

**WASHINGTON STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
DRAFT MINUTES**

ENTITY: WSHS Board of Trustees  
DATE: Thursday, June 6, 2019  
LOCATION: Washington State History Museum  
TRUSTEES PRESENT: Ryan Pennington, President, Alex McGregor, Treasurer (by phone), Jennifer Kilmer, Director, Sally Barline (by phone), RaShelle Davis (representing Governor Inslee), Suzie Dicks, John B. Dimmer, John Hughes, John Larson, Jerry Price (representing OSPI Superintendent Reykdal), Sheri Nelson (representing Secretary of State Wyman), Mark Wales, Senator Hans Zeiger  
STAFF PRESENT: Susan Hesselgrave, Executive Assistant to the Director

- I. Call to Order  
Called to order at 9:10am, President Ryan Pennington presiding.
- II. Consent Items approved unanimously (motion by Jerry Price, seconded by John Hughes)
  - a. Minutes December 6, 2018 Meeting [Exhibit 1]
  - b. Future Board Meeting Schedule [Exhibit 2]  
To the question of determining location of the 2020 (or 2021) off-site board meeting, Susan Hesselgrave will send out a poll to the trustees to gauge interest and ability to travel to the Polson Museum in Hoquiam. There was discussion regarding setting the March meeting in Olympia, to allow legislative trustees to participate and for classified trustees to also advocate for WSHS with their own legislators.
- III. Commemoration of 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day  
John Hughes remembered the service of his uncle who flew air cover for the invasion of the Normandy coast on June 6, 1944. The board observed a moment of silence in recognition of the valor and sacrifice of the Allied Forces on that pivotal day.
- IV. Treasurer's Report – Alex McGregor
  - a. Financial Report [Exhibit 3]  
We have been able to re-establish a substantial reserve. Despite decrease in equities due to market conditions, we have realized a net total increase in assets. Thanks to increased revenue and disciplined budgeting, we did not need to draw on the endowment funds this quarter. Point of clarification: original budget goal on facilities rental line item was in error because it had included the State Capitol Museum. Other revenue impacts of note: more partnered events with community groups, which results in less revenue but realizes other benefits integral to our mission; plaza repairs have impacted facility rentals. Director Jennifer Kilmer noted that one of the strategies under

consideration for increasing facility rentals is potentially creating a dedicated events coordinator staff position (function is currently fulfilled by support services staff). This would not take place until FY2021.

b. Audit Report [Exhibit 4]

WSHS had an exemplary audit, with no findings. There were two items of verbal advice:

i.) To increase the detail in documentation of P-card expenditures ii.) Modification in coding funds to grants, for easier reporting.

c. Proposed B19-21 Budget [Exhibit 5]

Director Kilmer noted that WSHS was allocated an operating budget for the upcoming biennium that will allow several much-needed investments in personnel. Several departments have been short-staffed for many years, bearing the brunt of the lasting impact of the recession. There will be some changes in job classifications to reflect actual scope of duties performed. There will also be some new positions. In addition to new/increased staff support for Human Resources and Collections, WSHS will be hiring for a tribal liaison position and establishing a historian-in-residence program. RaShelle Davis offered to be a resource for outreach in seeking candidates for the tribal liaison position, and Jerry Price indicated that OSPI's Office of Native Education might also serve as a resource in the process. A short discussion followed about the possibilities regarding potential partners for endowing certain specialized staff positions, such as the tribal liaison position or the historian-in-residence. (A couple of other points were made regarding tribal partnerships: WSHS is in a gradual process of handing over input and leadership decision-making for the In The Spirit festival to tribal partners, and John Hughes noted that he had reached out to Fawn Sharp, of the Quinault Nation, to see if she would consider joining the WSHS board.)

WSHS will be creating a small grants program for small historical organizations across the state. The first year of this program will entail conducting a heritage survey statewide, to identify needs. The question was raised as to whether this would be a grant, or a contract between WSHS and the specific organization. RaShelle Davis noted that the Governor's Office would provide assistance if a legislative initiative was needed to effectuate the program. Kilmer noted how beneficial this would be to the smaller organizations, as it was so much easier to build a facility than to support and sustain programming. John Hughes noted that this was in his opinion the most important WSHS initiative in the substantial time he'd served on the board.

In the FY20 budget, the WSHS staff position for National History Day (NHD) is eliminated. The program was transferred to OSPI through legislative action in 2018. WSHS has been using the remainder of WSHS funds previously committed to NHD to underwrite that position and provide support to OSPI as they transitioned the program to their agency. WSHS will continue to support NHD efforts by serving as a resource

institution to students, providing online access to collections and research support, and providing staff support at the State contest.

We will be migrating data to cloud storage, and hope that the amount designated by the legislature for data migration to the state data center can be re-allocated to cloud storage services.

The WSHS website will be redesigned. Several firms submitted proposals, and a local firm has been selected, with design/planning to begin this summer.

The FY20 Budget includes a projected 3% draw from endowment funds (down from typical 4%). We will not take the draw if it is not needed – evaluated quarterly.

The FY20 Budget was approved unanimously (motion by John Hughes, seconded by Jerry Price).

V. Collections Committee – John Hughes

a. Proposed Collections Policy updates [Exhibit 6]

The Collections Committee endorses the revised policy. The revised policy addresses several points, notably increased ease of access of curatorial staff to collections, assignment of security staff to oversee contractors, etc., performing maintenance at the Research Center (thereby relieving collections staff of this duty), and the formation of a Collections Review Committee, to review acquisitions and de-accessioning. Director Kilmer noted that the latter was a recommendation emerging from our re-accreditation process, and that it is becoming standard practice in the field. John Hughes noted that this will increase knowledge of the collections across staff and improve institutional memory.

The adoption of the revised Collections Policy was approved unanimously (motion by John Larson, seconded by Sen. Hans Zeiger).

VI. Governance Committee – Jennifer Kilmer

a. Board Elections

Natalie Bowman has agreed to chair the Governance Committee. Board composition strategy will be approximately 1/3 government positions; 1/3 statewide and academic positions; 1/3 Tacoma area representation.

There are no new board candidates to present at this time. Standing for re-election are:

Sally Barline

Sen. Jeannie Darneille

John Hughes

Beth Willis

The candidates were elected unanimously (motion by John Dimmer, seconded by Jerry Price).

- b. Director Review will be presented to the board at the September meeting.

VII. Director's Report – Jennifer Kilmer

- a. Update on planning processes

Facility Planning– the initial phase of workshopping with Mithun is completing this month. Mithun will come in September to present to the board. The board will be involved in the next phase of input and information-gathering. We will be going out to community partners and seeking input.

Interpretive Planning – the process has been informed by three different surveys, both on-site and in other history museums. The work-to-date will be presented at the September meeting. In the upcoming biennium, the next phase of renovation will be the “shipbuilding/agriculture” areas in the southwest corner of the Great Hall. The thematic focus will address core questions of the state history curriculum, including exploration, natural resources, trade, and innovation. This gallery will include interpretive content that had been removed to install the new Washington, My Home gallery. The working title for the new gallery is “Why Washington?”

- b. Agency Metrics [Exhibit 8]

We are on track for the year, using 2017 as a comparison (2018 was Toytopia, with record attendance).

- c. General Updates

We are in the process of workshopping our self-guided field trip resources to align with the Focused Inquiry Model adopted by state curriculum standards. Jerry Price noted that he would be happy to assist as needed.

The Cuseum app will be launched in the coming year. This will give visitors an additional information resource during their museum visit.

The Field Trip Scholarships fundraising was very successful, with \$18,000 raised, providing for free admission for 2,800 students from economically disadvantaged schools. There has been a lot of interest from schools in participating in this opportunity.

One of our strategic goals (as detailed in the WSHS Strategic Plan) is to embrace I.D.E.A. (inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility). The field trip scholarships fund is one

initiative where we have increased our commitment to financial accessibility. We are researching additional I.D.E.A. training institution-wide, to better serve the public. We are evaluating all of our guest and building procedures to see where we can eliminate points of friction for the public.

Allison Campbell has been hired to manage our statewide heritage outreach efforts. Her previous position was at Fort Nisqually Living History Museum.

This year we add another partner to our *In The Spirit* festival. Tacoma Art Museum joined us last year for the first time, and this year Museum of Glass will also participate along with TAM. All three museums will be free to the public that day.

VIII. Good of the Order

Jerry Price congratulated WSHS for its impressive work this past year. John Larson shared his recent visit to the Colorado History Center, noting an exhibit “Colorado through 100 Objects,” which was curated by graduate students. Jennifer Kilmer noted that there is an exciting gamified exhibit in early development for the Centennial Suffrage in 2020. Sen. Hans Zeiger attended the debut of History Pub (Escapes from McNeil Island, presented by WSHS curator, Gwen Whiting) at McMenamin’s, and was very impressed with the program and the beautiful restoration work of the building.

President Ryan Pennington adjourned the meeting at 11:33 am (motion by John Hughes, seconded by Suzie Dicks).