

WASHINGTON STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

ENTITY: WSHS Board of Trustees

DATE: Thursday, December 15, 2016

LOCATION: Museum of Glass, Tacoma

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Larry Kopp, President; Alex McGregor, Treasurer (by phone); Sally Barline; Carol Coe; Jeannie Darneille; John Hughes; Ryan Pennington; Bill Sleeth; Sheryl Steifel; Beth Willis

STAFF PRESENT: Jennifer Kilmer, Director; Patricia Tobiason, Deputy Director; Dr. Leah Melber, Director of Audience Engagement; Dave Beals, Education Programs Specialist; Susan Hesselgrave, Executive Assistant to the Director

- I. Call to Order and Introductions
Called to order at 12:35pm

- II. Consent Items
 - a. Minutes September 24, 2016 Meeting [Exhibit 1]
 - b. Future Board Meeting Schedule [Exhibit 2]
 - c. John Hughes moved to approve Exhibits 1-2 as presented.
Sally Barline seconded the motion.
 - d. The motion was approved.

Jennifer Kilmer

Update: The Governor's Budget was just released, and the WSHS operating budget received no cuts and some pass-thru adjustments. One of the items of potential impact is the Governor's proposal of a 6.5% increase over two years in state salaries. If this is approved by the Legislature, it would result in a match on our part (unfunded mandate) of up to \$25,000 (for the salaries that are not fully funded out of state funds). We did not have our decision package approved (for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War).

III. Vision and Strategic Goals Discussion

VISION (1:00pm)

Discussion began with examining the merits of two types of vision statements: externally focused, or internally focused. Given the satisfaction with the new WSHS Mission Statement, “WSHS partners with our communities to explore how history connects us all,” there was collective agreement to make the Vision Statement serve as an internally-focused roadmap, providing guidance to institutional stakeholders for setting strategic goals.

Framing questions were:

- What do we want to be doing?
- What is the impact we want to make?
- Are there things that we are not doing now, that we want to develop?

For reference, the new WSHS Mission is:

The Washington State Historical Society partners with our communities to explore how history connects us all.

WSHS Vision: Key Ideas

(not in ranked order)

(We need to be) Relevant

Modern(ization)

Lessons of history brought forward to today

Destination museum/institution: resource, scholarship, education

Destination for **all** Washingtonians

Relevance to/for diverse communities; cultural relevance

The relevance/role of the PNW globally – how we are connected to the world, our place (trade, etc.)

Visibility: increase awareness of how we help smaller institutions throughout the state

Engage in statewide projects that have wide-reaching impact

Aware and inclusive in how we tell the stories of the peoples of our state – first-person voices

Recognized as an educational institution (we don't have a system/plan in place to get recognized)

Safe space for difficult dialogue

Educational Value

WSHS Vision Statement Elements

(**BOLDFACE** are the **emphasized** words from the working draft/template)

WSHS will be recognized as the **Destination Institution** for Washington State **History Education**

Actively **Engaged** statewide

Making history **Relevant** to our modern lives

Convening a safe space for diverse perspectives, where **All** are welcome

STRATEGIC GOALS (2:00pm)

Strategic goals to be set in five key areas:

- Program
- Physical Infrastructure
- Human Capital
- Resources
- Outreach/Communication

*Notes in no ranked order. Potential priority goals in **boldface**. **Top Priority, if identified, is in red.***

Human Capital

Staffing: Conduct staffing needs study

Enhance staff, as required, to achieve goals and avoid burnout

IT Personnel and Marketing

Designated webmaster; Digital collections staffing

More staff for Columbia and online outreach

Additional exhibits staff with dual training in maintenance and repair

Diversity: Increase diversity on Board of Trustees and among staff

Resources

Expand alternate funding streams

Federal grants for innovation (Sparks): IMLS/NSF/NEA/NEH/DOE/USDA, etc.

Foreign/International Investors and engagement (*Washington's key role in trade*)

10-20% increase in corporate/foundation support: engagement and/or revenue

Sustainability - Provide sufficient resources through community support and Board involvement to fulfill the WSHS mission.

Leverage Footprint/Facilities

Evaluate ability to expand earned revenue through facilities, existing or future

Explore/Establish Partnerships

Establish partnerships with HistoryLink, BlackPast.org, Densho, etc., to provide expert expansions on history related to collections items (with associated financial cost/sharing)

Enhance funding for growing and preserving collections to fully represent our history

Increase Attendance of Exhibits

10% annual increase in earned revenue

Paid exhibit entrance is a direct metric of our impact

Increase memberships and visits to museum facility by 25% by 2020

Achieve X% compound annual growth in paid exhibit attendance over the next five years

Program

Grow Diversity

To build relevance to diverse audiences by collecting, storing, exhibiting, and celebrating culturally relevant people, places and programs.

Collections and collection development that reflects diversity and changing population of people, business and industry, as it intersects with exhibits/services/projects.

Increase Accessibility in Education (online/technology)

K-12 outreach, presence and resources with related staffing (expanding on history boxes), e.g. on-demand workshops (online, etc.)

Make public aware of the museum's programs and provide online availability

Create a platform for equal access and interactive participation for all

Enhance/expand our digital collections into an intuitive and extensive educational tool for K-12

Create "Wow" Programs/Exhibits

Create a "wow" program that will have statewide appeal

Bring a historical perspective to modern cultural phenomena

Select projects that will generate enthusiastic interest by all citizens of WA

Produce high-profile, high-impact exhibits to achieve broader awareness of the museum and solidify it as a must-see regional destination

Physical Infrastructure

Leverage Footprint/Facilities

Store collections in new space, returning use of old building to broad entrepreneurial uses to enhance earned revenue (e.g. rent for events, rent to arts/cultural organizations)

Grow facilities to provide for collections preservation and growth and increase operating revenue

Evaluate ability to expand earned revenue through leveraging WSHS downtown footprint with new structure(s)/uses (mixed use, retail, university housing, public parking, etc.)

Invest in Technology to provide enhanced reach of programs

Improved web server, database and interface platforms

IT infrastructure

Improve Museum Exhibit Spaces

Complete the entry project of the WSM that stimulates visitors to explore further

Interior changes to improve visibility and access to temporary exhibit spaces

Outreach/Communications

Continue and Increase enhanced marketing efforts

Increase communication with the Board of Trustees

Coordinated Partnership Marketing

More cooperative events with other museums and history sites

Targeted Positioning as Educational Institution

Increase public/governmental understanding about the role, relevance, impact and educational value of WSHS collections, services and programs.

Leverage Social Media and Online Engagement

Increase web traffic, social media impressions, web engagement

Everyone on social media

Build presence on social media by increasing interactions through games/contests and special online offers

To conclude the meeting, board members were polled as to interest in serving on an advisory Infrastructure Committee. Of the board members present, two board members indicated interest: Bill Sleeth and Sally Barline.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10pm.

Minutes approved by Board of Trustees, March 9, 2017.