



FOR THE RECORD

**Oklahoma Historical Society
Minutes of the Quarterly Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 23, 2013**

Call to Order – President Stidham

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Historical Society was called to order by President Emmy Stidham at 1:30 p.m., October 23, 2013, in the Dr. LeRoy H. Fischer Boardroom, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag

Roll Call

Members present: Jack Baker, Mickey Clagg, Bill Corbett, Betty Crow, Frederick Drummond, Cheryl Evans, Deena Fisher, Billie Fogarty, Martha Lippert, Leonard Logan, Patricia Loughlin, John Mabrey, Shirley Nero, Sandra Olson, Donna Sharpe, Emmy Stidham, Lewis Stiles, Charles Tate, Barbara Thompson, and James Waldo.

Emeritus members present: Dan Lawrence and Thalia Eddleman

Members excused: Sherry Beasley, Karen Keith, Guy Logsdon, Sherry Muchmore, and Betty Price.

Echoes of History

Dr. Blackburn read from a letter written by Joseph Thoburn that was placed into the Century Chest in 1913. Additionally, Mr. Thoburn placed a copy of *The Historian*, a precursor to *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, and a copy of the first history text book published by the state of Oklahoma. Dr. Blackburn read from selections of the letter written by Mr. Thoburn that included his thoughts on the present state of the historical society and the future of the agency.

Approval of Minutes

Quarterly Board Minutes, July 24, 2013

Lewis Stiles moved to approve the minutes from the July 24, 2013, Quarterly Board Meeting. Seconded by Jack Baker, the motion passed.

THE CHRONICLES OF OKLAHOMA

Treasurer's Report

Endowment funds. Leonard Logan reported that the OHS has \$1,697,464.73 in cash in the State Treasurer's Office. The OHS has \$200,724.99 invested in the Salomon Smith Barney account. This was originally a \$150,000 investment. The OHS has \$159,386.44 invested in Federated with an original investment of \$150,000. However, there are monthly drawdowns of \$750 per month from that account. The OHS has \$2,550,855.61 invested at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation Endowment Fund. The total cash and invested funds of the OHS amount to \$4,113,431.77.

Quarterly review of expenditures. Dr. Blackburn gave an overview of the FY-14 actual expenditures to the board. The OHS is making advances to bridge the gap in the revenue shortfall. Dr. Blackburn stated that one of the ways the OHS will see savings in the last quarter is through the vacancy of an unfilled position left open by the retirement of Michael Dean as the public information officer for the OHS. Dr. Blackburn thanked Mr. Dean for his years of service to the OHS. Mr. Dean extended his thanks to Dr. Blackburn, the OHS Board, and the OHS staff.

Executive Director's Report

Consideration of changes to statutory authority.

1. Use of a "request for proposals" to transfer ownership of real property.

The business model for the State Capital Publishing Museum was based on a trend in the 1970s when the OHS received a healthy allocation of federal funds from the State of Oklahoma. During that time the National Park Service was making millions of dollars available to the states for brick and mortar investment. The idea for the State Capital Publishing Building was to make it a living history museum for printing. This was going to be an expensive project, but the trend at the time suggested that funding would be available from the National Park Service. In the 1980s the business model broke down, which put the responsibility for the project on the state. To date, the cost of repairs and maintaining the building has reached \$1 million. The OHS would like to transfer the building and allow it to be an asset for the Guthrie community. The OHS is working with the speaker of the house's office and staff members of Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services. The OHS is considering utilizing a request for proposals (RFP) to help make sure the building will be an asset to the community and retain certain historical features. The OHS does not have the statutory authority to make a request for proposals; the Board will have to make that decision.

2. Ability to deposit proceeds from surplus property to endowment accounts managed by a 501(c)3. There was discussion regarding the proceeds of the sale of surplus property being placed with a 501(c)3 foundation.

No action was made on the above considerations.

Report on efforts to develop collections, programming, and public support for the Oklahoma Museum of Popular Culture. Dr. Blackburn summarized for the Board what happened last year with OKPOP. He stated that this year the goal is to keep the Senate support firm and to gain support in the House. The Greater Tulsa Chamber of Commerce had a meeting to highlight their top projects for the year, and the OKPOP was number three on their list. OKPOP Project Director Jeff Moore took the floor to update the Board on current OKPOP projects, such as remastering recently digitized Bob Wills songs to be released to the public, a Bob Wills documentary, and an old Bob Wills tour bus that will be restored and donated to the OKPOP.

Report on collections activities. Dr. Blackburn stated that the OHS is a collecting organization; everything that the OHS does stems from those collections. In the past the OHS was not proactive about seeking collections. That is not the case any longer. This is apparent in the recent collections acquired in the last ten years, such as the Steamboat

Heroine Collection, Cross-S Ranch House Collection, OPUBCO Photograph Collection, Latter-day Saints County Records Program Collection, Clara Luper Collection, and the Historic Barns Survey. Through these collections, the OHS has been able to create a brand, and use these collections to create a platform for public relations to reach out into the community. The benefits are clearly there; however, there are challenges. Limited space, processing the items, manpower, funding, and providing access are all concerns when dealing with incoming collections.

1. Organization. Dr. Blackburn discussed the changes that have been made in the past few decades regarding the manner in which the OHS works with collections, stating that major changes have occurred over time. For example, the Research Division at one time was segmented with departments that did not collaborate with each other. Dr. Blackburn stated that the goal is not to have segmented newspaper collections, photograph collections, and museum collections, but to have OHS collections. The OHS is still working toward this goal and is heading in the correct direction with a new unified gift agreement for the whole agency and a unified cataloging system. At the moment there are two separate cataloging systems, one for museum collections and one for research collections.

2. Access. Dr. Blackburn continued on the theme of creating a unified cataloging system by stating that the goal is to have museum collections accessible to the public via an online catalog. At the moment, the research cataloging program allows for public use, but the museum catalog system does not. Eventually, all items in the OHS collection will be searchable to the public online whether they are in the museum collection or in the archives.

3. Programming. OHS collections form the framework the OHS uses to share history with the public. Therefore, collections play a large role in programming in which the OHS engages. Examples of partnerships and programs include those with tribal governments, genealogical road trips with the Oklahoma Tourism Department, and a partnership with Ancestry.com.

Committee Reports

Indian Heritage.

1. Update on searchable online *Guide to the Indian Archives.* Bill Welge showed the Board the artwork that will accompany the *Guide to the Indian Archives*. He explained that the online version will be more detailed than the print version.

2. Update on *Guide to Indian Tribes of Oklahoma.* Mr. Welge stated that the guide is nearly completed.

3. Consideration of a partnership with Ancestry.com to identify full-blooded American Indians for voluntary participation in a DNA database. Mr. Baker explained that the project goal is to DNA test one thousand full-blooded American Indians with no Western ancestry for four generations back. This is an attempt to help establish the baseline that will be needed to test American Indian genetic background. The OHS would help to identify and contact the eligible American Indians to participate in this voluntary DNA swab sample.

Jack Baker moved to approve the consideration of partnership with Ancestry.com. Seconded by Jim Waldo, the motion passed.

Museums and Sites. Dan Lawrence stated that the committee had voted to involve Melvena Heisch of the SHPO in the process of Request for Proposals for the State Capital Publishing Museum. The stockade placement is underway at Fort Gibson. Mr. Lawrence reminded the Board that on November 9-10 the Battle of Honey Springs reenactment would take place.

THE CHRONICLES OF OKLAHOMA

Annual Meeting. Patricia Loughlin asked the Board to help get the word out to the community that the OHS Annual Meeting “Crossroads of Commerce” will take place in Stillwater on April 23, 24, and 25. Dr. Loughlin reminded the Board that the deadline for proposals is December 31. The Stillwater Community Center has been secured as the venue for the meeting, with an opening reception taking place at the OSU Alumni Center.

Development/Endowment/Membership. The projections for the endowment and planned giving are on track. At the end of the first quarter for the fiscal year 2014, the OHS has endowment funding in excess of \$102,000 compared to the OHS staff estimate of \$172,000 for the entire year. The OHS is on a similar track for annual giving donations. The committee discussed the possibility of changing the lifetime membership category. The committee decided against eliminating the category but will look into alternatives for the future. OHS membership is currently at 9,828 with a stated goal of 10,000.

Historic Preservation. The committee discussed the additions and reviews of the Statewide Preservation Plan at their meeting earlier in the day. On December 4-6 the SHPO will host a workshop on tax credits, the National Register, and federal projects.

Research. The Research Division generated \$15,000 for the revolving fund during the last quarter, with an annual goal of \$100,000. Research continues to work with Ancestry.com to digitize American Indian records. The Research Division section of the OHS website saw more than one million page views constituting 77 percent of the OHS web traffic.

Publications. The fall issues of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* will go to the printer by November 1. Since the passing of Whit Edwards there have been a large number of requests for a reprinting of his book *The Prairie was on Fire*. *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture* will be 40 percent off for OHS members leading up to Christmas. Updates to the online version of the *Encyclopedia* continue.

Black Heritage. The Black Heritage Committee went to Vinita to visit Attucks High School, which served the Black community in Craig County until after 1954. The committee was hosted by Board member Leonard Logan. The third annual Oklahoma African American Teachers Hall of Fame induction was held on September 27, with a full crowd at the Oklahoma History Center. Finally, a \$1,700 donation from John E. Green Community Fund at the Southwestern Urban Foundation completed the \$10,000 pledge made to support the new African American exhibit scheduled to open at the Oklahoma History Center in December.

Oklahoma Museum of History. Ms. Thompson updated the Board regarding the updates to Gallery 2B or the Kerr-McGee Gallery, which will reopen in December. The formal opening will be held in February 2014.

1. Consideration of Friends of Oklahoma History Center Board of Directors. Following a reading of the proposed Friends of the Oklahoma History Center Board of Directors, Barbara Thompson moved to accept the slate as proposed. Seconded by Leonard Logan, the motion passed.

Collections. No report was given from the Collection Committee.

New Business

Jim Waldo stated that the Oklahoma Historical Society community lost three members since the Board last met—Whit Edwards, Dr. John Carmichael, and Paul Mathews. President Stidham congratulated OHS staff member Bruce Fisher on his appointment to the Capital Preservation Commission. Additionally in March a large exhibit on Allan Houser will be unveiled, and the Oklahoma History Center is a cosponsor.

FOR THE RECORD

Adjournment

President Emmy Stidham adjourned the Quarterly Board Meeting at 3:30 p.m.

BOB L. BLACKBURN, Executive Director

EMMY S. STIDHAM, President