

Oregon Heritage Commission

8 a.m., April 7, 2011

Hotel Elliott, 357 12th St., Astoria

APPROVED MINUTES

Members present: Kimberly Jensen, George Kramer, Eric Martin, Carol Michael, Jan Mitchell, Roger Roper, E. John Rumpakis, Layne Sawyer, Jon Tullis, George Vogt.

Staff Present: Kyle Jansson, Kuri Gill, Tracy Zeller.

Visitors Present: Paulette McCoy, Ruth Metz, Robin Risley, Diana LaSarge, Cricket Soules, Don Ivy, Dirk Siedlecki, Glenn Jones, and others.

Kramer called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. Commissioners, staff and citizens introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Commissioners unanimously approved the preliminary agenda with a couple of minor changes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were none.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND COMMENTS: Jensen thanked the Commission for its support of the Century of Action women's suffrage centennial. It was launched with an event at the Capitol.

Rumpakis shared a recent article from The Oregonian promoting visits to Astoria and its heritage assets.

ASTORIA BICENTENNIAL PROJECT: Paulette McCoy, director of the Astoria Bicentennial, described the publication of a 4th grade local history book project, Astoria: An Adventure in History, that was assisted by an Oregon Heritage Grant. She is receiving feedback from the teachers and the students and they all love it. The schools receive the workbooks, the teachers' books; the teachers receive a CD of the workbook and a printout of all the worksheets.

CONNECTING TO COLLECTIONS PROJECT: Project coordinator Ruth Metz reviewed the history of the project and its conclusions. The project has made a formal assessment of preservation needs in Oregon through surveys and forums. They found 25 percent of heritage institutions had no funds allocated to preservation, the mean institutional preservation spending in 2010 was about \$2,000, that more than half do not have paid preservation staff, and 85 percent do not have a disaster preparedness plan that is current and ready to be activated. More specifically, they identified 47 specific learning needs in six categories: collection care, collection management, advocacy, planning, disaster preparedness, and technology. Learners prefer on-site, face-to-face consulting and training, but will take training in other forms and pay modestly for it.

The data was presented in March at a summit of Oregon preservation leaders. They recommended that the Commission appoint a cross-disciplinary (archives, libraries, museums) preservation advisory body. The purpose of the advisory body would be to collaboratively plan and strategize on funding initiatives for preserving Oregon's heritage collections. The suggested initial agenda for this advisory board would be to:

a. Develop a plan for requesting grants and other funds to implement the C2C committee's recommendations.

- b. Conduct a statewide inventory of critical objects and collections to ensure they are given attention.
- c. Submit an IMLS implementation grant (\$50K-250K) to carry the preservation agenda forward.

Kramer asked how the advisory body would be different from the impending Legislative requirement that the Commission convene coordination of the State Archives, State Library and State Historic Records Advisory Board. Metz said the difference is that the C2C is broader. It is focused on all collections, not just those of papers and documents. It also would involve the heritage professional organizations. Vogt said he has been asked in the past by rural historical societies about the possibility of online workshops, but there were issues of accessibility and connectivity. Tullis asked if the group was going to focus on funding projects or on strategies for creating collaborative initiatives. Jansson said both could be done. Vogt said that by adding SHRAB to the proposed advisory board that it could be moving sooner rather than later, and in coordination with the pending legislation. Metz said the summit leaders felt it was important that someone take responsibility for the advisory body, and that the Commission was in a position to do so.

After further discussion, Martin moved that the Commission applaud the Connecting to Collections effort, which has highlighted the need for preservation funding and reinforced the findings of the Heritage Vitality Report; and that the Commission looks forward to the Connection to Collections committee submitting the advisory board plan at its July meeting. Michael second. Approved unanimously.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE AND STRATEGY

Roper, Jansson and Kramer talked about three bills in the Legislature related to the Commission: SB 125, HB 2859 and HB 3210. The contents of SB 125 have been inserted by Rep. Nathanson into HB 2859, which now also includes making the State Historic Records Advisory Board an advisory member. The revised 2859 also will require the Commission to convene joint planning meetings with the State Archives, State Library and SHRAB. Jansson said this latter element adds some definition to the Commission's original purpose.

Kramer noted the assistance of the Cultural Advocacy Coalition in the efforts for these bills and thanked them for it. Rumpakis noted that getting momentum behind the bills shows the most interest in the Commission since he became a member, getting the Commission to the brink of real results. Jansson said that SB 602 had received a public hearing.

MUSEUM AND HERITAGE GRANT PROGRAM UPDATE:

Jansson said the grant programs are having better success this biennium. In 2009 the commission made 7 museum grants, 5 of those have been completed, one that still has its report to get in, and one more that was given an extension that should be finished by June. Ten museum grants were awarded in 2010, 5 of which have been completed, 3 are done but we are waiting on their reports, and 2 organizations have been granted extensions. The commission gave out 20 heritage grants in 2009, 11 have been completed, 2 have completed the work and are preparing their final report, 6 have been granted extensions and one never turned in the report although completing the work.

HERITAGE VITALITY REPORT/HERITAGE PLANNING

Jansson said this is a document that says what the commission is all about and why it exists. It has also been a useful tool in communicating with legislators. The next step for the report is to implement

recommendations made by the commission. The current Oregon Heritage Plan is dated 2005-2011, so this would be a good time to create a new Oregon Heritage Plan and include with it a multi-year action plan so that there are specific steps to take to implement the Heritage Vitality Report and the Oregon Heritage Plan. To do that, Jansson plans to involve the advisory members like they never have before. He proposed that at the July and October meetings that the Commission invite the advisory members to present their strategic plans as they relate to heritage. This will give commissioners a chance to learn how these organizations are involved in heritage, how they would like the Commission to support their efforts, and how these organizations might help the Commission. In addition, commissioners will also be able to identify overlaps and opportunities for better coordination. Motion by Mitchell for the Commission to invite advisory members to make presentations at the July and October meetings. Michael second. Approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES of FEB. 14, 2011 MEETING

Michael moved to approve the draft minutes. Mitchell second. Approved.

OREGON ENCYCLOPEDIA REQUEST

Kramer noted the Oregon Encyclopedia project had sent him a letter asking for financial support, and that it and his response had been given to them for information. He said that there will be time for a more detailed discussion of it at the Commission's July meeting.

HERITAGE CONFERENCE UPDATE

Gill and Jansson said the conference has been a pleasure to put together and they are excited about the numbers in attendance and the activities planned. This is the largest heritage conference staged outside of the Willamette Valley. It is taking place in 13 different locations around Astoria and the lower Columbia area, and that does not include the Hometown Tourism Day being organized by locals leaders. Jansson noted The New York Times even recently published an article about Astoria; and about 6 sites that are being used for the conference are mentioned in the article.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Kramer talked about the process that the committee of he, Michael and Schepke used to create their nominations. Because the only person who expressed written interest in becoming chair was the current vice chair, and the committee agreed on that choice, the committee then proceeded to also find a nominee for vice chair. Michael moved to nominate Mitchell as the new chair effective immediately at the end of this conference. Jensen second. Approved unanimously.

Michael nominated Tullis as vice-chair. Martin second. Approved unanimously.

OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY UPDATE

Vogt said this will be his last meeting representing OHS as he retires later this month. He noted that as part of the Multnomah County levy approved in November that benefits OHS, four small historical societies in the east part of Multnomah County will get about \$30,000 each. OHS is in the midst of a major strategic planning and expect to have it completed by June. OHS has been doing extensive consultations with

outside groups and they have just completed a survey, of which one result is that people said the library was OHS' most essential asset. Kerry Tymchuk will be the interim executive director.

ADJOURN: Kramer adjourned the meeting at 10:37 p.m. The following picture of commissioners and staff was taken immediately following.

