

Meeting Minutes

Douglas Henry State Museum Commission

Quarterly Meeting

October 10, 2019

The Douglas Henry State Museum Commission (DHSMC) scheduled for 9:45 a.m. met on October 10, 2019 in the Stophel Center of Bryan College in Dayton, TN with Chairman Thomas S. Smith presiding.

**Members Present**

Thomas S. Smith, Chair

Nancy Baker DeFriece, Vice Chair

Harbert Alexander, Sr.

Ambassador Victor Ashe

Tina Hodges

The Honorable Steve McDaniel

Deanie Parker

Scott Price

Laura Travis

Chairman Bo Watson

Eleanor Yoakum

**Ex Officio**

Robert Buchanan, Tennessee Historical Society Chair

Ashley Howell, TSM Executive Director

**Members Absent**

Walter Knestrick

Chairman Susan Lynn

**Participating Guest in Attendance**

Janet Kleinfelter, Deputy Attorney General

**Participating TSM Staff**

Mary Jane Crockett-Green, Deputy Director/Director of Administration

Sharon Dennis, DHSMC Liaison

**Call to Order**

Chairman Thomas S. Smith called the meeting to order at 10:17 a.m.

**Welcome and Introduction**

Chair Smith welcomed everyone present thanking Mrs. Corinne Livesay and Bryan College President Dr. Stephen Livesay for hosting the DHSMC in the new conference room of Stophel Center. He also thanked Commissioner Laura and Representative Ron Travis for hosting the commission in Rhea County, for this opportunity at Bryan College and for a memorable event at the Lucky Star Ranch. The chair proceeded with roll call, verified that a quorum was present and presided over the following business.

**Approval of Minutes from the July 8, 2019 Quarterly Meeting**

Chair Smith entertained a motion for approval of the minutes from the Quarterly meeting on July 8, 2019. Chairman Watson moved to approve the minutes; Scott Price seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the Chair called for a vote and the motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

**Development Committee Report**

Committee Chair Scott Price thanked Chair Smith and echoed appreciation that cannot be overstated to Ms. Travis for her hospitality, the opportunity to dine under the stars and for her attendance and participation in the Development Committee meeting that ended shortly before her event began.

Chair Price shared his enthusiasm for the opportunity enabling this committee to serve the DHSMC by exploring ways to provide additional support to the executive director and her staff to expand the reach and scope of museum outreach and services. The committee discussed a desire for future participation of the DHSMC in efforts to be cheerful givers to the museum and to assist the executive director in fundraising efforts.

The Development Committee learned the Tennessee State Museum Foundation (TSMF) voted 13/2 to adopt the Memorandum of Understanding as proposed by the Attorney General’s office. The Development Committee voted to bring two motions to the DHSMC for full approval.

Motion #1: The Development Committee moved that the DHSMC acknowledge that the MOU was approved by the TSMF and to convey to the TSMF the DHSMC’s expectation that the document be signed by TSMF on or before October 31, 2019. Chair Smith opened this motion for discussion. There being none, the Chair called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Motion #2: The Development Committee moved to authorize the DHSMC to explore and, if feasible, begin the process of creating (another) a new 501(c)(3) support organization to facilitate fundraising for the support of the State Museum. Chairman Watson moved; Ms. Travis seconded. The Chair called for discussion. There being none, the Chair called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Chair Price thanked the commission for its participation and the opportunity to work together for the cumulative impact.

**Collections Committee (CAC) Report**

Committee Chair Deanie Parker invited commissioners to review the proposed Deaccessions/Transfers Policy emailed and included in the meeting books. This plan is to be incorporated in the TSM Collections Management Policy. Following discussion to ensure the plan is lawful and ethical and in compliance with AAM and other governing institutions, this plan was unanimously approved at the October 9, 2019 CAC meeting. Chairman Watson moved for adoption of the CAC recommendation; Eleanor Yoakum seconded. The Chair called for discussion. There being none, the Chair called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Chair Parker concluded her report recognizing the quarterly Collections/Acquisitions report in the meeting books. Having reviewed the report, Chair Smith acknowledged less spending on acquisitions and recognized Director Howell to share her strategy on deaccessioning going forward in preparation for moving the collection.

Director Howell began by thanking the DHSMC for ratifying the Collection Committee’s motion to approve the Deaccessions/Transfers Policy. Regarding strategy, in preparation for a major move of the collection scheduled for summer, 2021, a shift in focus from collecting to moving is underway which includes planning for how to pack and move artifacts, where artifacts will be housed in the new facility and which artifacts are candidates for deaccession or transfer to other museums.

**Carousel Committee Report**

Chair Smith called upon the Carousel Committee Chair, Laura Travis to report on the Committees meeting earlier this day. Chair Travis conveyed the committee voted to approve and bring to the DHSMC for ratification a motion to access approximately $39,000 from a TSMF Carousel restricted account to hire BAS to assess the cost for preservation and Carousel and Carvings to assess the cost for mechanicals. Chairman Watson seconded the committee’s motion. There being no discussion, Chair Travis called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Following the vote, it was noted although there are no dollars paid to store the carousel there is cost to the artifact in terms of deterioration.

**Budget Report**

Chair Smith recognizedDeputy Director Mary Jane Crockett-Green who began her report explaining the State’s monthly closings are typically a month behind which is why the budget report ends August 31. Two months into the new fiscal year approximately 15% of the budget has been expended. Ms. Green highlighted revenue from donation boxes, combined revenue for the gift shop and event rentals, and inter-departmental revenue for staff expertise to other State agencies. The store revenue reflects gross sales.

Director Howell's response to questions about the breakdown of venue revenue and store revenue revealed that in order to report the true profit margins, an ongoing effort with Gateway and STS is underway to differentiate actual venue net and store net based on inventory purchases from cost of sales and cost of inventory.

**Executive Director Report**

Director Howell opened by directing members to her report which was submitted prior to the meeting and included in the meeting books noting the many activities of the museum. With over 190,000 visitors from October to October which does not include the 40,000 visitors served at the State Capitol, tour and outreach totaled 230,000 visitors served.

Strategic Plan

The strategic planning process is about to begin with a facilitator from the Department of Human Resources engaging staff and management to discuss the mission and the future of the museum. Part of strategic planning includes evaluation of trends, programs and their expansion and how to utilize earned revenue to support the programs. In terms of metrics, it is now possible to review and evaluate a year’s worth of data and the systems in place. Director Howell encouraged Commissioners to consider and share with her their future goals and aspirations for the museum.

Upcoming Temporary Exhibitions

Temporary exhibitions are designed to present more of the collection over time whereby visitors can make connections with their own lives, their own families and their family's stories.

**Let's Eat: *Origins and Evolutions of Tennessee Food***

This exhibition has enjoyed numerous state-wide media clippings; furthermore, Tennessee Crossroads filmed a specialaround this exhibition that will air on PBS throughout the state. Drawing from community scholars, advisors, and food festivals, programs have been created and artifacts from the collection have been exposed thematically telling the state-wide story.

**Tennessee Women's Fight for the Vote - - March 2020 - March 2021**

TSM will commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Tennessee's role in the 19th Amendment with an 8,000 sf Women's Suffrage Exhibition telling the story of the importance and the involvement across the state in helping to ratify this amendment. Nashville Public Television is producing a Suffrage documentary with TSM that will premier this November. TSM will have a shortened version of the documentary for its exhibition and will make it available to teachers as a resource on the website. In an effort to extend the story of the importance of this topic, early planning includes an event to honor the women who have served in the TN General Assembly.

Statewide Collaborative

The Legislature passed an appropriation to fund a state-wide collaborative with the TSM, Tennessee Historical Society (THS), Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA) and the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development. Initiatives include a website designed to promote statewide scheduled events, access to school curriculum, TSM Suffrage trunks, TSLA Doc Boxes, a traveling Suffrage exhibition and more. Three joint initiatives are underway:

* A low-cost traveling exhibition designed to give libraries, museums and local historical societies the opportunity to pull from their own collections and tell their stories in all 95 counties as Suffrage organizations across the State helped this vote happen in 1920.
* An initiative to provide more access to school curriculum on this topic online and by increasing the TSM Women's Suffrage Traveling Trunk fleet from 4 to 20 and TSLA Doc Boxes.
* TSM, TSLA and THS have launched an essay and film contest called *Battle for the Ballot* for K-12 that will afford $55,000 in scholarships with a 529 plan made possible through Tennessee Stars and the Tennessee Department of Education.

TSM Online Collection

In an effort to provide greater access to the collection for research by individuals, schools, teachers and professors, 600 artifacts have been launched with 6,000 artifacts in the final editing process. TSM was recently awarded $50,000 from the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area to help fund initiatives to advance more Civil War artifacts to this portal.

Internship Program

The museum completed its inaugural paid internship program which proved to be very successful for students and the museum with one intern hired as a curator and another as a repeat part-time staff member. TSM will be seeking private funding to continue this program.

Upcoming Projects

**Collections Storage Facility**

Planning for the renovation/construction for the new Collection Storage facility and moving the collection to the new facility is underway with General Services on the construction documents and finalizing the design to maximize every square inch not only for the initial move, but also in thinking about future uses of space and the future of the collection.

While the building costs are included in General Service’s budget, there is no provision for the cost of the move itself. TSM submitted the end of September an estimate of $3.6 million in the most recent budget request. The logistics of moving approximately 160,000 artifacts is quite an undertaking and this figure accounts for additional assistance in the planning process for the next 18 months which includes packing and the actual move in 2021.

**Military Branch Museum**

A temporary exhibits refresh for the Military Branch Museum (MBM) housed in the War Memorial Building (WMB) is imminent until General Service’s plans for the future large-scale building renovation is determined in which the MBM will be included. TSM has always had a presence in the WMB by statute as the WMB was designed and built with the purpose of having a museum dedicated to this topic. The permanent exhibits have remained on exhibition, unopened for several decades, while battling ongoing environmental issues regarding water, temperature and humidity.

Director Howell's action plan to satisfy the Audit findings and preserve the artifacts calls for deinstallation/conservation of artifacts. In an effort to maximize the visitor experience, expand programs and further engage veterans groups, the interpretation and technology in this space will include more information on the Vietnam era and information on Iraq, Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf will be added.

The cost of about $70,000 is not in the TSM budget; however, funds from the MBM donation box revenue along with both TSMF funds for exhibit refresh and TSM funds for exhibit refresh will be used. The legislature will not be asked for aid in accomplishing this goal. The proposed timeline is to close MBM for approximately six weeks beginning the day after Veterans Day and to re-open in mid-December.

Various questions ensued Director Howell’s report regarding:

* Building punch list.
* Collections staff in the Polk Center where collection storage remains with identified workspaces in both Polk and RLP, staff assigned to RLP only and pursuit via General Services of alternative workspace and communication strategies.
* Progress in working with DOHR to increase staff salaries including new hires.
* TSM artifacts in TN Sports Hall of Fame; a division of the Department of Tourism and Development, with fully executed loan agreements that are currently being vetted by the Attorney General’s office.

**Annual Conflict of Interest Forms**

All 2019 annual conflict of Interest forms from page seven of the Operating Policies are signed and noted.

**Media Coverage**

Chair Smith invited members to review at their leisure the Media section in the meeting books that includes positive media coverage from the quarter.

**Other Business**

Chair Smith invited commissioners to view their information in the Members Directory and email Ms. Dennis any updates.

**Public Comments**

Chair Smith called for public comment. There was none.

**Upcoming Meeting Dates**

Chair Smith announced the upcoming Quarterly meeting dates of January 13, 2020, April 13, 2020, July 13, 2020 and October 12, 2020.

**Adjournment**

Chair Smith entertained a motion to adjourn. Ms. Yoakum moved to adjourn, Chair Smith seconded the motion and called for a vote which carried unanimously with no abstentions. The meeting was adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

**Main Motions Summary**

**Motion #1:** Moved by Chairman Watson to approve the July 8, 2019 Quarterly Meeting minutes. Chair Smith called for a vote on the motion which carried unanimously with no abstentions.

**Motion #2:** Moved by the Development Committee for the DHSMC to acknowledge that the MOU was approved by the TSMF and to convey to the TSMF the DHSMC’s expectation that the document be signed by TSMF on or before October 31, 2019. The Chair called for a vote on the motion which carried unanimously with no abstentions.

**Motion #3:** Moved by Chairman Watson to authorize the DHSMC to explore and, if feasible, to begin the process of creating another 501(c)(3) support organization to facilitate fundraising for the support of the State Museum. The Chair called for a vote on the motion which carried unanimously with no abstentions.

**Motion #4:** Moved by Chairman Watson to adopt the proposed Deaccessions/Transfers Policy to be incorporated in the Collections Management Policy. The Chair called for a vote on the motion which carried unanimously with no abstentions.

**Motion #5:** Moved by the Carousel Committee to access approximately $39,000 from a TSMF Carousel restricted account to hire BAS to assess the cost to preserve the artifact and Carousel and Carvings to assess the cost to restore the mechanicals. The Chair called for a vote on the motion which carried unanimously with no abstentions.

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Thomas S. Smith

Chairman Douglas Henry State Museum Commission