



The Douglas Henry State Museum Commission (DHSMC) met at 10:00 a.m. on July 19, 2021, in the Conference Room of the Tennessee State Museum with Chairman Thomas S. Smith presiding.

Members Present

Thomas S. Smith, Chair
Nancy Baker DeFriece, Vice Chair
Chairlady Patsy Hazlewood
Walter Knestrick
The Honorable Steve McDaniel
Deanie Parker (Phone)
Scott Price
Laura Travis
Chairman Bo Watson
Eleanor Yoakum

Ex Officio

Ashley Howell, TSM Executive Director

Members Absent

Harbert Alexander, Sr.
Ambassador Victor Ashe
David Fox, Tennessee Historical Society Chair, Ex officio

Participating Guest in Attendance

Deputy Attorney General Janet Kleinfelter

Participating TSM Staff

Sabrina Hooper, Deputy Director
Sharon Dennis, DHSMC Liaison

Call to Order

Chairman Thomas S. Smith called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., proceeded with roll call, verified that a quorum was present and presided over the following business.

Welcome and Introduction

Chair Smith welcomed everyone to the Quarterly meeting thanking all Commissioners for their return in person. The Chair welcomed the newest member Chairlady Patsy Hazlewood and expressed the full commissions appreciation for her participation. Chair Smith congratulated Ambassador Victor Ashe and Nancy Baker DeFriece on their reappointments by Lieutenant Governor Randy McNally and announced the resignation of Commissioner Tina Hodges.

Approval of Minutes from the April 26, 2021 Quarterly Meeting

Chair Smith entertained a motion to adopt the minutes from the April 26, 2021 Quarterly meeting which was emailed in advance with all meeting materials and called for a motion. Chairman Bo Watson moved to adopt the meeting minutes; Walter Knestrick seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the Chair called for a vote and the motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

Budget Report

Chair Smith welcomed Deputy Director/Director of Administration Sabrina Hooper. Ms. Hooper began by referencing the budget report as of June 30, 2021 which shows the Agency has spent 91% of its State appropriated dollars. This fiscal year began with the daunting task of projecting a 12% budget cut which resulted in extending temporary exhibitions and limiting procurement. Fortunately, the budget was not reduced, and much needed procurements were funded. The agency continues to utilize its developed forecasting tools to keep track of all spending.

Revenue includes Nongovernmental revenue of \$43,536 from collection boxes and solicitations which includes a grant from Humanities Tennessee which came in as a donation, along with current Services Actual of \$123,443 from store sales and event rental. Since March 2020, eight refunds were processed for venue rental due to COVID-19. Internal Government revenue of \$14,130 was received from other agencies for staff assistance such as MOU procurements.

Ms. Hooper closed her report noting personnel movement is up within the agency with ten positions requiring some type of HR transaction either from retirement, promotion or resignation. While some resignations are a result of low salaries, some have furthered their careers due to experience gained with this agency.

Questions and discussion of the June 30, 2021 Budget

- How does Current Services numbers compare to pre-pandemic?
- Grants and Subsidies incorporates Green McAdoo which is paid through a nonrecurring line-item appropriation.
- Professional Services State Agencies includes rent, IT services and IU's from DOHR to the inner-state-agencies.
- Stores for Resale/Reissue/Mfg. reflects inventory purchases for the store.
- There is no budget for event marketing; however, minimal marketing has been paid out of the general marketing budget to advertise the event space in wedding magazines.
- When asked to compare the 2019 event revenue with 2021 year-end projections, Chair Smith responded that we really haven't had a solid year in this building to have a benchmark to build a number.
- Professional Services Third Parties reflects agency vendors, not event vendors, such as artifact conservation, art handlers for exhibition installation/deinstallation and exhibition construction. This does not include security.

Chair Smith thanked Ms. Hooper for her report.

Audit Committee Report (AFC)

Chair Smith recognized AFC Chair Eleanor Yoakum who began by noting the committee had a very lengthy and comprehensive meeting earlier this day focusing on three Audit Findings and

one Observation. Two of the findings are resolved while management is working diligently to resolve a third. The observation has to do with the Polk Building leaks which is a perennial evergreen issue.

Chair Yoakum closed her report commending Ms. Hooper on a wonderful preparation.

Collections Acquisitions Committee (CAC) Report

Chair Smith recognized CAC Chair Deanie Parker who began by referencing a Deaccession Certification form for a final item that was inadvertently omitted from the April 26, 2021 approved deaccession of 20th Century Militaria. The object is a Soviet Armed forces paratrooper's tunic (Jacket).¹ This Deaccession Certification form was emailed to the CAC Chair on July 8, 2021 for consideration of presentation in this meeting, included in the meeting booklets that were emailed to commissioners in advance of this meeting and is included in the meeting booklets this day.

Chair Parker moved for a vote of approval to return the World War II Soviet paratrooper's tunic to the donor. Chairman Bo Watson moved to approve the motion; Chairlady Hazlewood seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the Chair Smith called for a vote and the motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

Chair Parker concluded her report by deferring any questions about the Artifact/Object Acquisitions report to Dan Pomeroy. Chair Parker expressed regret that she was unable to attend in-person for two reasons. First, to be energized by Chairman Smith's smile and inclusion; second, to be able to express her gratitude to Dan Pomeroy face to face for working with the CAC to establish the Collections Management Policy (CMP) and to approve the collections acquisitions processes.

Chair Smith called for questions on the Artifact/Object Acquisitions Report noting it is a much shorter report and reflects Director Howell's ongoing efforts to slow acquisitions as preparation for the move to the new collections storage facility continues. There being no questions, The Chair thanked Ms. Parker for her report.

Executive Director Report

Chair Smith recognized Executive Director Ashley Howell to present her report.

Visitation

Director Howell began with the visitation number this last fiscal year of 56,579 through June 30. There was a decrease due to various reasons including COVID and inclement weather; however, visitation is on a significant incline with 10,607 visitors in June alone. For comparison, last July had 3,723 visitors. For a year over year comparison, TSM had 120,872 visitors for that fiscal year while being closed mid-March through June reflecting only nine of the twelve months

Overview of Operations

- The Capitol officially reopened welcoming visitors for self-guided tours in April and since that time private tours have resumed. The Capitol is enjoying the same attendance increases as the museum.

¹ Deaccession Certification form - - Objects #2008.138.1.1 Soviet Armed Forces paratrooper's tunic (jacket)

Onsite programming continues to phase in with a reintroduction of children's programming. The Children's gallery reopened on May 15, and the event rentals will resume August 15.

Dan Pomeroy announced his retirement effective August 1 after more than 47 years of service to the museum. He began during America's Bicentennial and has stewarded the collection to become a robust collection representing the State which has involved a collecting focus in looking at all items of Tennessee. The collection has populated two state museums from the Polk Center to the current location. His care, guidance and mentorship in the field of Tennessee history will not be forgotten. Commissioners will receive an invitation to a retirement function as soon as a date is set.

- Chair Smith announced it has been a real privilege to work with Dan, and clearly Dan has been the face of the museum; particularly the face of Collections and the museum's status in the museum world.
- Ms. Yoakum added when she was Chair of the Arts Commission, Dan was and is a Tennessee treasure and probably has more knowledge of the memorabilia and treasures in Tennessee than any human being.
- Ms. DeFriece added when she was Chair of the Arts Commission, Dan was right there assisting her and she is proud to say, he's from East Tennessee at Kingsport.
- Mr. Knestruck added when he was Chair of the Arts Commission, Dan was a young guy!
- Ms. Travis echoed all the accolades adding Dan is awesome, stellar, and he will be missed.
- Mr. McDaniel stated Dan is the treasure of this museum and thanked him personally for all the great things he has done for Tennessee.
- Chairlady Hazlewood wanted to make sure Dan was not leaving because she was coming!
- Director Howell concluded that Dan has assured her that he is a phone call away.

The Collection and the Collection Storage Facility Project

Director Howell and Deputy Director Hooper in discussing staffing, revealed "replace" is not an appropriate word when talking about hiring somebody who has Dan's knowledge of the collection and Tennessee history. They have met individually with each member of the Collections team to talk about staffing and resource needs. The entire museum has experienced a great deal of change. There are large projects ahead and the Collections team is not only transitioning temporary exhibitions, it is planning for the new collections storage facility. With the new Registrar having been promoted from within and two new curators hired, discussion continues on collection care and appropriation for the collections facility while packing and preparation continues under the guidance of Bynon Art Services; all while ongoing environmental issues continue in the Polk facility.

Director Howell has met with the Department of General Services and an architect to re-engage in the design of a new collections storage facility.

Strategic Plan

Four years ago in the July Quarterly meeting the commission approved a three-year strategic plan. An extension was approved due to COVID. Highlights from the past four years include the move to and the opening of a new museum, receiving reaccreditation from the American Association of Museums (AAM), the launching of an exhibition

planning process to develop a rotating schedule of exhibitions, all while weathering a tornado, a global pandemic and a Christmas day bombing.

- The resilience of staff to strive to develop greater access to the collection with an online collection database launched in the fall of 2019, whereby online exhibitions have become a part of the programming and to date, more than 2800 artifacts are available for viewing online while staff is continually adding more.
- Distance learning programs have been developed through tours, digital learning, teacher workshops and Traveling Trunks beginning first with the catalyst of the Digital Learning Center; the smart classroom which is continually evolving with new educational programs and virtual field trips. This quarter the museum served 2,568 students through 79 virtual field trips. In total, this past year, the museum hosted 183 virtual field trips and served 6,850 students. In addition, the Traveling Trunks fleet relaunched in October with new COVID-19 protocols in place. This quarter, 25 trunks served 233 students in 18 counties. In total, this fiscal year, the museum serviced 56 trunks engaging with 3,933 students in 49 different counties.
- The communications strategy is focused on the museum to extend the goals of the agency. Over the past four years the TSM website has undergone numerous redesigns. First, an initial redesign for the Grand Opening in October 2018. Currently a redesign included increased content; three blogs, archived digital programming, and visitor wayfinding especially as it relates to accessibility and information sharing.
- Social media has expanded heavily during this period with Facebook likes from 13,508 to 20,962 and Instagram followers from 330 to 5,467.
- A focus on the visitor experience has strengthened the entities such as the addition of the Children's gallery, the opening of the museum store and the launch of rental events. Rentals will resume on August 15 with 23 events currently on the calendar.

Director Howell closed her report thanking commissioners for supporting the initiatives outlined in the strategic plan and for sponsoring and supporting legislation enabling the museum to generate Earned and Contributed revenue. After four years the structure is now in place which includes a fully executed Memorandum of Understanding with the Tennessee State Museum Foundation. While work continues with the Foundation Executive Committee to strengthen the Contributed revenue structure, *A Tennessee Waltz* is slated and is accompanied by a new pre-Waltz fundraising event.

Chair Smith thanked Director Howell for an excellent report and called for questions or comments.

- What is the number of open positions and the projected timeline to fill? There are five open positions. With low-pay in relation to the high cost of living in Davidson County often cited in exit interviews, work continues between management and DOHR with respect to the equity of positions and job classifications moving forward.
- Explain the context of the open positions and if there are professional positions that might be outsourced. Although curators and educators may not be outsourced, graphic design must be outsourced at least during this interim period.
- What are the total number of digital encounters for a single year compared to the total number of in-person encounters for a single year for future reference? The

communications team can definitely capture those numbers, and Director Howell agreed to share it as soon as possible noting it would be a very good metric to include moving forward.

- Chairlady Hazlewood remarked Virtual Field Trips are valuable not only to students, but for all Tennessean's, and encouraged making that option available while making people aware that it is an option, and a viable one that should be continued long after the pandemic. Director Howell agreed as this process is underway along with teacher workshops that are now in-person and virtual.

Progress with Support Organization Q & A

- Has the museum received its share of the Waltz money from the last Waltz? In working through this process, management has been able to access museum funds for specific functions and recently for the purchase of a document signed by Andrew Jackson.
- Moving forward, are you confident that you can access funds from the Foundation? Although work remains to be done, a plan is in place and management is confident that access is accessible.
- Is the museum following the paperwork for the utilization of museum staff in its role in the Waltz? Management is working out the process to move the paperwork forward while limiting as much staff time as possible by outsourcing.

Chair Smith commented there have been a significant number of Trustee resignations from the Foundation, while the two Legislative appointees, Chairman Michael Curcio and Senator Dawn White have been very helpful in realigning the Foundation with the museum.

Media Coverage

Chair Smith acclaimed all the positive accolades in this quarter's media coverage.

Other Business

Chair Smith began by announcing the naming of the Tennessee State Museum building after Former Governor Bill Haslam and deferred to Director Howell for details. Director Howell confirmed both the October DHSMC quarterly meeting and the naming event are scheduled for October 27. Times for both are TBD.

The opening of the exhibition *The Best of Tennessee Craft* is October 29.

Public Comments

After calling for public comment and there was none, Chair Smith revealed he fully expects the Governor to make appointments for expired terms before the next Quarterly meeting. With this most likely being his last meeting as his term has expired, the Chair shared it has been his honor to serve the DHSMC since 2012 through a significant degree of change in leadership, through the design, construction and opening of a new museum, along with a tornado, a Christmas day bombing and an ongoing pandemic. He commended the Commission for the groundwork it has laid to weather those storms. He recognized the late Chairman Charles Sargent, the Honorable Steve McDaniel and Chairman Bo Watson for their leadership and guidance. He recognized the progress made in the reworking of the Foundation and the restored relationship.

Mr. McDaniel recognized he too is transitioning off and that he enjoyed the opportunity to participate as Deputy Speaker of the House in the forming of the DHSMC and to serve as Chair for over two terms. He noted Governor Haslam was right to appoint Mr. Smith who has accomplished a herculean task as DHSMC Chair and recognized the late Chairman Charles Sargent for his significant contributions. He closed by noting he will look back on his service to the DHSMC as a great part of his life and that the Commission is in very good hands with Chairman Bo Watson, and Chairlady Patsy Hazlewood.

Mr. Knestrick added his term has expired and he has really enjoyed his service.

Announcements

Chair Smith announced the upcoming Quarterly meeting dates of October 27, 2021, January 10, 2022, April 11, 2022, and July 11, 2022.

Adjournment

Chair Smith entertained a motion to adjourn. Senator Watson moved to adjourn, and the Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:19 a.m.

Main Motions Summary

Motion #1: Moved by Chairman Watson to adopt the minutes from the April 26, 2021 meeting. Chair Smith called for a vote on the motion which carried unanimously with no abstentions.

Motion #2: CAC Chair Deanie Parker moved for a vote of approval to return the WWII Soviet paratrooper's tunic to the donor. Chairman Watson moved to approve the motion; Chairlady Hazlewood seconded the motion. Chair Smith called for a vote on the motion which carried unanimously with no abstentions.

Motion #3: Moved by Chairman Watson to adjourn the meeting. Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 11:19 a.m.

Thomas S. Smith
Chairman Douglas Henry State Museum Commission