



## Board of Directors

June 17, 2023

3218 Gladstone Blvd, Kansas City, MO 64123

Missouri Humanities' mission is to enrich lives and strengthen communities by connecting Missourians with the people, places, and ideas that shape our society.

**Attendance:** Dr. Petra DeWitt (Chairperson), Marilyn Bradford (Immediate Past Chair), Trish Erzfeld (Vice Chairperson), Rev. Nicholas Inman (Secretary), Peter Hofherr (Treasurer), John M. Robinson III, Merci Bennett, Dr. Sudarsan Kant, Thomas Brandom, Dr. Jason Sides, Marvin Silliman, Betty Coleman

**Staff in Attendance:** Ashley Beard-Fosnow (Executive Director), Ashley Vogel (Office Coordinator), Caitlin Yager (Program Director), Clarice Britton (Director of Operations), Chrissy Sommer (Community Engagement Director), Erin Whitson (Archaeologist)

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|---|----------------------------|
| <b>I. Welcome Guests and Board Members and Staff</b>  | <b>Petra DeWitt</b>        |
| <b>II. Call to Order</b>  | <b>Petra DeWitt</b>        |
| <b>III. Roll Call</b>   | <b>Ashley Vogel</b>        |
| i. Ashley Vogel conducted roll call. A quorum was established.  |                            |
| <b>IV. Approve Agenda</b>   | <b>Petra DeWitt</b>        |
| i. <i>John Robinson III motioned to approve the agenda. Nicholas Inman seconded. All in favor. Agenda approved.</i>   |                            |
| <b>V. Approve March 21, 2023 Minutes</b>  | <b>Petra DeWitt</b>        |
| i. <i>Marci Bennett motioned to approve the March 21, 2023 minutes as presented. John Robinson III seconded. The minutes were approved.</i>   |                            |
| <b>VI. Executive Director Report</b>  | <b>Ashley Beard-Fosnow</b> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● We will be preparing for the future of Missouri Humanities in August during the Budget workshop. Ashley Beard-Fosnow discussed the staff focuses for 2023, our success, and what we're working on as an organization.</li><li>● We've hired Christina Highsmith to serve as our Marketing Coordinator. Erin Whitson will be leaving Missouri Humanities on July 15<sup>th</sup>. Ashley BF and Greg Wolk have been updating the Employee Handbook. She exchanged a vacation day from the day after Thanksgiving to Juneteenth. Marci Bennett recommended we invest in a legal review of the Handbook.</li><li>● Ashley BF proposed adding a 4-week paid parental leave policy. Betty Coleman asked if 6 weeks was possible. Ashley BF noted staff can use sick time and unpaid parental leave if 4 weeks is not enough.</li><li>● <i>Nicholas Inman motioned to approve Ashley Beard-Fosnow's Paid Parental Leave Policy request, pending legal review. Marci Bennett seconded. All in favor. Motion approved.</i></li><li>● Ashley Beard-Fosnow was contacted by the Missouri Community Service Commission to apply for a \$100,000 planning grant to hire a Researcher to train and engage AmeriCorps members to serve in cultural institutions in rural communities. The planning grant is not a commitment after 2024. We would send one AmeriCorps member to serve a</li></ul> |                            |



museum/historical society/etc. She clarified this is AmeriCorps State-Federal, **not** AmeriCorps Vista. Missouri Humanities would dictate the sites AmeriCorps members go to work.

- *John Robinson III motioned to allow the ED to move forward with the application process. Marvin Silliman seconded. All in favor. Motion approved.*

#### **i. Operations Update**

**Clarice Britton**

- Clarice Britton brought a Final Report from a kid's history camp in Presner, Missouri. It has letters to their legislator, the 501c3, and all other required documents.
- We incorporated Foundant. We increased the amount of grant funds given in 2018 but may need to do so again in the near future. The grants committee awarded 16 grants, and 7 were denied. We received grant documents dramatically faster than previously. Clarice distributed a list of grant-funded programs including dates and locations.

#### **ii. Digital Programming Update**

**Caitlin Yager**

- Our active digital programs include SS podcasts, videos, and Small-Town-Showcase. Each town gets a video and podcast. Voting is now underway for 2024 and you can now vote as many times as you want. We have 43 communities with an abundance of votes.
- Our videos have had 52,753 and 4,700 hours watched since January 2022. We're transitioning to asynchronous views and on-demand programming. Caitlin asked Board members to engage in the digital programs – subscribe to our channels and download podcasts. They can also write reviews of podcasts and videos.
- We've submitted 3 videos for regional Emmys. Caitlin is working on reaching out to other councils to discuss their numbers and measures of success. We have a site up for Humanities TV, it needs to be customized and with more content included.

### **VII. Committees**

**Petra DeWitt**

#### **i. Financials**

**Peter Hofherr and John Robinson III**

- Last month our ratio was at 6.15 and this month we are at 6.73, which has decreased since last year but is still above "1." We have a good ability to pay our liabilities. Our NEH Grant Receivable has dropped from \$1.2 million last year to \$993k this year.
- The Edward Jones Investment account started 5 years ago. Our balance has gone up \$5,500 in the last month and now stands at \$551k. Marvin Silliman, Peter Hofherr, and John Robinson III created a draft investment policy. It's been sent to Ashley BF, Charity CFO, Anders CPA, and John Caruso to ensure the language is appropriate.
- Program expenses are 78% of all of our expenses. Ashley BF would prefer this number to be over 80%. This month's expenses were an outlier. General expenses are down. We accrue the Missouri Humanities Council Trust on July 1.
- Ashley BF and Clarice meet regularly with the Charity CFO to discuss grant numbers. Because of Covid, some organizations applied for extensions. There is a penalty of not being allowed to apply for a year if grantees do not complete their reporting. Communities often cannot pay for their programs upfront to be reimbursed, though this has been considered by the grants committee. We rarely have to cancel the final 20%.



- Ashley BF is satisfied with our relationship with the Charity CFO. Peter thinks it'd be beneficial to create a standard for how many working business days until statements come out and how many business days until year-end documents are released.
- *Marci Bennett moved to accept the May 2023 Financials report. Thomas Brandom seconded. All in favor. The May 2023 Financials report was approved.*

## **ii. Bylaws**

**Marilynn Bradford and John Robinson III**

- The committee reviewed the points asked to be retouched upon at the last Board meeting. Thomas Brandom handed out a memo regarding the Bylaws. He pointed to section 4.5 noting Board Chair terms and serving until replacements are appointed.
- Marilynn Bradford directed Thomas to the Missouri Statutes under which we qualify as a 501c3. There is also a line in the Bylaws stating that if the number of Board members drops below 12, the Chair will call an emergency meeting.
- *Trish Erzfeld motioned to approve the Bylaws. Betty Coleman seconded. Nicholas Inman, John Robinson III, Sudarsan Kant, Marilynn Bradford, and Marci Bennett were in favor. Thomas Brandom and Marvin Silliman opposed. The motion carried and the Bylaws were approved as amended.*

## **iii. Policy**

**Thomas Brandom**

- Board nominations now need to go through Board or Staff members. The Executive Committee will review those who were/were not recommended by the Executive Director. Then members are brought to the full Board. Their term does not start until November.
- *Thomas Brandom motioned to approve the Board Nomination Policy. Trish Erzfeld seconded. All in favor. The Board Nomination Policy was approved.*
- Chairperson DeWitt noted the Policy Committee is being maintained to address other policies as well.

## **iv. Grants**

**Betty Coleman**

- This year we had \$550,000 for grants. It was great working with Foundant. Betty noted there were some hiccups. We can make changes now because the process is over.
- One of our grantees sent a letter to a state representative. Clarice read this letter and noted she will send it to all the Board members. Foundant was able to find the grant with a simple search and showed every score, comment, etc. with ease.
- *Thomas Brandom motioned to accept the Grants report. John Robinson III seconded. All in favor. The Grants report was approved.*

## **v. Advocacy**

**Marci Bennett**

- We increased 516k dollars to our core budget, which brings us to \$2.1 million. We may need to look at who would serve on a Trust Fund Board. Marci suggested we consider some candidates for our Trust fund who may not be able to serve on our current Board. Peter recommended including Kyna in this process.
- Chrissy Sommers discussed reaching out to legislators. Packets were distributed noting legislative assignments/addresses, notecards, envelopes, and stamps. Every Board member



has 6 legislators to contact by July 1st. Marci requested Board members let her know when they've completed them.

- Ashley BF provided a list of what organizations will receive funding from the Missouri Humanities Council Trust Fund. \$2 million will come to MH.
- Peter suggested Representative Riggs be considered for an Advocacy award at the Gala due to his advocacy work on our behalf. Marci agreed with this recommendation.

**vi. Soul of the State Initiative**

**Jason Sides**

- The survey is in motion. Jason Sides has been finding partners to establish focus groups and reaching out to universities to minimize the cost to us. There is coverage across every congressional district. He's been reaching out to universities with large populations of underrepresented communities. The main cost is providing opportunities for students to interact with the Humanities Council, such as producing Magazine or Facebook content.

**vii. Heartland Book Festival**

**Nicholas Inman**

- Nicholas Inman handed out flyers for the Heartland Book Festival. We will be participating in the National Book Festival again this year. Lisa Carrico and Maya Kucij will be representing our Center for the Book committee. We have chosen 2 books to be represented: Colter Jackson's *The Rhino Suit* and Vivian Gibson's *The Last Children of Mill Creek*.
- Dates: October 6th and 7th. The programming schedule and the website are essentially complete. They're planning for a July 1st release. The MO Arts Council would like for us to help introduce the new Poet Laureate at the Book Festival.

**viii. MObmentum Gala**

**Thomas Brandom**

- Each Board member received an invitation to mail out in their packet. Claire has been reaching out to sponsors and we will have a formal push for sponsors through email and mail. Entertainment by the Saint Boogie Brass Band. We are selling individual tickets (\$75) and group tickets (\$325 / 5). We will be collecting items for the silent auction and are looking into a new online software system.
- Chairperson DeWitt requested staff to set up a hotel for the Gala meeting.

**VIII. Old Business**

**Petra DeWitt**

**IX. New Business**

**Petra DeWitt**

**xi. Skills Matrix**

- Ashley BF went through the results of the skills survey that all Board members had previously filled out. She discussed current skill sets and gaps in skills, location, and diversity.

**xii. Board Candidates**

**Ashley Beard-Fosnow**

- Ashley BF interviewed each potential Board candidate (Dr. Juan Meraz and George Pettigrew) and evaluated them based on a rubric. Background checks were obtained and both candidates had no criminal convictions or offenses.



- *Marci Bennett motioned to bring the two recommended candidates onto the board. Thomas Brandom seconded. All in favor. Motion Approved. Dr. Juan Meraz and George Pettigrew were accepted to the Board.*

**X. Adjourn**

**Petra DeWitt**

*Betty Coleman motioned to adjourn. John Robinson III seconded. All in favor.*

The meeting adjourned at 12:38 PM.

**Board Budget Workshop** – August 15, 2023 at the State Historical Society of Missouri (SHSMO)

**Next Board Meeting** – September 23, 2023 in Saint Louis before the MOmentum Gala.