



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2023

Southeast Missouri University

University Center – RedHawks Room (4th Floor)

One University Plaza, MS 1200

Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

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

Board Members in Attendance: Trish Erzfeld (Chairperson), Jason Sides (Vice Chair), John Robinson III, Juan Meraz, Betty Coleman, Nicholas Inman (Secretary), Marci Bennett, Marilynn Bradford

Board Members Absent: George Pettigrew, Peter Hofherr, Sudarsan Kant

Staff Members in Attendance: Ashley Beard-Fosnow (Executive Director), Ashley Vogel (Office Coordinator), Michael Saldivar (Cinematographer), Claire Bruntrager (Director of Development)

- I. Welcome **Trish Erzfeld**
- II. Call to Order **Trish Erzfeld**
 - Roll Call **Ashley Vogel**
 - *Ashley Vogel took roll call. A quorum was established.*
- III. Approve Agenda **Trish Erzfeld**
 - *Chairperson Trish Erzfeld noted that there is no present reason for a closed session and suggested its removal from the agenda.*
 - *Juan Meraz motioned to remove closed session from Old Business. John Robinson seconded. All in favor. Motion approved. The Legal Issue for Closed Session was removed from the agenda.*
- IV. Approve September 23, 2023 Minutes **Trish Erzfeld**
 - *John Robinson motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Juan Meraz seconded. All in favor. Motion approved. The September 23, 2023 minutes were approved with no adjustments made.*
- V. Executive Director Report **Ashley Beard-Fosnow**
 - Christina Highsmith put together a Spotify-wrapped playlist that noted our successes throughout the year. We had a total of 8,085 people in attendance at in-person events. Total of 132 hours watched on Humanities TV. 5,719+ listened to our podcast. We gave our \$569,996.64 in mini and major grants. Our Horizons initiative serves 152,466+ Missourians.
 - 2024 Focuses:
 - Marketing
 - Missouri Marvels (2024 Signature Series) considers the state's role in the intricate relationship between the humanities, science, and discovery, and the human experience.



- Ashley Beard-Fosnow presented an outline of upcoming Signature Series events. She passed out a 1-page flier of all of our major programs with descriptions.
 - Private Fundraising
- We're planning to recruit development-focused board-meetings, expand the gala, and launch board-focused fundraisers. Ashley BF passed around a clipboard for Board members to sign up to host and schedule fundraisers. She also presented the Board with an Ad sheet noting different types of sponsorships that organizations and individuals can purchase.
- Michael Saldivar suggested adding Walmart and their foundation to the sponsor target for Small Town Showcase.
- Marilynn Bradford noted Lincoln University and Michael suggested Ampex for targets for H-TV. Marci Bennett suggested UMKC and Southwest Missouri State as we've provided them grants previously.
 - Films
 - AmeriCorps
- Ashley BF presented the current tactics and goals for the AmeriCorps program. Chris Kempke is an internal hire and promotion and is excited to lead this program when it starts in January.
 - We are going to keep pushing for fundraising, magazine growth, memberships, constant contact list, and H-Tv subscribers.
- Magazine Update **Ashley Vogel**
 - Ashley Vogel presented on *Missouri Humanities* magazine. She noted the general themes, outlines, and upcoming issues and their focuses. She discussed the current mailing list and numbers of submissions, as well as future goals for improvement. She encouraged Board members to contribute to the magazine.
 - Marci Bennett suggested adding Legislators to the mailing list. Ashley BF noted we will hand-deliver these magazines on Advocacy Day. Chairperson Erzfeld agrees with Marci about sending this to their home address where they don't feel as if they're being sold something. Marci believes there is a whole list of lawmaker addresses somewhere online.
 - John Robinson suggested sending magazines to libraries. We can potentially work with the state library and have them distribute copies within their network.
- Fundraising Update **Claire Bruntrager**
 - We are trying to increase our private fundraising and are currently doing a planned giving push. Claire presented a PowerPoint which is available online should Board members want to review the materials. Any gifts need to be approved through the Board. August is national Make a Will month, and Claire will send out a few eblasts and mailer campaigns then. Claire encouraged the Board to look at the planned gift materials online and consider making one.
 - Nicholas Inman has found success in building a society around planned giving and making formal and VIP offerings to those who contribute planned gifts.



- HTV Update

Michael Saldivar

- Michael helps with films, podcasts and producing H-Tv. He presented a video on films. Looking into the future, we have H-Tv, which is now on Roku, Fire TV, Apple, and Google Play apps. He noted we have a lot more retention on H-TV videos than on social media platforms. We are connecting with new filmmakers, new applicants for grantees, and new demographics wanting to engage with our content. We are planning on pushing this out with marketing efforts
- Michael is looking for films across the state- documentaries or story-based videos. The Board was encouraged to download the H-Tv app and create an account.
- Marilynn Bradford asked if Michael reached out to teachers to see if they would like to use any of these videos for teaching.
- The biggest obstacle is convincing filmmakers to let us have their films. They've been working with the Missouri Film Commission to create verbiage for reaching out to filmmakers. We are currently targeting films that are existing or new projects funded through the non-profit sector.

V. Committees –

Trish Erzfeld

i. Grants

Betty Coleman

- Betty Coleman went over the highlights of the November grants. We had 19 mini grant applications. They requested ~\$44k. Of the 19 requests, 5 were incomplete with blank budget pages and 1 page that did not include how they plan on using the money. 10 were first time applicants, and 6 had never received an award.
- 9 applications were fully funded, 1 was partially funded, and 9 were rejected.
- In the Executive Committee meeting, permission was granted to increase mini grant funding to \$5k and major grant funding to \$15k.
- Ashley BF presented a list of subawards and their locations for Board members to attend should they have the time and interest.

- Advocacy

Marci Bennett

- We have Advocacy Day scheduled for March 26, 2024.
- Ashley BF noted we should consider George Pettigrew and Sudarsan Kant for the Advocacy Committee. Ashley BF and/or Marci will send an invitation to them to discuss what's involved.

ii. Finance

John Robinson

a. Financial Report

John Robinson

- Cash balance at the end of our Fiscal Year was \$1,062,009. Edward Jones Investment account is \$537,515. The grants payable balance was \$242,516. The current ratio is 6.83. Anything over 1 is good, anything over 5 is really good. Total operating revenue for the month of October was \$3,780. YTD Operating Revenue was \$3,317,008. YTD Operating Expenses were \$2,216,946 with programming being 81% of expenses for the calendar year.



- John Robinson provided updates on the investment policy, which has been in draft form for a few months.
- Hopefully, at the March board meeting the investment policy will be brought up for approval.
- Chairperson Erzfeld announced that Peter Hofherr has stepped down as Treasurer and Finance Chair. John Robinson has taken over in his absence.
- Chairperson Erzfeld appointed John Robinson to the Missouri Humanities Council Trust Fund.
- Soul of the State Initiative
 - **Jason Sides**
 - Jason Sides is conducting focus groups at SEMO sometime between March and April. Jason noted that everything seems to be going well, though he is concerned about maneuvering the smaller schools that may not have the infrastructure and systems in place to make the process seamless.
 - Book Festival
 - **Nicholas Inman**
 - The Inaugural Heartland Book Festival was a great success. We had 2,181 people attend with 30 vendors and 23 sessions. He commended Lisa Carrico and the Missouri Center for the Book Planning Committee. The MC4TB's first meeting is January the 10th. They will be attempting to expand this program across the state.

VII. Old Business

Trish Erzfeld

~~i. Legal Issue for Closed Session* Ashley Beard-Fosnow~~

VII. New Business

Trish Erzfeld

i. Review Board Nominations **Ashley Beard-Fosnow**

- We received two nominations for Board service:
 - **Donn Herring:** lives in Missouri and is experienced in gift giving. He lives in St. Charles and is an attorney. He was nominated by Laura Dierberg-Ayers, a former Board member.
 - **Alicia Starr:** lives in the KC area and has a background in teaching K-12. She has personal financials to give and relationships to donors with expertise in fundraising.
- Ashley BF ran background checks on both nominees and neither had any findings. We currently have 11 directors on our Board, the recommended number according to our Bylaws is 12. Ashley BF has met both nominees and they both meet the qualifications outlined in our criteria. They were both nice people with a passion for the humanities, Ashley BF does not believe either has a personal, vested interest for joining.



- Betty and Chairperson Erzfeld believe it might be best to accept one nominee and to continue looking for more Board members with skills in fundraising.
- Jason Sides asked which two candidates would be a better fit in terms of personality and board cohesion. Ashley BF noted they would both be fine. They both bring valuable skills that fill gaps in this Board. Jason believes Donn Herring's legal background makes him an asset.
- *Marci Bennett motioned to bring Alicia Starr onto the Board. Marilyn Bradford seconded. The following voted in the affirmative: Trish Erzfeld, Nicholas Inman, Marilyn Bradford, Marci Bennett, Betty Coleman, John Robinson, Juan Meraz. Jason Sides opposed. Motion carried. Alicia Starr was nominated to join the Board of Directors.*
- A vote was needed to re-elect Sudarsan Kant and Jason Sides to a second term.
 - *John Robinson motioned to re-elect Sudarsan Kant and Jason Sides to a second term. Juan Meraz seconded. All in favor. Motion approved. Sudarsan Kant and Jason Sides will both serve second terms.*

VIII. Adjourn

Trish Erzfeld

I. John Robinson motioned to adjourn. Jason Sides seconded. All in favor. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Next Board Meeting – March 26, 2024 in Jefferson City (Advocacy Day)

Missouri Humanities is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: 12.9.23 Board of Directors Meeting

Time: Dec 9, 2023 10:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88966313202?pwd=ODU1dXU4cFlmY0pOd29EM01XaFIUT09>

Meeting ID: 889 6631 3202

Passcode: 239877