



## **Minutes**

**Thursday, Oct. 16, 2025**

**Business Meeting: 8:30 am**

**Commissioners present:** Kerry Savage, Randall Melton, Libby Provost, Larry Landis (HECC), Maureen Flanagan Battistella, Katee Withee, Michelle Woodard (Travel Oregon),

**Staff present:** Katie Henry

**Public present:** Daniel Santos, Johnny Edwards, Tyler Nizer

### **1. Commission Business**

a) Welcome and Introductions (Information)

b) Approval of Agenda (**Action**)

Katie Henry asked to move approval of July meeting minutes to the January meeting.

Commissioner Provost moved to approve agenda with stated amendments, Commissioner Melton seconded, Commissioner Flanagan Battistella, Withee, Provost, Savage, Melton voted in favor, none opposed, motion passes.

~~e) Approval of July 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes (**Action**)~~

This agenda item was moved to the January meeting.

**2. Public Comment:** No public comment made.

### **3. Oregon Heritage Staff Update**

Commission Coordinator Katie Henry will provide brief updates to the Commission related to the agency and programs including the following:

Katie Henry provided update on the FY26 OCT partner grant projects. Final amount \$92,292. We budgeted for 85,000.

Regarding the 250<sup>th</sup> project, Henry relayed plans to work with a consultant to develop a toolkit that helps organizations identify, think about, and leverage anniversary to help move organization goals forward. This will be designed to be broad for local, state, and national anniversaries. Henry discussed another possible additional 250<sup>th</sup> related project if money allows, to develop a communication campaign using data and heritage value statements collected over the past few years to run on communications platforms. Commissioner Landis emphasized highlighting the Heritage All-Star communities and Advisory Commissioner Woodard suggested that videos be shorter rather than longer and that Travel Oregon may be able to help promote them.

Henry's update on the NAGPRA for small organizations workshop included confirmation that LCIS staff and NAGRPA coordinators from OSU and PSU have committed to developing this workshop

that will develop guidance for small organizations working with Tribes on NAGPRA repatriation of Tribal ancestors and belongings. The intent is to also have a workshop at the Heritage Conference. Budget is still being determined.

The Covered Bridge proposed project will look to update and expansion on a previous report from the 1989. We are looking to IPRE first as a consultant but will approach others if that does not work. Commissioner Provost asked about the scope of the 1989 ODOT report, Henry responded with it focusing on survey, mentioning tourism, and making recommendations to the legislature for funding, the goal of this report is to expand on heritage tourism analytics and community identity assests and value and have broader recommendations beyond a legislative request given current funding constraints. Commission Landis commented on loss in Benton County and suggested Northwest Digital Heritage considering a “Covered Bridge” topic highlight.

Henry updated the Commission on the Heritage Plan survey and input sessions. The Commissions will have an input session the following day during the joint meeting. The statewide partners and service organizations input session went well with a lot of engagement, the heritage staff input session happened during the retreat and went well with the consultants leading it, continuing to have in person discussions scheduled for local, regional groups. Virtual sessions have been scheduled. Commissioner Flanagan Battistella asked about having a library specific session. The general public survey closes on Oct. 27 and Henry asked Commissioners to continue to push it out any way they can.

Henry reminded the Commission that Jan. 2026 is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Heritage Commission meeting and asked if the Commission wants to highlight the anniversary. Ideas included incorporating it into the conference in different ways or a blog post referencing a previous 20 year anniversary blog post with commission highlights since then, highlighting designations that have happened in recent years.

#### **4. Governor’s Task Force on Oregon Tribal Cultural Items**

Task Force Co-Chair Daniel Santos presented to the Commission the work of the Task Force in survey and inventory of Tribal Cultural Items held by State Agencies and plans to extend this work to other institutions such as museums, school districts, cities, and counties

Commissioner Flanagan Battistella asked about Tribal items that are a part of Federal agency holdings, Daniel Santos responded with that they are in communication with Federal colleagues.

The Taskforce will be presenting at the Heritage Conference in April.

Commissioner Provost requested that the Taskforce keep the Commission informed in case there are ways that the Commission can help with the efforts.

Advisory Commissioner Landis asked Katie Henry if Oregon Heritage grants can go towards this. Henry discussed that even prior to this taskforce work, inventory was rising to the top as a priority and we are working on tools to help support inventory. Henry also suggested looking at Oregon Cultural Trust statewide partner funds to help support the unfundated aspects of the mandate.

Commissioner Melton asked if the reports will be shared with Tribal leaders. Daniel Santos said the reports go to the Governor, Legislative Commission on Indian Services, and Tribes.

Commissioner asked about Tribes that aren’t in Oregon such as Nez Perce. Santos said that currently the work is with the nine Federally recognized Tribes in Oregon.

Commissioner Melton expressed concern about separating this work from NAGPRA.

Commissioner Flanagan Battistella mentioned the Finding Aid approach to inventory she is taking with organizations in Southern Oregon.

## **5. Collection Inventory Resource Development**

Henry provided this update in the Taskforce conversation from above.

## **6. Break - Great Shakeout!**

The Commission meeting had a brief break to participate in the Shakeout.

## **7. Oregon Historical Society Ethnic Studies Curriculum & Resources**

Oregon Historical Society (OHS) Senior Education Manager Katie Pearson provided an overview of OHS's new curriculum and educator resources in response to the adoption of the 2024 Oregon Social Science Standards, which integrate with Ethnic Studies, Tribal History/Shared History, Holocaust and Other Genocides Learning Concepts, and Civics requirements. These standards are required to be implemented in the 2026 school year.

## **8. Commissioner Reports**

- Commissioner Landis reported that the Oregon Digital Newspaper Program received notification of NEH funding but not an official letter which may be impacted by the federal shutdown but the advisory board still continues to meet. Oregon is Archives month and Universities, State Archives, and local municipal archives have engagement activities.
- Commissioner Woodard reported that the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center had received its one millionth visitor and that Oregon is the first state to be accessibility verified through Wheel the World.
- Commissioner Provost reported that the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Warm Springs Community Action Team are working on turning the historic commissary building into a business incubator and retail spaces and have received a large grant from the State of Oregon to do this work.
- Commissioner Flanagan Battistella reported the Josephine Community Library system has been struggling to renew their lease with the County Commissioners and now it requires just cause rather than no cause for eviction. Working with several communities where FEMA grants have been withdrawn which is having severe impacts on infrastructure. UO Newspaper project has an NEH grant for a newspaper project and she has compiled data based on the number of pages digitized and Chemawa American is fully digitized.
- Commissioner Melton reported that the Tamastlikt will be hosting the traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall and federal impacts are also felt in the area at the Museum and with partners.
- Commissioner Savage reported that he participated in a mid-century modern tour in the local area and that the shutdown is impacting his region and a local volunteer who did a lot of heritage related work passed away.
- Commissioner Withee reported that community is impacted by federal funding uncertainty.

## **9. Individual Business Meeting Adjourned 11:30am**

**Joint Meeting with SACHP, OCHC, HARC, & OHC begins, Oct. 16 at 12:30**

1. Lunch presentation

Kimberli Fitzgerald with the City of Salem Historic Preservation Program presented on how the City of Salem has leveraged different Oregon Heritage programs to accomplish goals related to heritage preservation in Salem.

2. Commissions and Committees participated in local tours and meeting adjourned until the next morning.

**Oct. 17 8:00 am, joint meeting resumed.**

**10. Commission Business**

- a) Welcome and Introductions
- b) Welcome from Brian Hodson, Mayor, and Oregon Heritage staff

**11. Public Comment** No public comment made

**12. Oregon Heritage Excellence Awards (Discussion) 8:45 – 9:05 (20 minutes)**

Katie Henry, Oregon Heritage Commission coordinator, discussed the Excellence Awards and facilitated a brainstorm on award worthy people, projects, organizations across the state.

**13. Nomination (Action) 9:05 – 9:50 (45 minutes)**

The State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation reviewed a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for the Arthur Devers House in Portland, Multnomah County.

**14. Oregon Historic Preservation Plan Update**

Ian Johnson will presented a plan update

**15. Oregon Heritage Plan**

Kearns and West Consultants presented and facilitated a discussion to help inform the 2026 update to the Oregon Heritage Plan.

Lunch presentation included a presentation by the Compliance staff.

**16. American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)–**

AASLH’s Vice President of Research and Engagement John Garrison Marks presented on [national 250<sup>th</sup> efforts](#), AASLH [research priorities](#), and [advocacy related tools and resources](#) based on recent [strategic plan update](#).

**17. Special Assessment Property Tax Program**

Staff member Joy Sears presented on the changes to the special assessment property tax program.

**18. Oregon Cultural Trust (Discussion) 2:15 – 2:45 (30 minutes)**

Oregon Cultural Trust board and staff shared information about the trust.

**19. Closing remarks by staff**

**20. Meeting adjourned at 3pm**