

Oregon Heritage Commission

Jan. 25, 2021, 9a.m.--- APPROVED MINUTES

Commissioners: Chelsea Rose, Rosemary Johnson, Kerry Savage, Anne LeVant Prah, Laura Ferguson, Kimberly Moreland, Matias Trejo De Dios, Todd Kepple, Mary McRobinson, Larry Landis, Michelle Woodard, Chrissy Curran, Kerry Tymchuk

Staff: Katie Henry, Kuri Gill

Public: none

1) **Call to Order (9:00 a.m.)** Chelsea Rose

2) **Introductions** All

3) **Approval of Agenda** All

LeVant Prah moved to approve the agenda. Moreland seconded; approved.

4) **Approval of Minutes Nov. 2** All

Moreland moved to approved the Nov. 2 minutes. Ferguson seconded; approved.

5) **Public Comment**

None

6) **Oregon Heritage Update** Katie Henry

Henry updated the commissioners on the following:

- **Mentorcorps** – A consultant was hired to revamp the mentorcorps processes and procedures. They will transition a lot of the intake and reporting to an online process through Smartsheets. She started in January and will be done by the end of March before Henry goes on maternity leave. Henry will implement the new changes once back from leave.
- **Awards** – Nominations closed Jan. 14 with 10 nominations submitted. Committee is meeting to review and choose awardees. Videos will be produced by the same company that is doing the tech for the summit.
- **2021 Summit** – We have finalized the program with panels on the first day responding to questions about successes and challenges and a workshop on the second day led by Community Toolbox through University of Kansas.
- **Digitization Hub** – will be including staff recommendations for this project in the next round of Oregon Cultural Trust Funds. Trying to give ourselves flexibility with what we recommend given that we are unsure what the COVID situation looks like next year. Henry continues to meet with the hub group on a monthly basis.

- **Oregon Heritage Staffing** – John Pouley is the new State Archaeologist after a thorough process of multiple interviews and a public forum with input from agencies, tribes, and other interested parties. Hiring process will begin for John’s previous position.
- **Grant Update** – All grants, with the exception of the Oregon Main Street Grant, will open next year but we won’t know how much in each grant program until February.
- **Disaster Update** – roll out of the pilot project and then had several workshops around the pilot project. Gill has had requests to present to OEM and DLCDC on this project. Looking to submit the project for awards. Gill and Henry are using the pilot process to partner with State Library of Oregon and State Archives to develop a disaster preparedness response for heritage organizations at the state level.

Rose inquired about the agency budget status and Henry responded with the fact that is a bit wait and see with lottery forecasts. OPRD is still doing a planning process across all of the divisions and that is still going on.

7) Oregon Cultural Trust Funds Update Katie Henry

Henry updated the commission on the following changes to the current year of Oregon Cultural Trust Funds:

- Due to COVID-19 and the wildfires we will not be doing the application process for partner organizations.
- After staff discussions we will be using some of that money for the MentorCorps revamp and the rest of the money will go towards a lottery of NAO memberships for heritage organizations. There was discussion among staff about grants but seeing how small business grants have been rolling out and the issues with first come first serve, we decided against them. Especially not knowing exactly what kind of grant would helpful and not being about to have criteria when choosing recipients.

Henry asked for volunteers to be on the FY 22 Oregon Cultural Trust Funds grant and Moreland, LeVant Prael, McRobinson, and Landis volunteered.

8) Break

9) COVID-19 Survey #1 Results and Discussion Katie Henry

Henry went over the timeline of the COVID-19 Surveys for heritage organizations:

- Survey #1 – went out in Nov. to capture March ’20-Oct. ’20 information and these results are being discussed today.
- Survey #2 will go out in March to capture Nov. ’20-Feb. ’21 data
- Survey #3 will go out in July to capture March ’21-June ’21 data

Henry reminded the commission that the goals of the survey are to understand the ongoing impact, provide information to our partners for advocacy efforts and funding, determine gaps for heritage orgs. in providing technical assistance, and inform long-term disaster response planning.

Some of the key results are as follows:

- 43 respondents in 33 different zip codes across the state with representation in different heritage organizations across the spectrum.
- Most of the respondents had a pre-COVID budget between \$50,000-99,000
- Total estimated revenue loss for the period this survey covers is \$3,789,576
- Many of the respondents applied and received an Oregon Cultural Trust grant in response to COVID impact.
- One of the grants that were applied for by several organizations but had a low rate of receiving it was the Oregon Community Foundation grant so there is some opportunity there for us to connect with OCF and see what the barriers are for heritage organizations
- Several organization applied for and received a PPP loan.
- Related to staff impact, pre-pandemic 67% of respondents had paid staff and 30% were volunteer run, 44% had staff layoffs, furloughs or reduced hours during the period of the survey, 19% of those with paid staff indicated no staffing changes.
- 390 programs were cancelled during the period of the survey
- When asked what do you project will happened to your org. in 3 months should no other COVID-19 financial assistance be offered, 32% said there would be no change and 65% said layoffs, furloughs, reduction of services, temporary closure and permanent closure were possible.

Moreland inquired about how we can make Oregon heritage organizations more aware of the national funding opportunities, IMLS, NEH, NEA, and how to apply for them. Gill mentioned that she had talked to the State Library of Oregon about the IMLS funds and she mentioned that the priority of those funds were very specific and not as relevant to museums. Gill also mentioned that the NEH funds were distributed through Oregon Humanities so we need to continue to do outreach with NEH on behalf of heritage organizations and communicate to heritage organizations these opportunities. Landis would like to figure out a way to increase higher education institutions response to the surveys. McRobinson brought up working with NW Archivists and other groups for outreach regarding the survey.

Johnson brought up the issue of volunteer run organizations not being eligible for much of the COVID funding. Henry mentioned that this has been brought up by other all volunteer orgs.

Rose wondered if organizations were able to draw a larger audience and/or new demographics through online programs.

Woodard mentioned seeing similar survey fatigue happening with the surveys Travel Oregon is putting out. Appreciates hearing the information about volunteer run orgs. encountering barriers to funding and thanked staff for work on the survey and suggested a forum or webinar where orgs. can share their success with others.

Moreland wanted to know if we could find out who these organizations are serving.

Ferguson suggested encouraging people to fill out the full survey but if they can't spend the time, having 5 key questions that they definitely answer. Kepple emphasized capacity being an issue in eastern Oregon where they don't have a lot of orgs. with staff.

McRobinson suggested having a pdf available to look at before people fill out the survey. Henry will look into that but the new smartsheets platform may make that difficult.

Summary of the COVID-19 Survey #1 for Heritage Organizations can be found [here](#).

10) Volunteer Study Results

Kuri Gill

Gill went over the results of the Volunteer Study results conducted by PSU. Key messages included: people want to connect to their community, people share their time and skills with mission they care about, volunteers want organizations to function effectively, heritage organizations provide volunteers with an enhanced sense of community and belonging to place and a uniquely localized heritage preservation experience, volunteers offer mission success and time, advocacy, promotion and skills.

Some key data includes the following:

- Not all organization track volunteer data
- Of the 69 that did track hours had 321,863 hours which totals \$8,493,965 base on Independent Sector rate
- Nearly 1/3 of the organizations are all volunteer
- 71% of the orgs. have a budget under \$250,000
- Volunteers donated personally to the organization a total of \$875,682.
- 81% of organizations operations would be compromised without their volunteers
- Only 36% of the orgs have a designated volunteer coord.
- Many of the barriers to volunteering can be removed with coordination and support.

Full results of the study can be found [here](#).

Rose suggested having these results ready for when organizations are trying to build back up volunteer support after COVID.

11) Fieldwork reports by Commissioners

All

LeVant Prahl: Have made gift packages and delivered to volunteers and have 45 volunteers doing a COVID oral history project. Also having volunteers transcribing documents remotely.

Rose: working the McKey Bridge historical society and also working with director of Oregon Black Pioneers and doing interpretive panels near Ben Johnson Mountain.

Landis: working on a project to restore some benches on campus and relocating them. Worked on a video for MLK day and is a tour of places on campus associated with Black activism.

Moreland: Oregon Black Pioneers director is working on rebranding of the org. and a virtual museum. Featured in Restore Oregon field notes.

Woodard: Travel Oregon completed a survey of their stakeholders. Noted they did demographics and had zero black respondents which helped them realize they need to do more targeted outreach. Metro area is having more tourism related impact related to COVID than some other areas in the state. Museums ranked third on the list for most impacted within tourism. Opening a second round of funding in March. Planning RDMO budgets and holding regional meetings across the state.

Johnson: noted that they keep bouncing in and out of county risk categories so museums are open and closed then open, etc. museums are doing digitization projects.

McRobinson: thanked everyone for the welcome and recognized Layne Sawyer for her service in the archives position.

Trejo de Dios: had a meeting with OHS regarding research of the origins of Hispanic roots of Oregon and the name of Oregon. working on a set of recommendations on Spanish language outreach and inclusion.

Kepple: Museum was directed by county commissioners to stay open during state shutdown mandate.

Curran: updated commission on legislative bills related to Oregon Heritage including the Special assessment program. Historic Cemeteries bill will realign the date at 75 years of age rather than a static date. Moving ahead with African American MPD and also a WPA and PWA MPD. Compliance and Archaeology are working on fire recovery efforts.

Ferguson: High Desert museum has their outdoor spaces open, reduced admission. Doing virtual programs and reaching folks they have not previously reached.

12) Adjournment (12:07pm)

Next Meeting

June 7, Virtual Meeting