

# Oregon Heritage Commission

9 a.m. Monday, January 22, 2018  
Nordic Northwest at Nordia House, Conference Room

## Minutes

**Commissioners:** Todd Kepple, Eric Martin, Mari Lou Diamond, Laura Ferguson, Chelsea Rose, Matias Trejo de Dios, Layne Sawyer, Chrissy Curran, Andrea Morgan (phone)

**Staff:** Beth Dehn, Kuri Gill

**Public:** Sandra Nelson Miller (Nordic Northwest), Ross Fogelquist (Swedish League), Dave Alford, Judy

1. **Call to Order (9:00 a.m.)** Todd Kepple

2. **Introductions** All

3. **Approval of Agenda (9:05)** All  
Rose motioned for the agenda to be approved. Ferguson seconded, approved.

4. **Approval of Minutes of November 6, 2017** Todd Kepple  
Trejo de Dios motioned for the November 6 Minutes to be approved. Diamond seconded, approved.

5. **Public Comments (9:10)**  
Four members of the public, all associated with Nordic Northwest, introduced themselves and stated that they were pleased to host the Heritage Commission Meeting in their facility.

6. **Oregon Heritage Tradition (9:25)** Beth Dehn & Committee  
Dehn and Committee presented information on the University of Oregon Mother's Day Powwow held by the Native American Student Union. The Powwow is a three day event organized by student volunteers that creates Native community on campus. The Powwow will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> year this May. Motion to designate the U of O's Oregon's Mother's Day Powwow as an Oregon Heritage Tradition by Ferguson. Approved by Diamond. Unanimous.

Martin questioned whether the mere presence of vendors would count as a participatory activity in future applications. Commissioners felt the presence of vendors doesn't suffice participation, but in addition to other participatory activities, adds to public participation.

Dehn presented information about the Portland Midsummer Festival. The Festival has been in existence since 1928 and will celebrate its 90<sup>th</sup> year this June. The day-long event includes music, dance performances, a midsummer pole, vendors, and traditional Scandinavian foods. Activities reinforce Nordic identity and culture. It is open to the public for a nominal fee.

The committee discussed the criteria for free or paid admission. Trejo de Dios noted that many events with admission become unaffordable for families. Ferguson noted that these events cost a lot of money to run and funds do go to support local musicians/performers/etc... Commissioners will discuss this idea in more detail in the future.

Martin motioned for the Portland Midsummer Festival to be designated an Oregon Heritage Tradition. Seconded by Diamond. Unanimous.

**Follow-up:** Dehn will contact groups to arrange communications and presentations.

**7. Statewide Celebration (9:45)**

Beth Dehn & Committee

Dehn reported on the follow-up from the 175<sup>th</sup> Oregon Trail Anniversary Celebration application. Staff submitted an OPRD Legislative Concept Request to change the word “Celebration” to “Commemoration” in statute 358.595 (2)(f). The current language used in statute 358.595(2)(f) places the Heritage Commission in the position of making judgments about the impact of events and, ultimately, limits the Commission’s ability to draw public attention and educational opportunities to a diverse array of statewide heritage events. The proposed change will take into account multiple perspectives of the impact of an historic event.

Dehn shared the timeline of OPRD’s Legislative Request process. By the spring of 2018 OPRD will determine whether to move the request forward in the February 2019 legislative session. Martin questioned if OPRD’s process could be speeded-up by commissioners approaching heritage-minded legislators. Curran noted that the current legislative session is a short session and proposals are already selected; therefore the OPRD process may be the most expeditious way forward. Curran noted that it is a new process for OPRD, but it appears promising. Gill noted that in once the process begins moving forward, more questions about criteria and rules will come to the surface. The Commission will need time to have criteria solidly built.

The Celebrations Committee then presented a draft of criteria and an application for this designation. Discussion about the criteria followed. Diamond suggested clarifying the benefits of the designation. Gill strongly suggested adding bullet points for clear measurables to Criteria 1 to define what constitutes a celebration for the whole state.

**Follow-up:** Committee will meet about discussed changes to criteria and application.

**8. Oregon Heritage Conference (10:30)**

Kuri Gill

Gill described current conference updates and showed schedule posted on the website. Gill highlighted the keynote speaker.

**9. Collections (10:40)**

Beth Dehn

Dehn reported that she met with Orbis Cascade Alliance, State Library of Oregon, and Washington Rural Heritage on current digitization efforts. Oregon Heritage will be distributing a Digital Collections Survey in February aimed at small-medium sized organizations to assess where organizations are in digitization efforts, what technical needs exist, and organizations’ interest in participating in statewide initiatives. Survey will close April 30, results reviewed Mid-May, and a final report made in June.

Sawyer commented that Orbis Cascade may not work with digitized objects, which is important for heritage organizations. Kepple stated that the introductory statement to the survey must be approachable so small organizations aren't intimidated. Martin asked if the Commission included digitization questions in the Vitality study and encouraged comparing results if questions allow. Sawyer asked how collaborative projects will be funded.

B. Spring Workshops- Not discussed.

**10. Nordia House Tour & Nordic Northwest Presentation (11:00) Sandra Miller**  
*(A working lunch will be provided to commissioners.)*

Nelson Miller provided a short tour of Nordia House and spoke about the organization's mission and goals. Following lunch Commissioners toured Fogelbo, a historic house on the property.

**11. Education (12:15 p.m.) Beth Dehn**

Dehn reported on the 2018 Oregon Heritage Fellows. The Fellows will present their projects at the Students Researching Oregon session of the Heritage Conference on April 13, 2018. They will be joined in the session by the Oregon Women's History Consortium Junior Fellow.

**12. Communications (12:20) Beth Dehn**

Dehn reported that staff is moving forward with the components of the Toolkit approved by the Commission from the FY 18 Cultural Trust Funds, with the exception of a tri-fold brochure. The brochure will be put on hold and created down the line to better respond to needs of heritage groups. Dehn also reported that she received a proposal from Full Focus Communications to gather stories to demonstrate the cultural value of heritage and create underlying messaging for the toolkit. The Communications Toolkit Committee requested more information about the proposal and how it fits the approved plans.

**Follow-up:** Communications Toolkit Committee will meet to review proposal and determine if it needs to be brought back to Commission as a whole.

**13. Cemetery Permit Legislation (12:30) Kuri Gill**

Gill reported that a new legislative process is in place to maintain and preserve cemeteries without an owner. This permit process will allow groups to clean and maintain cemeteries without penalty. While groups aren't necessarily penalized for doing this work, the legal gray area deters many from participating. The new permit process should encourage groups to step forward and follow preservation standards in their cleaning and landscaping. Permits must be resubmitted every year in order to track current contact information.

**14. Membership Update (12:55) Todd Kepple**

Kepple thanked Diamond for her service on the Commission and presented her with a certificate of appreciation. Kepple announced that two appointed positions are currently open. Commissioners suggested that an archivist or someone with marketing background would be a strategic fit. Heritage Conference is a good time to advertise these positions. Kepple also noted that Martin and Ostermiller will term off the Commission this summer.

**Follow-up:** Martin and Ostermiller will serve as the nominating committee to select a future vice chair to succeed Ostermiller. Dehn will post the Portland-based commissioner position.

**15. Reports by Commissioners (1:15)**

All

**Martin:** Described a recent visit to the Kennedy exhibit with a work colleague and the value of visiting a heritage exhibit or organization with someone you typically don't attend with for a new perspective. Martin encouraged commissioners to invite someone new on a heritage visit.

**Diamond:** Thanked everyone for her time on the Commission and will miss her time here. She hopes to connect with everyone moving forward.

**Ferguson:** No report

**Rose:** Shared that her partnership with Jefferson Radio Underground History is having their first live event on January 29. They hope to model this after History Pub, and the Radio station has committed to quarterly events. Rose also reported that she recently completed a month-long research trip to China and located the childhood home of an Oregon resident. This is a step forward for transnational research that connects Oregon to Southern China.

**Trejo de Dios:** No report.

**Sawyer:** Reported that Blue Book will highlight community traditions. Also, the Archives will host an exhibit in their gallery opening the first Monday of February that focuses on black history from 1840-1870. The exhibit includes original documents and images that are very compelling. A web version will be available.

**Curran:** Reported that OPRD has a few items they are working on during the current legislative session that include flexible fees. OPRD is also in the planning process for 2019. The Special Assessment Tax Benefit (1975) is due to sunset in 2020, so they are contemplating what it should look like moving forward. SHPO hired a new National Register Coordinator. SHPO continues to be challenged by some high profile National Register cases. Curran also reported that this is a busy time for Oregon Heritage because of the upcoming Heritage Conference and several grant cycles that are opening. She is pleased to see the completion of several Main Street projects come into the office after a three year cycle.

**Morgan:** Reported that the second draft of Social Studies standards will be available for review. All are invited to complete the survey and give feedback about the standards. A group of 29 educators from across the state and grade levels meet to review them as well. About 200 people commented on the first draft of the Standards.

**16. Next meeting locations (1:45)**

All

- A. April 11 in Bend: Liberty Theatre during the Oregon Heritage Conference
- B. July 30 in Astoria: Columbia River Maritime Museum
- C. October/November TBD: Klamath Falls

**17. Adjournment (2:00)**

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