

**ILLINOIS STATE MUSEUM
BOARD MEETING
November 9, 2020, 1 p.m.
Zoom Meeting**

Board Minutes

Attending: Officers: Chair Donna Sack, Vice Chair Lisa Yun Lee, Secretary Sarah Doherty; Board members: Tamira Brennan, Andrea Carlson, Graham Peck, Beth Shadur, Roger Taylor, and Nikhil Trivedi; Museum Society Board Chair Cinda Klickna; Museum Staff Members: Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko, Elizabeth Bazan, Karen Everingham, Dr. Brooke Morgan; Department of Natural Resources Representative Rachel Torbert and Attorney John Heidinger.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Donna welcomed attendees and the meeting commenced at 3:12 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Karen called the roll and a quorum was present.

III. Approval of the Minutes of September 21, 2020

The minutes were presented for approval. Lisa moved to approve the minutes, Beth seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. Orientation Pt 3

a) Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Overview – John Heidinger

John shared an overview of the FOIA statute 5ILCS 140 process with the Board. He noted the purpose of the act is to ensure the public has access to the records and decision-making process of the government. Public records include any documents pertaining to the transactions of government regardless of their form and are subject to FOIA. FOIA requires a response within 5 days of the receipt of the request. Agencies are required to justify any documents they may wish to be withheld or redacted under the exemptions that are enumerated within the legislation. This decision may be appealed by the requestor within 60 days. Request forms can be found on the DNR website.

Communication between board members should not include more than 3 persons or the communication will be considered an open meeting per the Open Meetings Act. Be thoughtful in what you include in emails and refrain from discussing board business between meetings.

b) Educational Programming – Elizabeth Bazan

Elizabeth shared an overview of the July reorganization of three departments including education, visitor services and security that were merged under the new department of Audience Engagement. The new department will also include volunteer functions (when we

are able to have them in the Museum again). The visitor services staff are charged with administering COVID protocols and orienting visitors. Public programs have shifted to online formats including virtual tours, panels, website pages and other online resources. Activity kits have been created for families to pick up to take part in the Super Saturday online program. The virtual programs are being recorded and also made available on demand.

School services educator Lorna Shuman has created a pre-k through 12th grade teacher advisory group including teachers from all across the state to learn what they need and how we can support their efforts in the classroom. We are looking to create resources that are applicable and accessible to students and teachers. We are providing a stipend to the teachers participating in the group. This effort has garnered considerable data and the teachers are pleased that we are asking them how we can assist. We will be following through based their input. Virtual field trips for each of the grade levels will be put together and tested this winter. They should be available next year. Teacher requests are being addressed while we develop more permanent resources.

Virtual programming is expected to continue for the foreseeable future and will continue to be useful post-COVID. We are working to ensure our programs are accessible with captions included and addressing DEAI objectives.

V. Museum Director's Report – Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko

Cinnamon reported that the Museum organizational chart is being reworked in light of the pandemic and budget pressures. Two of the leadership team positions, Director of Interpretation and Director of Collections and Research, will be announced very soon. The Operations Manager position has been reworked and posted through November 13th. The Visitor Services Manager position to guide and work with the frontline staff has been posted through November 30th in addition to a 6-month temporary guard position and a 60-day hire. The leadership team will be in place when the Director of Interpretation and Director of Collections and Research are hired. These individuals will attend Board meetings to keep the Board abreast of their activities as well. The Society has also posted the position of accountant. Donna noted that the staff challenges impact our capacity as well as working within a larger agency.

COVID numbers continue to rise and staff are working from home as they are able. Staff will not be idle, and they will have access to the building as needed. No in-person meetings are allowed. The Museum will continue to be open under the required protocols.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) in convening an agency wide DEAI (Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion) committee. DEAI is also fully embedded in the IDNR strategic plan. Cinnamon is co-chairing the committee with Chief of Staff Kristen DiCenso. The second phase of work at the Museum has been completed with Dina Bailey. Phase three is modest with one-on-one conversations and input from Dina on the Museum's strategic plan. Cinnamon noted she has seen growth in the staff and conversation shifts around DEAI.

NAGPRA contacts and consultations are ongoing with more than twenty letters sent and seven consultations planned. Brooke has been identified as the Museum's NAGPRA representative with Dickson Mounds Director Duane Esarey and Cinnamon rounding out the NAGPRA Committee. Eventually the Museum hopes to fund a full-time NAGPRA Coordinator as outlined in the strategic plan. The University of Illinois has enhanced its NAGPRA program and the Museum is meeting with them to establish good communications.

a) Strategic Plan

Cinnamon presented the revised strategic plan for the Board's consideration. Dina Bailey and the original strategic planning committee took part in the review of the plan. The revision includes an enhanced approach to DEAI, performance metrics, and focuses on six goals within an eighteen-month timeline. Goals and objectives achieved are highlighted in yellow and the plan should take us through April 2022, with a review in January of 2022. Upon approval, the DEAI component of the plan will kick off with the creation of a joint board and staff committee.

Lisa asked about the budget outlook for the Museum. Cinnamon reported there is reason for concern, but she has no definitive information at this time. She added that she hoped we wouldn't be considered for reductions due to our already limited budget and staffing shortfalls.

Roger asked for detail regarding parking at the Museum. Rachel said she spoke with the Secretary of State (SOS) regarding parking. SOS staff are going through the spots on the surface lot immediately west of the Museum to determine how many spaces might be available. The Museum has requested a total of ten.

Andrea asked how often NAGPRA is updated and when the Museum will be NAGPRA compliant. Brooke noted upon receiving materials the institution has two years to update its records. The Museum is currently caught up and in full compliance with the law, but that she hopes we will do better. She is working to establish a schedule for the Museum moving forward. She said there are open cases at the Museum that are being addressed. Cinnamon said 1,100 individuals at Dickson Mounds are being addressed first. The Museum holds roughly 7,000 individuals that need to be returned and that work will be pursued as quickly as possible. We are applying for a NAGPRA grant that is due in March with the funding to come that summer if awarded. We are also pursuing other resources to support this important work, including educating DNR leadership on NAGPRA to see what support the agency can provide. The hope is to return the individuals from Dickson Mounds within a couple of years, based on the current resources. Donna noted the NAGPRA assistant position will be critical to achieving these goals and that the state budget should support this work. Brooke noted that once the paperwork is submitted to NAGPRA they review it, updates are made, and other claims will be considered. Once the report is submitted the process usually takes about six months. No other institution has taken on the repatriation of such a large number of individuals.

The Board continued discussion of the strategic plan and its 18-month timeline. Beth moved to approve the revised strategic plan, Lisa seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

VI. Staff Report – Dr. Brooke Morgan

Brooke shared an overview of the deaccession request regarding remains uncovered in a cemetery dating to roughly 1830-1870. This material came to the Museum and has been held in a freezer at the Research & Collections Center (RCC) that recently failed. Some of the samples were lost. Those that were salvaged are being handled as biohazards. Therefore, they should be respectfully and appropriately deaccessioned. Tamira moved to approve the deaccession, Lisa seconded, and the motion carried.

VII. IDNR Report

Rachel reported that a meeting has been scheduled with IDNR leadership to discuss NAGPRA and its implications for the Agency and the Museum. Monthly meetings have also resumed with Central Management Services (CMS) regarding Dickson Mounds and other sites under their care. The new property manager for Dickson Mounds is moving aggressively to address the outstanding issues at the site. A plumber was called in to address leaky fixtures and restore hot water. A fire suppression system contract is now in place as well. Bids are being requested to address the roofing issues before winter and the freight elevator work is on hold until an inspection can take place. The larger projects including the parking lots and outdoor restrooms will have to be handled by the Capital Development Board (CDB). IDNR and the Museum are facing difficult staffing issues. The Museum has been allotted several hires and will continue to be a priority.

Currently, IDNR staff are working from home when possible with minimal people in the building due to COVID. The IDNR headquarters will remain closed for the foreseeable future. All IDNR programs at state sites are limiting participants to avoid crowds and protect attendees.

Graham asked if the Museum should plan for cuts given the fair tax initiative failed and aid from the Federal government is delayed. Rachel said that we have little information at this time, but that caution is certainly in order. Every agency has been asked to identify areas that could be trimmed, but that exercise is done every year. IDNR leadership is working to protect the Museum from severe cuts given its prior closure. Another closure would be catastrophic for the Museum.

VIII. Illinois State Museum Society Report

Cinnamon reported the shop is opening online first for Society members on November 15th and to the public on November 30th. The goal is to open the physical shop this time next year. This is a huge step for our members and visitors that has been supported by the Museum Society. The Society Board members are reaching out to members and new committees have been formed and they are working on their charters in order to keep the Society moving forward.

IX. Old Business

None.

X. New Business

Donna noted the next Board meeting will be held on December 14th at 3 p.m.

XI. Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

XII. Adjournment

Donna asked for a motion to adjourn. Graham moved to adjourn, Beth seconded, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.