

**Illinois State Museum  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
February 29, 2016  
Dept. of Natural Resources**

**Attending:** Mr. Guerry Suggs; Dr. Brian Butler, Vice Chairman; Dr. Lorin Nevling, Secretary; and Board Members Dr. Brian Anderson, Ms. Beth Shadur, Dr. David Sokol, Mr. Roger Taylor, Mr. Leo Welch, Mrs. Rosemary Winters, and Mrs. Donna Sack participated via phone; Society Board Chair Sandy Bauer, Society Board Members R-Lou Barker, Renee Johnson, Karen Westbrook, Susan White, and Society Trustee Mary Alice Davis; Museum Interim Director Dr. Michael Wiant, and Executive Assistant to the Director Karen Everingham; Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Director Wayne Rosenthal, Chief of Staff Jason Heffley and Communications Director Chris Young; Mr. Erik Hostetter, AFSCME.

**1. Call to Order**

Dr. Brian Butler called the meeting to order at 10:17 a.m. Dr. Butler asked for a motion to allow Mrs. Donna Sack to participate by phone. Mr. Roger Taylor so moved, Mr. Leo Welch seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the December 14, 2015, Board Meeting**

Dr. Butler asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes. Hearing none he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as they were presented. Dr. David Sokol moved to approve the minutes, Ms. Beth Shadur seconded, and the motion carried.

**3. Introduction of the Board and Attendees**

Dr. Butler asked Dr. Michael Wiant to introduce DNR Director Wayne Rosenthal. Dr. Wiant introduced Mr. Rosenthal remarking that he and Mr. Jason Heffley have been most accommodating during this transition. Mr. Rosenthal said he could not stay but wanted to thank Mr. Guerry Suggs and the rest of the Board for their service to the Museum. He added that he hoped to see the Museum open and serving the public again. He said Mr. Heffley would serve as his representative at the meetings. Dr. Butler asked the attendees to introduce themselves.

**4. Recent Events**

Mr. Suggs reported that the last Board meeting was on December 14, 2015, and since that time SB317 was sent to the Governor. The bill essentially says the State of Illinois shall operate a museum and it shall be open to the public. The bill also indicates that the museum will operate its current branch facilities. On February 5 the Governor issued an amendatory veto. The amendatory veto left the determination of branch sites to the Director of DNR in collaboration with local government and other public and private entities; called on DNR and the Museum Board to solicit the assistance of the Illinois State Museum Society to raise non-state resources to provide additional assistance to the Illinois State Museum; and directed DNR to set the admission fee with different fees for different classes of visitors. The amended was returned to the Senate. The Senate failed to override the Governor's veto and the bill died. Mr. Suggs said the Senate and the House do not look favorably on amendatory vetoes, thus a new bill was needed. He and Mrs. Mary Jo Potter met with Senator Andy Manar, who introduced SB317, to discuss the new bill.

Mr. Suggs said two of our local Representatives, Sara Wojcicki Jimenez and Tim Butler, along with Representative Michael Unes, who represents the area near Dickson Mounds Museum, introduced HB6179,

which included the Governor's amendatory language. He said what needs to be done now is to get a bill passed that is acceptable to both sides of the aisle. He said the Senators and Representatives have been working on a compromise and he thinks that they are close to doing so. He urged the Board members to work with legislators to get the Museum open.

Ms. Suggs also noted that he, Mrs. Mary Jo Potter, and Mrs. Jessica Jagielnik have been replaced. He said he was impressed with the new appointments to the Board and was confident that the group could move forward. He finished by saying the legislation is key to re-opening the Museum and he hoped the Mr. Heffley would spear-head the work to pass the bill with support from the Board.

## **5. DNR Report**

Dr. Butler asked Mr. Heffley to present the DNR report. Mr. Heffley said he recognized the gaps that Mr. Suggs and others leave, and that he appreciated their work on behalf of the Museum. He said he looks forward to working with the Board to get legislation passed. He said the intention is to get the Museum open again, and added that the Museum is included in the Governor's FY17 budget. He said admission fee legislation is the best strategy because the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) process takes at best 90-120 days. Mr. Heffley said that Representatives and Senators Manar and McAsey met last week and that they are nearing agreement. He hopes the legislation will soon move forward.

Mr. Heffley reported that the Union arbitration litigation decision should be forthcoming. He hopes to have admission fee legislation in place before the litigation decision is rendered. If the state wins, the lay-offs will move forward, and that will leave us with three Museum staff.

Dr. Brian Anderson asked for more background on the issue. Mr. Heffley noted that due to a lack of funds the Museum staff were given lay-off letters; however, AFSCME filed suit and the lay-offs were suspended pending the outcome of the arbitration. If arbitration determines that the Governor had the authority to lay-off Museum staff, the decision to do so may be implemented unless the legislature passes acceptable legislation to re-open the Museum. Dr. Anderson asked if CMS had the latitude to suspend some of the lay-offs. Mr. Heffley said if we have a deal in place; this will not be an issue.

Mr. Suggs expressed concern about the Museum's accreditation with the American Alliance of Museums. He noted that the Museum must be open to the public for 1,000 hours each year and if we don't open soon we will not meet that requirement. If we lose accreditation, it is not easy to restore it. He emphasized again the need for the admission fee legislation and he feels that re-opening the Museum could move very quickly once we have an agreement. Dr. Butler asked about charging fees. Mr. Heffley explained that we have statutory authority now to charge but implementation requires legislation or rulemaking through JCAR. Legislation would allow us to bypass the JCAR and permit the DNR Director to determine admission fees.

Mr. Heffley also noted that he will be going to meet with stake-holders in Lockport to discuss partnership opportunities with the city of Lockport. He said the local legislators and the Lockport Mayor are very engaged and he hopes we will get something in place. Mr. Anderson asked why not move on both tracks: JCAR and legislation. Mr. Heffley said the rule has been drafted and we are moving on both fronts, but the legislation should move more quickly.

Mr. Heffley said he wanted to address the question of whether the Museum Board is advisory or governing. He stated that DNR holds that the Board is advisory, but that he doesn't want to be involved in the day-to-day operations of the Museum. He said the Board has traditionally run the Museum and he hopes it will continue

to do so. As long as we keep approvals in place for budgeting and staffing, the rest is up to the Board. He said we need to keep the lines of communication open so we can move forward in partnership.

Dr. Sokol inquired about the fate of the Chicago Gallery at the James R. Thompson Center (JRTC) given the Governor's plan to close that facility and move agencies out. Mr. Heffley responded that this is part of a larger conversation and that we need to explore options for a Chicago home. Dr. Sokol said we all know the JRTC location was not ideal but that a Chicago presence is very important especially for fundraising. Mr. Heffley expressed his commitment to work on this issue.

Mr. Heffley finished by thanking Mr. Suggs for all his hard work on behalf of the Museum.

## **6. Interim Director's Report**

Dr. Wiant thanked all of the long-standing Board members and the Society Board members present for enduring this challenge to the Museum. He also welcomed the new Board members and said they would find their colleagues on the Board to be unique and the Museum staff to be a hardy group. By way of introduction Dr. Wiant noted he had visited the Illinois State Museum in the Howlett building as a fifth grader and he was privileged to be hired by Museum Society to fill a grant position with the Lands Unsuitable for Mining Program. Soon thereafter, he was appointed as a Curator in the anthropology section where he spent about twenty years before moving on to Dickson Mounds. He added that since 1990 he has taught a course on Museum Studies at the Illinois State University which keeps him abreast of developments in the field. He said he has been thinking about his philosophy of museum operation. He said former Director Bruce McMillan taught him that we should be vigilant about building constituencies. The other influence he noted was Dr. George Rabb, who encouraged him to personalize museums.

Dr. Wiant reported that Museum employees have been very busy working on a variety of projects. One project in particular has been spear-headed by Mr. Chris Young. He said Mr. Young has assembled a group from the Museum and the Department to create videos and other means to reach out to new audiences using technology. This "voice" will reach far beyond the general area of each of the Museum's locations. Mr. Young thanked Mr. Heffley and Dr. Wiant for the opportunity to work on these projects. He said the group has developed about ten videos representing various collections and programs of the Museum. He added that Mr. Kelvin Sampson and Mr. Erich Schroeder were working on a new website that will accommodate different platforms from a desk top computer to a mobile phone. He showed two of the videos to the Board. He said there are many opportunities to share our collections with the public. He said he would like to offer a virtual tour of the Museum in the future. Dr. Wiant commented that diversity promotes stability, and that DNR has skill sets and assets that allow us to complete a variety of projects.

### **a. Museum Policy Manual Clarification**

Dr. Wiant asked that the Board draw their attention to the Museum Policy Manual to address the impact of the staff choosing to organize into an AFSCME bargaining unit.

### **b. Museum Re-Opening Plan and Activities**

Dr. Wiant reported that staff, in particular the Education section, have begun discussing events to celebrate the re-opening of the Museum. He said he thinks we will have a honeymoon period of about eight weeks during which there will be an outpouring of interest in the Museum and its various sites. He said he believed the media would pay close attention and we should take full advantage of the marketing opportunity. He said he would share our ideas on events for the opening with the Board for their comments and suggestions. One of the proposals is to hold a pre-opening event at ISM-Springfield to thank the constituents who took the time to support the Museum prior to and during the closure. He said discussions included other special events and

programs that include music, lectures, and an open house for the public at the RCC among other ideas. Dr. Wiant reported that the Museum staff recently commented on a series of questions that Mr. Heffley posed at a meeting of Museum roundtable. In answer to the question, "How do we engage visitors?" staff responded as follows:

- Assess audience interest
- Reconsider our brand and improve our marketing
- Create AV/Media voice to reach distant audiences
- Develop modular exhibit frameworks to build vignettes that can be rotated more frequently
- Reconsider museum hours, for example opening on an evening
- Upgrade the website and expand use of social media platforms that include curatorial content
- Digitize collection data and create access for the public
- Install interactive technology in our exhibits
- Museum experiences have value; that should be underscored by a fee
- Hire a development director to continue to build our endowment
- Develop partnerships

### **c. Admission Fee Structure and Policy**

Dr. Wiant noted that Mr. Heffley said that young people and veterans should be excluded from an admission fee, as should Museum Society members. He said admission fee policy should involve a dialogue of the Board to address implementation. There are other issues to deal with as we look at this new process. Dr. Sokol suggested that we look at previous Board discussions of the subject. Dr. Wiant said we can certainly redistribute appropriate material. He also indicated that Ms. Karen Everingham would be meeting with Ms. Clare Thorpe of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum to discuss the process they use for collecting admissions. Mr. Heffley said the conversation from previous years was largely looking at the wisdom of charging a fee. He said that ship has sailed, what would be most helpful to us is feedback from the Board on what the administrative rule should look like. He said we will charge at the main museum only, and veterans, seniors, and kids will be exempted. There is language included that would allow for the exemption of Society members as well. He said he would appreciate comments and ideas on that. Mrs. Winters expressed appreciation for the added incentive for Society membership. Mrs. Susan White said the Society struggles with incentives to join and offering free admission would be a good incentive. Mr. Suggs noted the biggest advantage to being a member has been access to opening receptions for first-looks at the new exhibitions.

### **d. Dedicated Funding for the Museum**

Dr. Wiant noted that dedicated funding for the museum is essential. Dr. Lorin Nevling asked, what can we do now? Dr. Wiant responded that Ms. Everingham has done extensive research on how other state museums are funded via personal contacts, phone and email, and web research. She is gathering a remarkable body of data that has scholarly merit and practical implications. There are a number of methods utilized including fees from gambling in Colorado and tax levies in a number of states. He said we could prepare a synopsis of that data and encourage thought on these ideas to see how we might advance those concepts. Mr. Heffley emphasized the need to find funding beyond the general revenue fund (GRF). He said the GRF is often a target for budget cuts. He added that DNR managed to pass its sustainability bill a few years ago which increased license fees by \$2 and provides about \$20M a year for state parks. Mrs. Sack suggested we look at the Minnesota's program funded by the Clean Water & Legacy Amendment. She said it provides funding for cultural institutions via a tax levy and would be worth looking into. She also suggested we look at the IMLS Museums for All program as well as the Blue Star Museum program.

## **8. Personnel**

### **a. Personnel Losses**

Dr. Wiant reported that taking into account people who have indicated they will retire or take employment elsewhere our headcount is 36.8 people. He added the number of positions we had previously was 67 and the departures have come from all ranks of the staff. He noted that these circumstances frame all conversations regarding the Museum's future.

### **b. Critical Personnel Replacements**

Dr. Wiant said an admission fee is going to require hiring especially in light of the death of Mrs. Jan White-Brady and the departure of Mr. Terry Scrogum. He said we are trying to be creative in addressing this issue. He indicated he had a preliminary conversation with the head of DNR Human Resources about hiring staff with both visitor services and educational duties so we can get maximum utility during slow times at the visitor services desk. He added that we need custodians at the main museum, Dickson Mounds and the RCC. He said we have to proceed in a step-wise fashion. We have to get the critical positions first and then it is a matter of strategy. He said a key position is that of Director. The new director should be in place to contribute to a new framework or staff organization for the Museum. He said he felt, after talking with curators, that we need collections support due to the size of our collection and the loss of staff. He added that the education department also needs help to begin to develop public programming and address virtual programming as well. Virtual programming will allow us to reach a broader audience. Those, he said, are the key components to rebuild the Museum as he sees it.

Dr. Wiant said that if the lay-offs were to proceed that would leave only one non-union person and two other union positions to attend to all the collections and facilities. He said that is not a prudent way to manage the Museum. He said we need some administrative level people such as a director of collections and a Museum director. He noted that he has asked each section to reformulate their mission and how they will move forward. He said the re-structuring of the personnel of this institution should be derived from our mission and how we hope to accomplish it. Dr. Wiant opined that despite this calamity we have a remarkable opportunity to recast the Museum in a 21<sup>st</sup> century perspective.

### **c. Director Search**

Dr. Nevling welcomed the new Board members and expressed his gratitude for their willingness to bring their expertise to the Board and to this daunting task. He said it will take time for us to recover given the magnitude of the present circumstances. He said the Museum will look different in the future and hopefully be something better. Dr. Nevling noted that Dr. Wiant is a competent leader and that the Board should not feel rushed to replace him. He said we need to take the time to get a good director for the Museum.

Dr. Nevling stated that one of the duties of the Board is to make a recommendation for director in the event the position becomes vacant. He said the question is, how does the Board discharge that responsibility? The Board has a personnel committee of three persons appointed by the Board Chair to examine potential hires as recommended by the Director of the Museum. He asked if the Board is comfortable delegating the responsibility of finding a director to this committee. He noted other options are for the Board to act as a committee of the whole to recruit a director or create a new ad hoc committee to take this on. He said he would like for the Board to determine its approach to this task today. Mr. Suggs said that if you go with the Board as a committee of the whole you would be required to follow the Open Meetings Act. Dr. Nevling said that may take that option off the table as there would likely be a good deal of discussion of candidates. Mr. Suggs suggested the personnel committee could vet the candidates and then bring a recommendation or set of recommendations to the whole Board. Mr. Anderson noted that at the Survey they are having difficulty bringing in qualified candidates given the current situation with the budget, limited security, tier two status

in terms of benefits, and all the uncertainty around state employment in Illinois. He also noted that this is more like a re-launch than a re-opening. He said he thought we should adopt language to this effect. He said the problems the Museum faces are so monumental because there are structural, long-term, generational shifts that are occurring and were compacted by this crisis. He suggested that, given the reality we are working in, we look for a recently retired professional to come for a couple of years, engineer the re-launch and then turn it over. He said it is such a challenging time to be looking for a director. Dr. Nevling said he appreciated those comments and noted that we expect the search to take at least a year. He affirmed that he wants to establish how the Board will approach this task. Dr. Sokol noted that perhaps we should wait until the structure and budget issues are resolved, especially since we have a competent interim director in place now. Mr. Anderson said you can get everything ready before you actually post the job. Mr. Welch said he has been on three university presidential searches and noted that the committee only focused on the one position. Mrs. Sack said she has also served on search committees and she agreed that it should be an ad hoc committee to really focus on the task.

Dr. Nevling moved that a three member ad hoc committee be formed to oversee the search for a new director to make a recommendation to the Board. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. Mr. Nevling noted that the group needs to determine what kind of person we need to lead the institution in the future. He said we need to develop the position description, a list of qualifications, and the compensation package. It is very important that we all agree on these things. When these things are in place the search will enter another phase and the mechanics of the search will be complex. It may well be beyond the capabilities of the Board, and we may need to consider a search firm. Mr. Taylor asked if there were firms that specialize in museum personnel, and about how much money we would be looking at. Mrs. Sack responded that there are firms that specialize in museums, and that we would be well served to use a firm. She added there has been a lot of national and international coverage regarding the closure of the Museum and that there are many people rooting for a positive outcome for the Illinois State Museum. If we use a search firm they may be aware of people with a fire in their belly—someone who would really like to take on this situation. Search firms often have knowledge of these types of people. Dr. Sokol noted the cost of the firm as well as travel costs for potential candidates, background checks and other details probably put the investment in a search firm at around \$50,000. Mr. Anderson asked if there are other funds that could be tapped for this purpose. Mr. Welch noted he concurred that search firms often have a large pool of potential candidates to draw from, and he agrees this is the path we should take. Mr. Taylor also agreed a search firm is the way to go. He said not only do search firms know who the good candidates, but they also know the not so good candidates. Mr. Nevling commented that a search firm would also handle all the paperwork. Dr. Butler called the question and the motion to have a three person ad hoc committee to oversee the search process was passed.

Dr. Nevling returned the conversation to financing the search firm. He said he didn't think this was something for which we could use General Revenue Funds, and asked what contribution the Society could make. Mr. Suggs pointed out that the *1877 Fund* could be used for the search and said that about \$30,000 has been raised so far. Mrs. Karen Westbrook noted that it would be a challenge to find the funds, but that there is seed money in the *1877 Fund*. Mrs. Sandy Bauer concurred. Mr. Suggs added there were some monies left over from last year's campaign as well that were not used due to the closure of the Museum, and there were funds for staff travel that could be utilized as well. Mrs. R-Lou Barker said that she wasn't sure if it was appropriate for the Society to fund the search. She said the purpose of the Society is to support programs and events, and this seems to be going in a different direction than it has in the past. She noted it would be difficult to do fundraising for the Museum while it is closed. Dr. Sokol suggested that the ad hoc committee also look at possible search firms and how to fund the search. Mr. Heffley noted that we could ask for General Revenue Funds, though he was uncertain of the response. He said we don't want to raid the Society funds for

everything. Mrs. Westbrook noted that the two Boards should work together to raise funds for the Museum. Mr. Nevling thanked the group for their input.

Mr. Heffley suggested reinstituting the roundtables to include members of both Boards and of the public to begin to look at how we move forward. Mr. Anderson noted that situations like this often lead to feelings of tension, and suggested listening sessions might be useful to promote healing. He said we need people to be less angry and get excited about moving forward. Ms. Shadur noted that many of the artisans would be very upset if there were no Museum location in Chicago. She said she thought there are institutions that would partner with the Museum. Mr. Heffley suggested we put together geographical committees to look at possible partnerships for the branch facilities. He offered to facilitate more roundtable meetings if the Board thought it would be useful. Dr. Sokol said that Chicago is a hub of major foundations and businesses that might fund or partner with the Museum. He added a Chicago presence is critical for the Museum. Mr. Anderson asked if there is also a need for some listening sessions with staff and retirees to promote the process of setting aside what has happened, and moving forward. Mr. Wiant said he likes all of these ideas and we should work to coalesce these groups and listen to what they have to say. Mrs. Sack noted that an important group would be previous visitors to the Museum. She said that the testimony of the nine-year-old Kai Bailey-Smith at the COGFAA hearing was particularly strong, and that he clearly expressed why the Illinois State Museum is important. Dr. Nevling agreed, noting he offered the best testimony of the day, and suggested Mr. Young talk with him for one of the videos he is working on.

Mr. Heffley said he would look into the idea of more roundtable meetings and listening sessions. He said there are a lot of people who care about the Museum and it would be good to get their input. Mr. Anderson asked if the Board chair has the authority to appoint the ad hoc search committee, and how we move forward with the listening sessions. Mr. Heffley said he would handle the listening sessions. Mr. Suggs asked if he wanted to do the listening sessions before or after the Museum opens. Mr. Heffley responded that opening the Museum is the first priority.

Mrs. Westbrook again asked the Museum Board to share potential Society Board candidates. She said vacancies will need to be filled on July 1. Ms. Renee Johnson said that from a marketing perspective, we will have more people hearing and talking about us if we move the listening sessions around the state. She also noted that she was the only person of color in the room, and that we need to seek out persons of color for our Boards.

Mr. Heffley said that he felt Dr. Wiant should be the liaison for the search committee.

## **8. ISMS Report**

Mr. Suggs reported that the Society had a Board meeting on January 27. The Society Board discussed the issue of non-employees serving as principal investigators for Society grants. The Board agreed to send a letter outlining the responsibilities of the principal investigators to the Society. He said there are only three active grants and two are nearing completion. He said Dr. Eric Grimm's grant will be moved to the University of Minnesota. He said the Society Board asked for quarterly financial reports for their meetings. A committee was formed to investigate what reports can be prepared with minimal time because we have only one employee to handle the finances. He said a committee was also formed to look at the Society Constitution and By-Laws and recommend updates. He said he resigned as the Executive Secretary of the Museum Society upon Dr. Wiant's appointment as Interim Director. As such, Mr. Wiant would assume the responsibilities of Executive Secretary. Mr. Suggs added that he also resigned as Trustee to the Society Board because he felt it was time for new faces. He finished by saying that the next meeting of the Society would be April 28. Mrs. Bauer extended her thanks to Mr. Suggs and noted that his guidance and expertise will be missed.

## **9. Election of Board Officers**

Dr. Butler noted we need to fill the position of Board Chair. He said officers serve two-year terms and the current slate is in the middle of their terms. In talking with Dr. Wiant and others it was decided that a new slate of officers should be selected to move forward given the influx of new Board members. To that end, Dr. Butler moved to defer the selection of Board officers until the next meeting, and in the meantime he would like to nominate Dr. Nevling for Interim Board Chair. Mr. Welch seconded the motion and the motion carried.

## **10. Old Business**

Dr. Sokol pointed out that we need a replacement for Mrs. Jessica Jagielnik and Mr. Suggs on the Personnel Committee. Dr. Butler said that the committee is to be appointed by the chair. Mr. Suggs confirmed this and suggested persons interested in serving on the personnel committee let the Board chair know.

## **11. New Business**

### **a. Deaccession Approval**

Dr. Butler noted that any request for deaccession from the Museum collections requires Board approval. He asked Dr. Wiant to present the deaccession request. Dr. Wiant said the Museum has an agreement with the Army Corp of Engineers to curate items within their purview. During this process items from the Bauman site were accessioned as property of the Army Corp of Engineers. However, we have since learned the items do not belong to the Army Corps, but to the University of Missouri at Columbia. He said we need to now deaccession those items and return them to the University. Mrs. Rosemary Winters moved to proceed with the deaccession of the items, Mr. Anderson seconded, and the motion carried.

### **b. Thank You to Departing Board Members**

Dr. Wiant extended his thanks to Mr. Suggs, Mrs. Mary Jo Potter, and Mrs. Jessica Jagielnik who are leaving the Board. He presented a small token of appreciation to Mr. Suggs for his service. Mr. Suggs said thanks to the Board and said he has enjoyed his service.

### **c. Letter for Mr. Taylor**

Mr. Taylor said he is still of counsel with his law firm and he needs to have a letter signed by the interim director indicating he will not be offering legal counsel. Dr. Wiant said he would be happy to sign the letter.

## **12. Adjournment**

Dr. Butler asked for a motion to adjourn. Dr. Sokol moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Welch seconded the motion, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

Approved:

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Lorin Nevling, Chairman pro tem

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Date