

**Illinois State Museum  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
10:30 a.m., September 17, 2018  
Research & Collections Center**

**Attending:** Chair Dr. Lorin Nevling, Vice Chair Mr. Leo Welch, Secretary Dr. Brian Anderson; Board members Donna Sack (by phone), Beth Shadur, Dr. David Sokol, Mr. Roger Taylor, and Rosemary Winters; Museum Staff Ms. Karen Everingham, Interim Director Robert Sill and Dr. Michael Wiant; Department of Natural Resources Staff Mr. Chris Young.

**I. Call to Order**

Dr. Lorin Nevling called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and requested a roll call.

**II. Roll Call**

Ms. Karen Everingham called the roll and a quorum was present.

**III. Approval of the Minutes of the June 11, 2018, Board Meeting**

Dr. Nevling asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Beth Shadur made the motion, Mrs. Rosemary Winters seconded, and the motion carried.

**IV. DNR Report**

Mr. Chris Young reported that there were a number of facilities issues at Dickson Mounds. He and Interim Director Mr. Robert Sill met with Central Management Services (CMS) Facilities Director discuss the issues including HVAC failures, needed repairs to restrooms and the observation deck. He said in addition to that the group had a good discussion regarding the relationship with CMS and defining their role at the site. Interim Director Sill noted that the CMS charges for this care absorbs about 76% of the Museum's contractual budget line, and added that the group toured the site thoroughly. They now have a timeline of priorities for the site. Mrs. Rosemary Winters suggested a follow up in writing to the CMS leadership. Mr. Young noted that Department of Natural Resources Deputy Director Rich Brauer has attended several meetings regarding Dickson Mounds and has been very supportive of taking care of this issue.

**V. Director's Report**

Interim Director Sill reported that the Society will be receiving a generous bequest from the estate of former State Board Chair and member Dr. George Rabb. The gift totals \$500,000 and is unrestricted. The ISMS Board is considering how to utilize those funds for operations and endowment. Mr. Sill also suggested the Museum publicly acknowledge Dr. Rabb's gift. Mrs. Winters suggested naming the fund for Dr. Rabb. Dr. David Sokol concurred noting the designation could be used to leverage additional gifts and appropriately honors a long-time and ardent support of the Museum.

Mr. Sill reported the interviews for the museum technician and registrar for Art & History Department as well as the State Historic Sites are complete and a candidate has been selected. Amanda Bryden comes to us from Indiana where she worked with their historic sites. She is a perfect fit for the position and we are excited to have her join the staff. In addition, the Mary Ann MacLean Educator interviews and candidate selection were complete and Kate Suits, from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum & Library accepted the position. The Education Department is now fully staffed to pre-closure levels. He said the next positions to be addressed were a museum technician

for marketing, curator of anthropology at Dickson Mounds, curator of geology, and museum technician to handle the archaeological sites file. Mr. Sill noted that the Dickson Mounds Director position was offered to the selected candidate, however the individual turned down the offer citing an insufficient salary. The position will be reposted. He added we now have a contract to provide custodial support at the Museum.

Mr. Sill reported that work on the strategic plan was underway. He said staff have been working on their departmental SWOTS and strategic plans. Their drafts are being reviewed by the writing team.

Mr. Sill noted the opening reception of *Bicentennial & Beyond! The Illinois Legacy Collection* exhibition was attended by more than 400 and received very positive feedback. It has received considerable media attention. The Museum Society has supported several advertising spots that have really been instrumental in boosting the exhibition and attendance. He said the *Story of Illinois: The Bicentennial through Museum Objects* is also garnering good reviews. Accomplished in partnership with the Illinois Association of Museums and include not only objects from our collection but also objects from museums like the Field Museum, Chicago History Museum, Wabash County Museum, Cedarhurst Center for the Arts, Pullman State Historic Site, and many others. He said the website framework will be used to further digitize the *Illinois Legacy Collection* to allow for more public access.

Mr. Sill said he met with the Secretary of State engineering staff and have a commitment to move forward with a capital project package for the Museum. It will include a new sprinkler system and work on HVAC systems. He said the SOS staff has been extremely supportive of the Museum. The lease for the Lockport Gallery has been signed and will be in place for the next five years.

Mr. Sill reported a number of collaborative exhibits and programs two exhibitions with the Elmhurst Art Museum and the Bicentennial Speaker Series have been well received. The Speaker Series headed up by Ms. Everingham, is a partnership with the Lincoln Land Community College Academy of Lifelong Learning and has drawn significant attendance. Mr. Sill said twenty-two works of art from the Museum's art collection were sent to a New York City gallery. The exhibit was curated by a renowned artist Roberta Smith and a substantial catalog of the exhibition has also been published. Eight Museum works of art have been loaned to the Governor's Mansion, and the Museum staff have been instrumental in the presentation and installation of the overall exhibit. Mrs. Elizabeth Bazan and Ms. Everingham have been planning another Society member trip on October 26-27<sup>th</sup>. The trip highlighting the Quad Cities will be led by one of our Bicentennial Speaker series lecturers.

Mr. Sill said both he and Ms. Everingham were attending a five-day seminar on capacity building, which has been very helpful as we move through the strategic planning process, and the Springfield area leadership group called SMASH (Springfield Museum and Site Heads). The latter meetings are looking at opportunities for joint marketing, exhibitions, and programs as well as better communication and coordination for area sites.

Mr. Sill reported the Museum has been awarded the Award of Distinction-Leadership Institution of the Year as well as an Award of Merit-Community Partnerships for ISM-Dickson Mounds/Emiquon partnership from the Illinois Association of Museums.

## **VI. Accreditation Progress**

Dr. Michael Wiant reported that work is underway on the strategic plan and updates for the Collecting Policy for the Museum's accreditation package. The completed strategic plan is due to the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) on December 14, 2018. Dr. Wiant recognized the work of Interim Director Sill in moving the accreditation process and the Museum forward. Dr. Wiant identified three key areas being addressed in the strategic plan, including transformation, constituency building, facilities issues, and addressing the issues raised by the AAM Accreditation team. He said during the team's visit they were largely impressed with all the Museum has accomplished. They noted the Museum should evaluate and update as needed its collecting and collections policies.

Dr. Wiant brought to the Board's attention developments with regard to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and the Museum. Museum's that receive Federal funding are required to report objects in their collections related to human remains and funerary objects. He said there are about 6,000 human remains and 100,000 funerary objects in the Museum's collection. In the event those objects need to be repatriated, extensive modification to existing exhibitions, especially at Dickson Mounds and Cahokia Mounds, will be required. The Museum has established excellent working relationships with various tribes, and negotiated an unprecedented agreement with the Peoria tribe to hold and care for objects that were repatriated to them. They own them, we care for them. The current changes in the regulations have simplified the process for tribes to request the return of objects related to their tribe and ancestral lands. In light of this the Museum should be prepared to repatriate any or all of those objects.

## **VII. Personnel Committee**

Mr. Roger Taylor reported the Committee was given a draft of the job description for the Director at Dickson Mounds position as well as some questions for the interviews by Interim Director Sill. Mr. Taylor moved that the Board approve the job description for the Dickson Mounds Director upon review of Mrs. Sack, Dr. Anderson seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. Taylor said the Committee received Museum Director position description and moved to approve the description, Mr. Anderson seconded, and the motion carried.

The Board broke for lunch at 12:16 p.m. and reconvened at 12:45 p.m.

## **VIII. Metropolitan Outreach Working Group**

Dr. Sokol reported that work continues to explore possible partnerships in the Chicago area, but that there are no significant developments to report.

## **IX. ISMS Report**

Mr. Mark Pence reported that the Society Board is also working on its part of the strategic planning document and identifying areas for contribution. The Board was tasked with compiling their own SWOTS as they move through the process.

He also reported that he and Mr. Chris Vallillo submitted a grant application to support the Music at the Museum program. He also announced the grant for an assisted hearing system for the Thorne Deuel Auditorium at the Museum.

The next meeting of the Society Board will be September 24, 2018, where new Board members will be elected. The Society Board has worked diligently to improve the diversity of their Board both in terms of ethnicity and location to better represent their members.

He said the Society Board is looking at implementing a new shop, but that it will take time and may include online sales. The group discussed possibilities for retail at length. Mr. Pence noted a retail committee would be established to examine the idea in more depth.

**X. Old Business**

Dr. Nevling reminded Board members that there are several openings on the Board.

**XI. New Business**

Mr. Leo Welch reported he had developed a document on higher education reform dealing with the impact of the General Assembly on education. The impact on our educational institutions, including the Museum, has not been favorable. He added he has spoken on this issue numerous times and hope to continue to educate the public.

Dr. Nevling reminded the Board of the upcoming special meeting regarding the Accreditation and strategic plan on November 5, and of the regularly scheduled meeting on December 10, 2018.

**XII. Adjournment**

Dr. Nevling asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Sokol moved, Mrs. Beth Shadur seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:02 p.m.

Approved:

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Dr. Lorin Nevling, Chair

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Date

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Dr. Brian Anderson, Secretary

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Date