

Multnomah County Historical Societies Levy Oversight Committee

Minutes of March 3, 2022 Meeting

Meeting Conducted via Zoom

Note: A full transcript of the meeting will be available here: <https://www.multco.us/ohs-levy-oversight-committee/documents>

Co-Chair McKeel called the meeting to order at 3:30pm. Attending via Zoom were the following LOC members: Co-Chair McKeel, Co-Chair Dilg, LOC members Bennetts, Burns, Forrester, Grisham, Harrison, Menashe, Pruden, Taylor.

Co-Chair McKeel stated the purpose of the meeting was to hear updates from each of the five historical organizations that receive funding from the levy and to provide a briefing of the digital assets of the Oregon Historical Society.

Report from Gresham Historical Society

Sue Piazza, President of the Gresham Historical Society, provided an update on progress since the recent fire at the Gresham Historical Society's museum and headquarters. The museum officially opened for the first time since the fire on March 2. Ms. Piazza highlighted an upcoming speaker series, including a May 15 presentation on World War II Japanese American incarceration camps.

Report from East County History Organization

Peggy Olin, President of ECHO, expressed gratitude for the levy funds, stating that ECHO wouldn't be able to open their doors without it. She highlighted the recent Christmas display at the Zimmerman House and previewed ECHO's third annual car show this coming July 10th and an antique doll exhibit in July.

Report from Troutdale Historical Society

LeAnn Stephan, Executive Director of the Troutdale Historical Society, reported that the Troutdale Historical Society will re-open at the end of April. In the meantime, staff and volunteers will be working on the installation of a new exhibit and continuing to work on collection inventory, management, and storage. They have also updated technology in their gift shop, which has led to an increase in online sales. They will have their first in-person annual meeting since the pandemic on April 24.

Report from Crown Point Historical Society

Sandy Cartisser, Treasurer of the Crown Point Historical Society, provided an update on construction of the new CPHS museum. Supply chain issues are likely to delay the opening of the building from January 2023 until later in the year. On March 6, CPHS will host a 100th birthday party in honor of long-time community member Marion Kirkham, who passed away in November.

Report from Oregon Historical Society

OHS Executive Director Kerry Tymchuk reported on the large increases in the number of visits to the OHS website and digital assets, and highlighted the current and upcoming exhibit schedule. OHS Chief Program Officer and *Oregon Historical Quarterly* Editor Eliza Canty-Jones previewed the upcoming Oregon History Day competition and highlighted the recent *OHQ* special issue on the Chinese diaspora in Oregon. OHS Deputy Museum Director Nicole Yasuhara reported on the Afro-American Bicentennial Heritage Quilt, which was removed from OHS by vandals in October 2020 and damaged by being left in the rain. OHS sent the quilt to conservators in the eastern United States for repair, and the quilt has now been returned.

Deputy Museum Director Nicole Yasuhara provided LOC members with a “show and tell” tutorial on the use of the OHS museum portal, which includes photographs and information on over 11,000 artifacts, with new records being added on a regular basis.

OHS Digital Services Librarian Laura Cray provided a tutorial on accessing the OHS Library digital collections portal, which was launched in 2017 and has about 35,000 items online.

LOC Member Scott Forrester asked via chat how many years it would take to digitize the entirety of the OHS collection and what percentage of the OHS photo collection has been digitized. Cray reported that only about 1% of the collection has been digitized and that given the size of the collection, it will take many years to digitize the entire collection.

OHS Digital History Manager Amy Platt provided background and a tutorial on the Oregon Encyclopedia and the Oregon History Project.

LOC member Bennett asked if frequent visits to a particular site or topic leads OHS to put more information online relating to that topic.

Ms. Cray responded that the OHS library does look at Google analytics to determine what is of interest to visitors.

Ms. Yasuhara added that the OHS museum will also be utilizing Google analytics.

Report from Multnomah County Chair’s Office

Co-Chair Dilg recognized Paul Park from the Multnomah County Chair's office.

Mr. Park reported that one possible item for the LOC to consider at future meeting would be the adoption of bylaws.

In response to a question from LOC member Bennetts Mr. Park reported that the minutes of the LOC will be posted on the Multnomah County website.

LOC member Forrester asked if the information included in the "chat" section of the Zoom call would also be posted on the country website.

Mr. Tymchuk said that it was his understanding that the "chat" section would be included with the Zoom transcript of the meeting.

Discussion of meeting logistics

LOC member Forrester suggested that the LOC meet every two months and that the LOC consider forming sub-committees. He also suggested further discussion about the role, boundaries, and goals of the LOC.

Co-Chair McKeel recommended that meeting frequency and subcommittees deserved a more lengthy discussion.

Co-Chair Dilg stated that she would favor a survey of all LOC members to determine their preference on meeting frequency.

LOC Member Burns stated that OHS does have a Board of Trustees that is charged with oversight of OHS operations and that LOC responsibilities are different than that of the Board of Trustees.

Co-Chair Dilg announced that, under current health guidelines, the next LOC meeting would be in-person and would include a tour of the OHS “Vault” in Gresham at a date to be determined. The meeting was then adjourned.