

**Colorado Humanities Board of Directors Meeting
September 11, 2021
Online**

Present: Lee, Brendza, Best, Dadone, Fajardo, Hoeven, Holden, Kalish, Koehler, Mason, Philpott

Absent: Cordova, Jones, Keith, Miller, Montgomery, Schincke, Woods

Staff: Coval, Albright, Jones, Tucker

1. Pre-meeting Icebreaker (Lee)

Participants shared something about themselves that would not come up in everyday conversation.

2. Welcome and videoconferencing guidelines (Lee)

Lee welcomed the Board and reviewed videoconferencing guidelines, including voting procedures. New members Brendza and Hoeven introduced themselves.

3. Approval of agenda (Lee)

Motion by Dadone to approve the agenda.

Seconded by Koehler

Vote: Unanimously approved

4. Approval of minutes of the June 5, 2021 Board meeting (Lee)

Motion by Philpott to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2021 Board meeting.

Seconded by Holden

Vote: Unanimously approved

5. Chair's report (Lee)

a. Board members' recent activities

Lee thanked individual board members for their recent activities.

b. Plan for December Board meeting

The board discussed logistics of the December board meeting. Many expressed a preference for the ease and efficiency of remote meetings online. Future in-person meetings would require proof of vaccination or a negative rapid test within 24 hours of the meeting. It was recommended that all in-person attendees be required to wear masks to maintain equity and due to waning vaccine efficacy. A hybrid meeting option is appreciated, especially when weather makes travel difficult. Dependable technology is needed for the success of hybrid meetings. Holden's place of business, Gary Community Ventures, is a potential venue with advanced technology systems.

6. Executive Director's report (Coval)

Coval thanked Lee for her recent activities.

a. NEH funding update

For FY2021 the NEH received \$167.5 million, \$52 million of which was distributed to the state humanities councils. During Humanities on the Hill, the state humanities councils requested \$225 million for NEH, with \$75 million allocated to the Federal/State Partnership division for the state humanities councils. The House of Representatives has passed an Interior Appropriations bill proposing \$201 million to NEH with \$61.8 million for the state councils, which is a 19% increase from current funding. The Senate has not yet passed the bill. There will be negotiation between the House and the Senate regarding the final figures, but an increase is anticipated for FY2022.

The fiscal year for the federal budget ends September 30th. Interim funding for the period between the end of the fiscal year and the approval of the federal budget will be provided through a Continuing Resolution, which allows for advance distribution of some FY2022 funds.

b. National Humanities Conference

Following a survey of state humanities council executive directors, it was decided that the National Humanities Conference would transition from in-person to online in 2021. Conference events will be November 3, 4 and 12. Holden urged new board members to attend. Those interested in attending should contact Coval with questions.

c. Other

CH's budget for the A More Perfect Union initiative has been tentatively approved. There is no news regarding the SHARP budget approval.

Interviews for a marketing director and conversations program coordinator are underway.

Coval will be on vacation from Sept. 20 through Oct. 1, but will remain available during that time.

7. Board giving update (Holden)

About \$19,000 of the \$20,000 board giving goal has been raised to date. Some board members have yet to meet their giving obligation of \$750. There is a \$100 individual cash donation requirement. Board members may solicit or facilitate the remaining \$650 from non-board donors, for which the board member will receive a "soft credit." Examples of soft credits include donations resulting from Dadone's summer dinner party, a letter-writing or social media campaign to personal contact lists, and the recent email campaign to past Colorado Book Award winners. Invoices will be sent to board members shortly after this meeting.

8. Governance and Nominating Committee (Best)

a. Governance documents review

Best plans to bring balance to the two responsibilities of the Governance and Nominating Committee, as over time its focus has become primarily nominating. The last review of the CH bylaws was in 2012. Some clarification is needed, e.g., the distinction is not made between elected versus Governor appointed board members. Additionally, there is no specific language regarding the NEH requirement for a portion of board members to be humanities scholars.

b. Board election calendar

The Committee suggests revising the nominating process so that terms expire and new members are onboarded in June. This will eliminate confusion about when terms end, and coordinate orientations. Board members whose terms are expiring before June of 2022 will be asked if they are willing to extend their terms until June. Members who are eligible to renew their service for a second term will be asked if they are willing to do so. Mason and Miller are term-limited, so the Committee will be seeking at least two candidates for 2022. The Committee will discuss moving leadership out of Committee chair positions during the last year of their terms to allow them time to mentor their replacements. A full report on the proposed process will be given at the December 4th Board meeting.

c. Board nominations priorities

Best thanked the board for returning the self-identification surveys to help the Committee determine what competencies should be sought in new candidates.

9. Program Policy and Evaluation Committee (Philpott)

a. Program status report (Philpott, Jones)

The Program Status Report was presented in a new format informed by input and feedback gathered in board and Program Committee meetings. It is designed to provide quick access to desired information. It does not include all the pages yet. There is a digest of CH's Major Objectives on the last two pages. Any feedback should be shared with Jones.

Changing the Legacy of Race & Ethnicity has been the most active program in the last quarter. The most recent event on August 11th was led by Miller, and featured a panel discussing White Allyship. Live viewership has declined significantly, but views of the recordings continue to increase. It's possible the public is tired of online activity after months of work and school from home. The Committee will discuss what kind of participation is desired by the public, and how to capitalize on those desires while expanding outreach. The next event on October 6th will be on policing. Penfield Tate will moderate, and the panel will include Aurora Chief of Police Vanessa Wilson, an independent Denver police monitor, and another person involved in policing. There is an exciting number of community partnerships. Board members were encouraged to attend. A marketing campaign will launch soon.

New Motherread/Fatheread Colorado (MFC) Coordinator Karen Murphy has been working hard to raise awareness of the program. There is a new Department of Justice initiative to get all Colorado students up to grade-level reading. The MFC curriculum has been translated into Spanish

History Live! Durango continues through the end of September, and will include two Chautauqua presentations. Organized by the Southwest Humanities Roundtable, it will serve as a model for the development of community partnerships among other regional organizations for creation of regional networks.

- b. **COSHARP Grants Committee report (Kalish)**
107 COSHARP grant applications have been received with requests totaling nearly \$2 million. There is \$750,000 available. The application requested two years of 990s to see how the organizations handled COVID. The Grants Committee is made up of more than half of the board. They will meet October 9th to review the qualifying applications and make determinations about awards.
- c. **FY2022 Program Plan**
The board reviewed the proposed FY2022 Program Plan.

Motion by Philpott on behalf of the Program Committee to approve the FY2022 Program Plan.

Vote: Unanimously approved

10. Marketing update (Holden)

With the support of former board member Richard Ballantine's gift, and the Google Ads grant of about \$2,000/month, marketing efforts to broaden awareness of CH have increased in FY2021. The Google Ads grant enables CH ads to appear higher in search results. The CRM list of about 4,000 has been cleaned to improve communication with CH's existing audience. Fresh video footage from MFC institutes shot this summer, and used in an online campaign, generated a 2,000% increase in live viewership by ad recipients, which underscores the need for the marketing director position in the FY2022 budget. The footage will also be used in the brand marketing video.

11. Development and External Affairs Committee (Holden)

- a. **Fundraising status report (Holden, Tucker)**
The FY2021 fundraising goal was revised to \$313,000 as programs continued with remote delivery, or were delayed. Funds raised currently exceed that goal at \$329,000 which is 125% of the total goal for programs and 121% of the overall goal. Over \$2,000 in unrestricted funds remain to be raised. \$49,500 was received yesterday for the Five States of Colorado film, in addition to \$75,000 from the Colorado Film Commission. \$55,000 was received from Buell Foundation for MFC.
- b. **FY2022 Fundraising Goals**
There is a \$25,000 gap between the proposed FY2022 fundraising goals and FY2022 budget. The Development Committee agreed to assume responsibility for raising this

amount. They are investigating a subscription model that would provide exclusive programs in exchange for an annual fee of a pre-determined amount. Planned giving is another effort that the Committee would like to implement.

Board and staff have been making thank-you calls to FY2021 donors. The calls are a relationship-building effort, and do not include any appeal for funds. Any board members interested in helping with the calls should contact Tucker.

12. Finance and Infrastructure Committee (Dadone)

a. FY2021 preliminary year-end report (Dadone, Coval)

Year-end projections for income and expenses are both in line with what was budgeted for FY2021. Personnel is under due to employee attrition. Two open positions are currently being advertised. Pages 8-9 of the financial statement show combined revenues and expenditures. The organization is in good financial position. \$14,000 in NEH match funds and the Payroll Protection Plan loan are not yet included in revenue. There will definitely be surplus funds at year-end to move into FY2022. Coval offered a conservative estimate of \$100,000.

b. FY2022 Budget (one vote including fundraising goals)

The Board was reminded that CH's fiscal year is November 1 through October 31. The budget was developed by Coval and staff. Drafts were reviewed by the Finance and Executive Committees, reworked after input from the Development Committee, and then submitted to the board following approval by the Finance and Executive Committees. Budget figures for individual programs have been approved by the Program Committee. Investment/reserve funds are not budgeted. Because the NEH budget is never determined before the CH budget is confirmed, Coval estimates NEH grant income conservatively, using level funding from the prior year.

CH's FY2022 budget is much larger than in recent years due to NEH funding for SHARP grants, and the A More Perfect Union initiative. Programs with the largest fundraising goals are The Five States of Colorado film and Motherread/Fatheread Colorado. The line item for salaries was increased for raises and to support new hires. There has been an increase in accounting expense and a decrease in office space due to the renegotiated 2-year lease extension.

**Motion by Dadone on behalf of the Finance Committee to approve the
FY2022 Budget including the FY2022 Fundraising Goals
Vote: Unanimously approved**

SHARP funds and A More Perfect Union funds will not be available in FY2023. Related program expenses will be reduced, but salaries and marketing expenses will need to be maintained. Coval anticipates a potential deficit in FY2023 of \$262,000. Although possible increased funding from NEH will make up some of the difference, the challenge will be to meet and exceed FY2022 fundraising goals by as much as possible in an effort to support FY2023.

- c. Investment and endowment fund report (Koehler)
The investment policy calls for 60% in stocks and 40% in bonds. Currently the investment portfolio is made up of 66% stocks, some cash and less than 40% in bonds. Because interest rates are currently poor, Koehler recommends not rebalancing the investments at this time.

**Motion by Dadone to postpone rebalancing of CH investments.
Seconded by Philpott
Vote: Unanimously approved**

- d. Office space lease renewal (Coval)
Coval has signed renegotiated lease documents that extend the contract for 24 months at reduced rent and includes two free months. The lease was extended until the impacts of COVID on the real-estate market become clearer. The rent will be reduced to \$21.50 /sq. foot for the first year, and \$22.50/sq. foot for year 2. The lease extension includes an escape clause that allows CH to leave without penalty if NEH funding falls below a certain level.

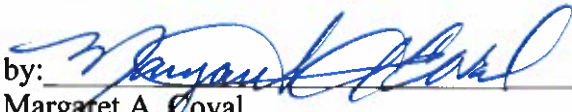
13. Other business

The Board discussed whether or not the ice breaker should continue as a board meeting feature. It was decided that it would become an optional agenda item, from 8:30 - 9:00 prior to board meetings.

Lee commended Committee chairs on the efficiency of the meeting.

Adjourned.

The Board of Directors Minutes have been approved by the Board, and signed on this 30th day of December, 2021.

by: 
Margaret A. Coval
Executive Director, Corporate Secretary
Colorado Humanities