

Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes
January 29, 2025

Present: Kalish; Etter; Jones, Jr.; Keith

Absent: Fajardo

Staff: Coval, Olivier, Albright

1. Approve minutes of October 16, November 20, and December 18, 2024 meetings

Motion by Keith to approve the October 16, November 20, and December 18, 2024 minutes.

Seconded by Jones, Jr.

Vote: Unanimously approved

2. Committee reports

a. Governance and Nominating

In Fajardo's absence, Coval gave the update. The Nominating Committee will host a discussion at the next board meeting. The focus will be on the characteristics of a good board member, and how to identify those qualities in potential prospects.

The Committee's tasks include conducting a survey of current Board identifiers, seeking candidates for election, and outreach to the current prospects.

b. Development and External Affairs

Jones, Jr. updated the Committee on recent development activities. CH's proposal for continuation of the NEH United We Stand grant has been approved. It is uncertain when the funds might be available.

Staff are working on a donor prospect tracking tool where Board can review and suggest funding prospects, and determine who will be responsible for facilitating connections. When ready, it will be added to the Board tools on the website.

Marketing and messaging will be significant elements in upcoming fundraising efforts. Staff are developing a one-page document to be used as a reference in discussions with potential funders. Other ideas are short videos for social media and a brief annual report or impact report. The desire to be less dependent on federal funding could be leveraged in fundraising messages.

Kalish and Jones, Jr. plan to meet with individual board members to stimulate Board giving and gauge level of engagement in fundraising. The goal is to complete meetings before the March 8 board meeting. Jones, Jr. will send a proposed meeting schedule to Coval and Kalish.

c. Program Planning and Evaluation

The Program Committee will be discussing program evaluation when they meet. Evaluations are essential to demonstrating and improving program value. Olivier presented a training session on program evaluation for the staff. Young Chautauqua and Black History Live evaluation plans are in progress; Colorado Book Awards, Author Talks, and Community Conversations will be next. Key questions will be developed to align with CH Major Objectives.

The evaluation training session will be abbreviated for presentation at the board meeting. The Board's primary role in evaluations is as a big-picture thought-partner.

For the past several years, CH and the High Plains Chautauqua (HPC) committee have been working within a transition plan that incrementally transfers program responsibilities from CH to community leadership, and provides for acquisition of a separate 501(c)3. The transition plan and current community perspectives need to be reviewed and discussed to determine the program's future. A meeting with the HPC leadership is scheduled for February 18.

d. Finance and Infrastructure

Keith shared that the FY2024 year-end statement is pending, and will remain in draft form until the audit is complete. The audit is scheduled for the third week of March. Staff will receive a list of requests to start addressing in advance. FY2025 financial statements are expected by mid-February.

Keith and Coval will meet to discuss strategies to put in place in the event that federal funding is paused. NEH funding under the current continuing resolution extends through March. It is unknown if a federal budget will be approved by then.

3. Humanities on the Hill

The Federation of State Humanities Councils' annual Humanities on the Hill (HoH) outreach to Congress is scheduled for March 4-6. It is not within the budget to send staff to Washington DC, so virtual meetings to share CH activities with representatives will be scheduled. Staff will prepare meeting materials. Board members are welcome to participate. Those interested should reach out to Coval.

4. Other business

There was no other business.

Next meeting: February 19 at 2:00 pm

Adjourned.