

**Meeting Minutes of the Executive
Committee of the Board of Directors
of the Arizona Historical Society**

April 29, 2024

Mission: Connecting people through the power of Arizona's history.

Minutes

- 1. Call to Order** – By President Linda Elliott-Nelson at 12:05pm
- 2. Roll Call** – By President Linda Elliott-Nelson
 - a. Present – Robert Ballard, DeNise Bauer, Linda Elliott-Nelson, Jim Snitzer, Linda Whitaker, Bruce Gwynn
 - b. Absent – Tom Foster, Desirae Barquin, Deborah Bateman
 - c. AHS Board Member Present – Kelly Corsette
 - d. Staff – David Breeckner, Melba Davis, Rebekah Tabah-Percivel, Vince Bradley, Jace Dostal, Salessia McGowan, Sebastian Alt, Nikky D'Anzi, Rachael O'Hara

Due to the absence of a quorum until 12:09 pm, agenda items on approval of the March 25, 2024, minutes and the Sanguinetti House and Gardens were delayed until a quorum was present.

- 3. Call to the Public** – Linda Elliott-Nelson
 - a. No members of the public present.
- 4. Finance Committee** – David Breeckner shared that the governor's office had given notice to AHS on April 22, 2024, of budget cuts to all state agencies in an action to address the state deficit. There are also mandatory caps on employee headcounts in effect on Saturday, April 27, 2024. The total budget cuts to AHS are around \$170K. Per David Breeckner, the budget cuts will not have a large detrimental effect on AHS.

Linda Whitaker asked if David Breeckner had received feedback on the data previously submitted by Arizona Historical Society (AHS) to the governor. David Breeckner replied that AHS had received information that the submittal had been received, but that no formal follow-up had been received. There is no estimate on the timeline for this.

Linda Whitaker asked about the impact on the governor's plan for budget and the

length of the legislative session. David Breeckner said he has not heard of anything yet, but that this would probably lengthen the legislative session. There will be an impact on the AHS outreach, given the push on budget reductions. There was an AHS request for a \$1.4m increase, but since this push would probably not be fruitful, AHS will step back on requesting this increase.

David Breeckner reported that before last week, AHS's headcount was 49 people; the strategic plan was based on 47 people. However, AHS had to submit the headcount at the current staffing level, based on bodies in seats and contracted personnel. This total is 36 positions: 34 staff, and 2 contract workers. The state has not shared the process of moving forward; AHS is in an operational hold of 36 positions per the state.

Linda Whitaker asked what the impact is on people in the pipeline for hiring. David Breeckner reported that **current hirings are paused while awaiting clarification and permitted exceptions to proceed from the State.**

Linda Whitaker asked when AHS will know how and when to proceed. David Breeckner replied that AHS can proceed on the one position recently vacated.

Robert Ballard asked for clarification that this situation involved headcount of employees and not the amount of employee salaries. Mel Davis confirmed.

5. **Minutes** – with DeNise Bauer and Bruce Gwynn joining the meeting, quorum was reached and Linda Elliott-Nelson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2024, meeting. Minutes were unanimously approved. (Linda Whitaker, Robert Ballard)
6. **Sanguinetti House Museum and Gardens Update.** Bruce Gwynn shared that things are moving ahead. The Yuma County Historical Society (YCHS) is operating the two areas (Sanguinetti House Museum and Gardens, Jack Mellon Building). The Mellon House is being renovated and a donor is placing new flooring in the Sanguinetti House.

On April 23, 2024, Senator Brian Fernandez set up a press conference and invited Representative Tim Dunn, the Mayor of Yuma Doug Nicholls, and other dignitaries, to celebrate the passing of the bill moving the ownership of the three areas mentioned above from the state of Arizona to the City of Yuma. This appeared in the headlines of the Yuma Sun newspaper.

David Breeckner shared that AHS staff was on site Monday, April 22, 2024, through Thursday, April 25, 2024, for the cleanup of the Molina Building. David Breeckner gave credit to Rebekah Tabah's team, Jace Dostal, and David Turpie for the work they accomplished and noted that dignitaries from the Yuma community toured the Molina Building.

Bruce Gwynn noted that the portcullis of the Mellon House was scheduled to be worked on and a state contractor from Flagstaff came to Yuma to build this new roof at a cost of \$38K. Bruce shared that he asked a local contractor for the cost of this portcullis and was told a median cost for this project would be \$1.5K. Bruce said that he was concerned about the difference in cost.

David Breeckner responded that this was a procurement matter, which should be discussed with State Procurement during their upcoming Q&A session with the Board in May or June.

Linda Elliott-Nelson noted that she toured the Molina Building the morning of April 25, 2024, before the AHS staff left and took photos of the items there. She commended the AHS staff for the amount of work they did during a very short period of time.

7. **Outreach Committee** – David Breeckner stated that given the budget situation, AHS will be scaling back on outreach to the legislature. He also assured everyone that AHS is in a better position given the previous actions done on the budget.
8. **Boards and Commissions** – Linda Elliott-Nelson shared that she and David Breeckner had met with Carlos Ramos, the Director of Boards and Commissions several times. Given the current situation, there is difficulty adding board members. There is a possibility that by going through the lengthy application process, someone could be approved to join the AHS board, but only for a maximum of one year. Linda noted that the AHS full board meeting on May 31, 2024, will be a hybrid one, involving both in-person and virtual meeting options. Carlos Ramos has been invited to attend this meeting to share information about the current state of Boards and Commissions and their process.

David Breeckner added that if current board members are considering changing their status, to please contact Linda Elliott-Nelson or David Breeckner first.

Linda Whitaker asked for a general status regarding members only able to serve one year and urged that people need to know that they would only be able to serve one year.

David Breeckner said that awareness is the best we can do at present. He shared that there are two candidates being put forward for consideration, but we do not know where they are in the process. He added that there are no formal resignations at this time.

Linda Whitaker asked what the process is for resigning from the board.

David Breeckner replied that Boards and Commissions is requiring a formal request for resignation from the board. This request would then need to be voted on by the Executive Committee or the AHS full board.

Linda Elliott-Nelson asked if there had been any reply from Carlos Ramos regarding the last email asking about process, and if there had been any formal resignations from the AHS Board. David Breeckner said no.

- 9. Director's Update** – David Breeckner shared that hiring has been restricted and all hiring efforts re-evaluated. AHS can move forward in one position.

Development projects – there will be pauses on large construction projects. AHS is looking by December on the acquisition on land in Tucson.

The Development Director was an open position, but is being reevaluated as a priority against best needs of the agency and its now limited, available headcount.

The Historical League will be holding an appreciation lunch for AHS employees on May 6, 2024, together with the Prescott Historical Society.

David Breeckner also announced that the employee engagement survey has gone out to employees.

- 10. Announcements** – no announcements

- 11. Adjournment** – Linda Elliott-Nelson adjourned the meeting at 12:46 pm.

Dated this 29th day of April, 2024.

Arizona Historical Society

Linda Elliott-Nelson, Board President

The Arizona Historical Society does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the administration of its program and services as prescribed by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation such as a sign language interpreter or alternative formats, by contacting AHS Administration at 520-617-1169. Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time to arrange for the accommodation.

Upcoming Executive Committee Meetings

Noon and Virtual unless announced otherwise

Please use the following link as a hyperlink to solicit online registrations. It has been set up to work (individually) for all Executive Committee meetings in 2024.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUlc-2hqDIsG9QarPDKi819C7uUohXboP9Q>

All meetings are hosted and live-streamed via Zoom.

May 20, 2024; June 24, 2024; July 22, 2024; August 26, 2024; September 23, 2024; October 28, 2024; November 25, 2024; December 30, 2024 (to be discussed)

Upcoming State Board Meetings

Noon and Virtual unless announced otherwise

Please use the following link as a hyperlink to solicit online registrations. It has been set up to work (individually) for all State Board meetings in 2024.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAod-2opj4qHNEcUWuowtZ2nJI5HaZEciYX>

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