



Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: October 12, 2024

Location: Casper College / UW Outreach Room UU 315 & Zoom

Board Members Present:

- Jessica Flock, President, At-Large
- Beki Speas, 2nd Vice President, At Large
- Lucas Keeler, 1st Vice President, NE Rep
- Nancy Tabb, Secretary, At Large
- Dean King, NW Rep
- Deb Davidson, SE Rep

Board Members Absent:

- Heidi McCullough, Treasurer, SE Rep
- Andrea Lewis, SW Rep
- Bud Alley, Out of State Rep

Others Present

- Aley Philp, Executive Director WHS
- Cindy Bower, Chapter President of Natrona County Historical Society
- Tom Rea, Project Director of WyoHistory.org
- Korina Ike, WHS Member, via Zoom
- Nancy Curtis, WHS Member, via Zoom
- Lynn Houze, Interim President of Park County Historical Society, via Zoom
- Guest: Andrew Schneider, WY Arts Alliance

Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order by President Jessica Flock at 9:36 am. Followed by introductions.

Chapter reports were moved up in the agenda to accommodate the 10:00am arrival of guest speaker, Andrew Schneider.

Chapter Reports:

1. Albany - update of recent programs/activities by Jessica Flock
2. Campbell
3. Carbon
4. Converse
5. Crook
6. Ft. Bridger
7. Fremont
8. Goshen – update of recent programs/activities by Deb Davidson

9. Hot Springs - update of recent programs/activities by Dean King
10. Johnson - update of recent programs/activities by Nancy Tabb
11. Laramie
12. South Lincoln
13. Natrona – update of recent programs/activities by Cindy Bower
14. Park – update of recent programs/activities by Lynn Houze. Lynn asked when the membership renewal letters would be sent to the county chapters. Aley indicated that renewal letters were mailed on Oct.2.
15. Platte – update of recent programs/activities by Nancy Curtis
16. Star Valley –
17. Weston – update of the annual meeting by Lucas Keeler
 - Beki Speas hopes to re-start the Sheridan County Historical Society.

Guest Andrew Schneider, Director of the Wyoming Arts Alliance (WYAA) presented a program with discussion on 501c3 options within the political process. The WYAA is a membership-based non-profit started in 1981. It is an all arts alliance including museums, libraries, and archivists. They advocate to increase the Wyoming Arts Council budget. Highlights and recommendations from Andrew include the following:

- If desired, a group of 501c3's can form a 501c4 to create an arts & culture caucus, which could work with the WY State Legislature.
 - Any effort to create a 501c4 would need funding.
- Recently, the Wyoming Humanities Council budget request was added to the standard budget of the Wyoming State Legislature.
- Add voter education to our efforts.
- Build positive relationships with individual members of the WY State Legislature.
- Create a 1-page fact sheet about the WY Historical Society to share with legislators.
- Some of the older and smaller history-based museums in the state are “not on brand” with promotions from the Wyoming Office of Tourism.
- Film office at Northwest College was eliminated during the pandemic.
- Wyoming needs a film workforce and support from individual communities to grow a vibrant state to entice film production/films about Wyoming to be filmed in Wyoming. Need experts in each county to provide information about how their community can support film production.
- Film Production in WY – 1/8 of 1 staff person's time at the WY Tourism Office is dedicated to film production.
- 20% of a 501c3's budget may be allocated for advocacy.
- Tourists that come to Wyoming for the history, culture and arts tend to stay longer.
- WYAA recently hired a grant writer.
- Update about the America250 effort in Wyoming
 - Encourage committees in each county, possibly through the county commissions.
 - Each WHS board member should reach out to their local county commissioners about the celebration in July 2026.

Break for lunch at 11:45. Meeting commenced at 12:04 pm.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

The minutes from quarterly meeting of the Executive Committee held on September 6, 2024 were amended; the spelling of Ann ~~Nobel~~ should be Ann **Noble**. The sentence, “The Wyoming Historical

Foundation is the entity that is in charge of fundraising for the Wyoming Historical Society. Any ideas we have for fundraisers should go through them” was added to the end of the paragraph before Upcoming events of WHS. Nancy Tabb made a motion to accept minutes with these changes which was seconded by Deb Davidson and approved.

The Executive Committee was not provided with meeting minutes from the annual meeting of the General membership on Saturday, Sept.7, 2024.

Treasurer’s Report: We did not receive a Treasurer’s Report prior to the meeting. Aley reported that nothing has changed since the quarterly meeting on Sept.6, 2024. Aley shared the following items:

- We cashed in our \$50,000 CD in July 2024 in an effort to help balance the budget of the society.
- Aley plans to submit a grant funding request of \$10,000 for general operations from the WY Community Foundation.
- Aley indicated that the Management and Oversight committee approved a \$10,000 Crossroads grant application to the Wyoming Humanities Council. Aley described the grant application would fund a live action Oregon Trail Live event in 2025. If funded, Aley would travel with the Live event simulation to the Pioneer Museum in Lander, the Rockpile Museum in Gillette, and the Wyoming Territorial Prison in Laramie.

Foundation’s Report: The following report was submitted by Ann Noble, Wyoming Historical Foundation President, and read by Jessica Flock.

- The non-event fundraising brochure went out to members around the first of October. Foundation treasurer, Alena Wagner, reports that to date more than \$3,000 has been received. In addition to sending donors a receipt, Ann will send out handwritten notes to all.
- Soon the Foundation will begin developing a solid plan for fundraising.
- Nothing in the minutes of the EC meeting on September 6th report the motion passed regarding the Foundation’s mission as the fundraising arm of the Society. Perhaps that was recorded in the minutes of the General Membership meeting which we know won’t be approved until the 2025 annual meeting. Let us know.
- Linda has been in touch with WyoGives and will finalize paperwork in mid-March as required.

President’s Report: see attached report. Jessica added the following items:

- Social media ad hoc committee - Suggested members include Jessica Flock, Janelle Molony, Lain Prior, Heidi McCullough and Aley Philp.
- Marketing & Membership Ad hoc committee – suggested members include Cheryl O’Brien.

Executive Director’s Report: see attached report. In addition, Aley shared the following items:

- Lain Prior, the WHS Executive Assistant, hopes to start a new chapter of the historical society at the University of Wyoming.
- Described the “Light in the Window” project to remember Paul Revere's Ride for America 250. County courthouses will have 2 lights in the window.
- Aley reported that the Membership Database is ready to use. Currently, syncing everything with QuickBooks. Bulk emails will begin to be sent. It costs \$5400 per year to subscribe to Every Action membership database.
 - Lain sent a bulk email to the membership in August 2024.
- Beki Speas volunteered to help Aley & Lain use the membership database to its full potential.

- Members can start paying for renewal of memberships on the website now.
 - Jessica noted that the online site for membership renewal is missing three of our seventeen county chapters. In addition, the available county chapters all indicate that membership is out of stock.
 - Jessica recommended the historical society remove the current mandatory credit card fees which were added to the cost of online membership. It was noted that it is not standard practice of non-profits to require donors/members to pay for the credit card processing fees. Rather, non-profits should ask their donors/members to voluntarily cover those fees so that the entirety of the donation goes to the organization.
 - Jessica noted that it is not legal to charge over 4% for credit card processing fees. If the historical society decides to charge members these fees, then it must be 4% or less. Currently, the \$2.50 fee addition at the \$50 general membership level is 5%.

Committee Reports:

- **Awards** - Beki reported that there was a good selection of award nominations for the 2024 awards. Discussion included possibly adding new categories for podcasts and memoirs. They are considering adding an electronic form for submission, possibly a Google form or fillable PDF. Jessica requested a press release for the 2024 WHS Award winners be sent to county chapters and uploaded onto website.
- **Constitution and Bylaws** - Amendments to the Bylaws were approved at the General membership meeting on Sept. 7, 2024. Bylaws need to be updated on the website. It was suggested that this committee needs a chair who lives in Wyoming.
- **Finance** – no report.
- **Historic Preservation** – no report.
- **Legislative** – Currently, we have no members on this committee. Cindy Brown was suggested as a WHS member to ask to serve on the Legislative committee.
- **Management & Oversight** – Tom Rea reported. Committee members include Mike Jording (Chair), Tom Rea, Rick Ewig, Deb Davidson and Jessica Flock. Recent grant application to the Wyoming Community Foundation was emailed to the M&O committee for review two days prior to the deadline. The committee would like a better timeline for grant submissions. It was suggested that all grant applications be submitted to M&O at least two weeks prior to the deadline.
- **Nominating** – Lynn reported that the committee has not met as of Oct. 12.
- **Oral History** – Jessica will ask Leslie Waggener to continue to serve on this committee.
- **Projects (Homsher)** – Lucas Keeler reported. Committee members include Patty Kessler, Brie Blasi and Sara Davis. Need a press release to call for submissions.
- **Publications** - Members are Nancy Curtis, Jessica Flock, Nancy Tabb, Dean King, Carl Hallberg and Aley Philp. Wyoming History News needs to be at the printers by the 20th of each month. The 2026 calendar will likely be aligned with the theme for America250. The Fall 2024 issue of *Annals of Wyoming* arrived in members mailboxes last week. Carl Hallberg will publish one more issue in January 2025 and then he will retire in April 2025. The pass-through grant from Wyoming State Parks and Cultural Resources, which has been paying for the publication costs of the *Annals of Wyoming*, may be reduced again during the 2026 session of the Wyoming State Legislature. The Wyoming State Archives has been underwriting the publication by allowing Carl Hallberg to

complete the editing during his regular work hours. The Winter 2024 issue of Annals cost \$7,484.56 to print, plus an unknown amount to mail through our bulk mail permit. The Fall 2024 issue of the Annals of Wyoming cost \$7,339.73 to print, plus the additional shipping costs. Costs for print publications continues to increase. We should anticipate a 7% cost increase due to inflation. Beginning in 1989, Rick Ewig edited and produced four issues per year. Since 2019, we have averaged three copies of the Annals per year. We might consider printing two double issues per year to reduce overall expenses for the Annals. WY State statute 9-2-415 does not specify the number of periodicals to print each year. WY State Parks and Cultural Resources (SPCR) has agreed to fund the design of the Annals through their in-house graphic designer. SPCR designing the Annals will begin with the January 2025 issue. Discussion was brought up to consider longer articles for *Annals* and shorter ones from the same authors for WyoHistory.org. Would it be possible to reduce costs by utilizing the University of Wyoming Press? We would need a connection to UW through a faculty member. Consider asking Scott Henkel who is the director of the Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research.

- o **Website** –Kathy Bogan has taken over management of the website since Steve Foster plans to step back from the responsibilities. Currently, digitized copies of the Annals of Wyoming from 1923 to 2005 are available online. An index is available on the WHS website.
- o **Wyoming History Day** - no report. Schools in Pavillion, WY may participate in WY History Day.
- o **WyoHistory.org** - Kylie McCormick is officially the new project director. An advisory board was formed and includes Lynn Houze, Lucas Keeler, Paul Flesher, Ann Noble and Tom Rea. Both Kylie and Tom are involved in writing content and selecting photos for the exhibits at the newly remodeled Wyoming State Capitol. They meet monthly with the Capitol Interpretive Exhibits and Wayfinding Subcommittee. Many of the exhibits will be installed by February 2025. The electronic content in kiosk's is another layer of work still to complete. WyoHistory.org's grant application to the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund is a project to add a version of the publications by the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to the WyoHistory.org online website. The SHPO articles are the documents submitted to the National Register of Historic Places and Landmarks in Wyoming.

Old Business: Jessica mentioned that previous planning documents provided by Robert Waggener would be useful to review. They may serve as a good starting point for a formal strategic plan. Either Aley or Jessica can provide the EC the Dropbox link.

New Business:

- o Aley mentioned that there will be a membership drive on social media.
- o Aley will be out of the office November 19th through November 23rd to attend the American Association for State and Local History meeting in Minnesota.
- o Tax forms from the accountant are due on November 15th. As a non-profit, we submit our taxes by February 15th.
- o 2025 Trek will be in Converse County in June 2025.
- o 2025 Annual Meeting will be hosted by the Fort Bridger Historical Association. No official dates have been announced.
- o 2026 Trek in Albany County from June 18-21, 2026.
- o 2026 annual meeting in Fremont County.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 by Jessica Flock. Motioned for approval by Deb Davidson and

seconded by Beki Speas. The next quarterly board meeting will be held on Saturday, January 18, 2025 at 9:00 am via Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Nancy Tabb, Secretary

Reviewed and edited by Jessica Flock, President of WHS on Nov.13, 2024.