

**ILLINOIS STATE MUSEUM  
BOARD MEETING**

September 13, 2021, 10 a.m.

Zoom meeting

**Attending:** Chair Donna Sack, Secretary Sarah Doherty; Board members Leverne Backstrom, Tamira Brennan, Andrea Carlson, DNR Representative Kristin DiCenso, Graham Peck, Roger Taylor, and nikhil trivedi; Illinois Museum Society Board Chair Cinda Klickna and Staff Member Jamila Wicks; Museum Staff Members: Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko, Jennifer Edginton, Meghan Lindstrom, Brooke Morgan, and Robert Sill.

**I. Welcome**

Chair Donna Sack welcomed attendees and the meeting commenced at 10:02 a.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Meghan called the roll and a quorum was present.

Donna thanked Rachel Torbert for her past service as the DNR representative to the board and introduced Kristin DiCenso as the new DNR representative. The members of the board introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds and work experience.

**III. Approval of the Minutes of June 14, 2021**

The minutes were presented for approval by Secretary Sarah Doherty. Roger moved to approve the minutes, Andrea seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**IV. Chair's Report**

Donna reported on the *Fashioning Illinois* exhibit which opened as an exhibit in the Lockport Gallery after being featured in Springfield. A nice crowd was present at the opening reception. Donna thanked staff members for organizing a successful event, taking care of many details including logistics for August heat and COVID restrictions.

**V. DEAI Committee**

Andrea introduced the topic of land acknowledgements and thanked Cinnamon for providing excellent resources on the topic in the board packet. Andrea clarified that land acknowledgements have a historical precedent and were used long before European colonizers were in the Americas. She shared that there is valid criticism about acknowledgements when they are

performative without attempting any lasting institutional commitments. nikhil thanked Andrea for providing historical context for land acknowledgements and recommended the museum use its land acknowledgement to foster a closer relationship with Indigenous Nations.

Roger asked what land or territory the museum's land acknowledgement would need to cover. Cinnamon said that different land acknowledgements may be necessary for each museum location as well as a broader one that covers all of Illinois. Andrea suggested that the land acknowledgements be translated to Indigenous languages when they are completed and displayed at the museums. Cinnamon recommended that the DEAI committee could start the project. Donna concurred and suggested that board members should continue to educate themselves on the topic by keeping up with national news on this topic, She also suggested that we consider bringing in guest speakers with expertise and background in this work.

Cinnamon shared that there are many opportunities for board development and training. IDNR is currently offering DEAI training to all department staff and Cinnamon will look into the possibility of offering this training to board members. Andrea would like to invite more Indigenous people to speak to the board to give a broader view of Indigenous perspectives. Cinnamon said that Jamila Wicks and Jennifer Edginton had applied for a grant to help support hiring Indigenous people for board training or to help develop the museum's land acknowledgement.

## **VI. Museum Director's Report**

Cinnamon confirmed that the museum is continuing to complete necessary hires. The manager of visitor services position had been filled by Jacob Wankel, who had worked with the frontline museum staff in a temporary capacity for over a year. Logan Pappenfort joined the museum staff at Dickson Mounds as Curator of Anthropology. He had worked with the museum before in his capacity as second chief of the Peoria nation.

Cinnamon provided an update from George Sisk from DNR Legal on the deaccessioned quilt collection. At this time, the board's action is a title change only, and the quilts remain in the museum collection. To properly dispose of the quilts and maintain accreditation the museum will need an exception to the State Disposal Act. George Sisk is writing the exception.

Cinnamon discussed the museum's strategic plan, reminding board members that the current plan, was revised in consideration of Covid. Stated goals are

being reached. Cinnamon would now like to create a new Strategic Plan, that would also take IDNR's new plan into consideration. The museum needs a lighter, more visionary plan that can be more easily communicated. One possibility is to create a three-year strategic framework with one-year actionable plans. nikhil supported considering smaller increments of time since it would allow the museum's plan to be more responsive to changing situations. Graham said that he believes aspirational goals should not be included and a plan should be focused on what is feasible and realistic for the institution.

Robert Sill presented a proposed change to the museum's Emeritus and Adjunct Appointment Policy. Cinnamon wants to avoid blanket reapproval of all emeritus and adjunct appointments. It is possible that a past appointee might no longer be a fit with current ISM policies and operations. For example, someone questioning the value of NAGPRA. Donna suggested adding language to the emeritus section clarifying that the position does not offer any financial compensation in the same way that is currently reflected in the adjunct section. Graham concurred that should be done and moved to approve the policy with the language change. Sarah seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Brooke Morgan presented three deaccession requests. In the first, Brooke requested to deaccession one box of historic artifacts and one of prehistoric flakes that were collected in Linn County, Iowa by the Rock Island District of the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE). USACE determined that the site was not USACE owned property and therefore the collection should not be curated by the ISM but instead should be held at the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) in Iowa. Brooke said that if it was subject to NAGPRA that would be the responsibility of the OSA in Iowa, not the ISM. Tamira moved to approve, Kristin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Brooke presented a second deaccession request for a collection of 65 soil core samples from the St. Louis District of the USACE. They were originally collected in 1990 as part of a landscape study and were stored at the RCC. Soil cores do not store well long-term, and the samples had deteriorated. USACE determined that they did not own the samples and that they currently hold no research potential. USACE also warned that the materials used to wrap the soil cores would have also deteriorated in the decades since their collection and recommended caution when the cores were disposed of due to the potential hazardous dusty material that remained. Donna asked what level of caution would need to be observed to safely dispose of the cores. Brooke

confirmed that the materials were not hazmat level, and the primary concerns were curators breathing in the dust, as well as the dust potentially contaminating the collection if it were opened outside of a decontamination chamber. Sarah moved to approve the deaccession, Andrea seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The third deaccession request was for 11 ancestors and 282 associated funerary objects from four sites across Illinois. The collection would be repatriated to the Peoria Tribe. Andrea thanked Brooke for her NAGPRA work. She asked how consultation was done with the affiliated tribes or if the Peoria were the only ones consulted. Brooke confirmed that the consultation was with the Peoria alone because all four sites had previously been determined the locations of former Peoria villages, which confirmed them to be culturally affiliated with the Peoria Tribe. Brooke further clarified that any sites without previously established cultural affiliation would require her to consult all NAGPRA representatives. Andrea asked for the last time any tribes were contacted other than the Peoria. Brooke said that she has been reaching out consistently since she joined the museum staff in 2018 and that currently 20 tribes have been invited to consult at Dickson Mounds to provide guidance on exhibit changes. Andrea said that she would continue to ask about consultation each time repatriation was sought to provide a record of the museum's consultation practices. Roger moved to approve the deaccession, Tamira seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

**VII. IDNR report—Kristin DiCenso, Chief of Staff**

Kristin said that IDNR currently has 1178 employees with a top head count of 1250, the lowest she has seen. In 2002 the agency had a headcount of 2300. IDNR has taken on the responsibility for more sites statewide but has lost over 1000 positions. In 2017, with the Historic Preservation Agency restructuring, many of the sites were absorbed into IDNR. Often, land adjacent to historic sites are donated by landowners but IDNR is unable to increase staff to cover these areas. Andrea noted that Native nations would appreciate any land donations, which would also alleviate the staffing burden. Kristin said that would need to be arranged with Andy Manar, the new deputy governor, who is familiar with IDNR sites and is active in any related conversations.

Kristin was pleased to see the museum take a significant role in Juneteenth this year. The exhibit *Noir* was very well received and there was excitement for it in the community. Kristin recommended that the museum consider hosting a similar exhibition annually.

Kristin shared that, despite the staffing shortages, IDNR has been very active since the board's last meeting. Despite COVID limitations and lower annual fair attendance, the Department had an active presence at the Illinois State Fair within Conservation World.. The Department is also very involved in the new energy bill before the Illinois Senate. Department-wide DEAI training is scheduled to begin this week and a staff survey will solicit staff opinions to inform what can be done to make the department more welcoming and accessible for all employees.

Kristin said that given the new Delta variant, the Department is concerned about a resurgence of Covid and is considering more hybrid work. She confirmed that the Department will not approve completely remote work and is planning how to safely bring as many employees to the office as possible.

**VIII. Illinois State Museum Society Report—Cinda Klickna**

Cinda shared that the Museum Society Board was able to meet in person in July and hosted a reception for museum staff. One of the Society's current goals is to have the new museum shop open to guests in November for the holiday season. The Society will also strive to build awareness about the headcount issue in IDNR, its historic sites, and the ISM system. Another goal for the Society is to follow up with people, including community leaders, who attended *Noir* and cultivate relationships and build membership. A future goal for the Society is to host a spring reception for legislators to create stronger relationships between them and the museum. Cinda emphasized that it is imperative to help legislators understand and acknowledge what a great resource the museum system is for their constituents across the state. The museum is not limited to a single site in Springfield so support should come from across the state.

Cinda said that the Society has been able to hire new staff. Grants to support additional staff are being pursued.

**IX. Old Business**

Donna called for old business. There was none.

**X. Public Comment**

None present.

**XI. Adjournment**

Donna asked for a motion to adjourn. Sarah moved to adjourn, Tamira seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.