

ILLINOIS STATE MUSEUM BOARD MEETING
November 7, 2022, 10:30 a.m.

Dickson Mounds Museum
10956 N. Dickson Mounds Rd., Lewistown, IL

Attending: Officers: Chair Donna Sack and Secretary Sarah Doherty ; Board Members Tamira Brennan, Andrea Carlson, Chris Pappan, Beth Shadur, Roger Taylor, nichil trivedi, and Director Colleen Callahan;

Illinois State Museum Society Staff Member Jamila Wicks; Illinois State Museum Staff Members Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko, Jennifer Edginton, Meghan Lindstrom, Heather Miller, and Logan Pappenfort; Strategic Planning Consultant Laura Roberts; two members of the public.

I. Welcome

Chair Donna Sack welcomed attendees and the meeting was called to order at 10:34 am.

II. Roll Call

Meghan Lindstrom called the roll and a quorum was present.

III. Approval of the Minutes of September 12, 2022

Secretary Sarah Doherty presented the minutes for approval. Beth Shadur moved to approve the minutes, Tamira Brennan seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. New Business

Donna welcomed Museum staff members Logan Pappenfort, Interim Director of Dickson Mounds Museum (DMM), and Heather Miller, Director of Tribal Relations. Logan thanked the Board for their attention and care toward Dickson Mounds Museum. He appreciated the opportunity to show them the site and share the challenges the Museum faces in the present community. Heather gave a brief overview of the work she is now involved in across the Department of Natural Resources. Her position will enable her to help deal with issues of the past and create an opportunity to improve, create, and share narratives of Tribal communities. She asked the Board to check in on the process and assist her in finding new ways to move forward. Board members and Museum staff gave brief introductions of themselves and their areas of expertise.

V. Chair's Report

Donna recommended the three deaccession requests be combined and moved forward in the agenda to free up the rest of the meeting for the strategic planning discussion. The Board agreed. Heather presented the three deaccession requests. The first was two vials of botanical material collected in 1981 from the Channel Islands in California. The second was four ground stone tools from the William McAdams collection, three of which were reportedly collected from Los Angeles while the fourth was only known to be from California. The third was of two bear teeth from the Eliza and Helen Condell collection, reportedly from Los Angeles per the catalog card. Heather emphasized that the items presented in the three deaccession requests lacked provenance or connection to Illinois. While the items did not fall under NAGPRA they were collected in California and would be better curated at a California repository. She would be traveling to Chumash country next week to return ancestors and, if the deaccession was approved, also hand over the California items. Sarah asked if the items were expected by the Chumash and if they were prepared to accept them. Heather confirmed the items were expected and the Chumash were prepared to properly curate them. Director Callahan moved to approve the deaccession requests, Andrea seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Museum Director's report

Cinnamon introduced Laura Roberts of Roberts Consulting as the Museum's strategic planning consultant. Laura proposed focusing on four questions to help identify the driving forces for the Illinois State Museum (ISM). All suggestions would be written down to be reviewed later by the Strategic Planning Team, composed of the Museum's Leadership Team and the Board's Executive Committee.

“What would you like to say about the Illinois State Museum in 10 years?”

Laura asked the Board to focus on the Museum's impact, community, and audience instead of concentrating on the institution itself.

Andrea would like to have no ancestors, Associated Funerary Objects, or sacred materials in the Museum's collection.

Roger would like for ISM and DMM to have significantly higher attendance. Andrea disagreed in the case of DMM as she would prefer the area not be open to the public and that the buildings be removed.

Jennifer would like to have strong youth programming. Cinnamon expanded that to the Museum being more child centered and potentially provide daycare or other social services.

Heather would like for the Museum to be more tribally focused with a strong tribal presence at DMM.

nikhil would like to see the ISM to not be 'locked' on the geographical borders of the state.

Andrea would like to better educate the people of Illinois about Native history and work toward the establishment of a reservation in Illinois.

Donna would like for the ISM to be a center of education where people can share histories that are not segmented. She would also like for the Museum to have more collections digitized and to develop more online resources.

Beth would like for the Museum to hold relevance to a wider range of constituents across the state. Tamira particularly wanted the Museum to have a larger presence in Southern Illinois and rural areas. Sarah said that the acquisition of State Historic Sites with new interpretation would enable the ISM to have greater reach. Tamira recommended the Museum also consider natural sites like fossil beds, limestone quarries, and man-made mines.

Cinnamon supported the idea and recommended looking into cross-disciplinary sites.

Donna would like for the ISM to be viewed as essential to the state, like other departments. Director Callahan said she is working to add 'Cultural Resources' to the department name, to more accurately reflect the work completed at the Department of Natural Resources.

Andrea recommended making DMM a Site of Conscience. They would like to see it become a place to discuss past wrongs with a focus on making it a healing space. Andrea suggested the Board consider in the future how different sites can harm one group more than others.

Robert Sill had sent a list of suggestions for the Museum's art collection. Cinnamon shared a few key points and emphasized that the existing art collection was mainly filled with the work of white male artists. Current and future exhibition planning will be focused on increasing the diversity of the artists featured in the collection. Jennifer suggested that experiences like art classes or performances could help bring in non-traditional artists to the Museum.

Laura asked what work needed to be done to secure assistance for the Museum from public office holders. Tamira said elected officials would need to clearly understand the value of the ISM and how much was lost in the 2015 closure. Cinnamon said that they would need to understand that the ISM provides essential services throughout the state. Jamila agreed and emphasized the importance of the Museum being a place where all the

people of Illinois feel welcomed.

“What does ISM need to be good at to take on adaptive change?”

nikhil recommended that the Museum have a plan in place in the event of another shutdown or similar disaster, since there were two shutdowns in the last seven years.

Andrea recommended the Board and staff learn to work with humility on NAGPRA repatriation efforts. She commended Cinnamon's leading style in these efforts with the understanding that some repatriations will be transactional in nature and some Native people would not want to develop a deeper relationship with the ISM. Cinnamon recommended that the Board and staff develop a stronger ‘proximity’ and care of repatriation and other social issues.

Laura recommended that the staff develop better ‘social competency’. Based on Dina Bailey’s report of the Museum staff, some staff members have greater discomfort in DEAI and learning power-sharing than others.

Donna recommended that the Museum be clear in its direction and messaging. ISM should be humble but not apologize for its decolonization and DEAI efforts. Laura recommended the Museum be firm on non-negotiables, such as genocides, but be willing to discuss other contentious issues, such as climate change.

Jamila said the ISM needs to secure new avenues of funding. Many of the Museum's recent exhibitions and programming have not been as attractive to traditional donors as in the past.

“What key questions do we need to resolve?”

Laura suggested the Board consider how to use the State Historic Sites acquisition to develop a fully statewide presence. She also suggested that the Board determine how to capture existing institutional memory, establish more public relevance for the Museum, and find ways to approach topics such as sundown towns or forced removals in ways that do not cause communal harm.

Andrea cautioned the Board to be aware that ‘public’ use or ‘public’ relevance could be weaponized against marginalized people. She used the National Park Service as an example. Some treaties would require land to be returned to Native people if not in use, but the creation of national parks meant undeveloped land was considered ‘in use’ and thus not returned. Andrea asked the Board to consider this risk of ‘public’ interest in future. Cinnamon confirmed this would be relevant with the State Historic Sites merger since

there is support for some sites such as Cahokia Mounds to be designated as national parks.

Cinnamon said the Museum should anticipate future staffing needs as several employees are expected to retire. She would like to try to determine which staff members will be present in the next five years and who and what skills will need to be invested in to cover gaps.

Tamira requested the Museum complete an inventory of what is present in the collection to determine which areas are lacking and should be expanded. Cinnamon warned that state mandates and storage space would limit which areas could be able to grow.

Jenn said that the Museum should explore how to center current and future visitors.

Cinnamon said that the Museum used to be very heavily focused on scientific research but to the detriment of art, history, and even the public. Research does continue but the Museum needs to find new ways to balance support and make the research accessible and meaningful to the public.

Andrea said the Museum needs to examine itself, its purpose, and how to define the borders of Illinois and its people.

Donna asked who was responsible for state legislation. Cinnamon confirmed she works with DNR Legal to change or create Museum related legislation.

“What do we need to know or understand to make good decisions?”

Laura asked the Board to focus on what research or resources would be beneficial to help decision making or planning in the future.

Director Callahan recommended that the Board prepare an outline of what they want to see in the Museum system in 10 years. The Board or a smaller committee should then evaluate what is needed to help reach those goals. Donna suggested the Illinois Museum Society Board be involved as well. Heather recommended bringing in Tribal nations as partners. Cinnamon confirmed that many expressed interest in working more closely at the Tribal consultation in May.

Cinnamon recommended that the Board receive training to better understand issues like state statute and budget.

Roger asked if the Board members could be authorized to reach out to their individual representatives and senators. Director Callahan seconded the suggestion. Her business with the legislature made her realize how high a percentage of legislators on committees were unaware of DNR's work and purpose, with the Museum included. Andrea and nikhil cautioned that any

Board member advocating to a legislator must do so as an Illinois citizen and not as a representative of the Board. Director Callahan also recommended that the Board complete training on the legislative process.

nikhil recommended that research be done to understand what would make the Museum essential and welcoming for all audiences.

Cinnamon distributed the document “Director's Vision for the Illinois State Museum”, which states that the Illinois State Museum will be a 'museum of service' to the people of Illinois. She asked the Board to review the draft, which will be edited as the strategic planning process continues.

The Board adjourned for lunch at 12:00 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

VII. Old Business

Donna called for old business and there was none.

VIII. Public Comment

Debra Yepa- Pappan commended the Board for their repatriation efforts and was pleased to know the institution understands the necessity of NAGPRA work.

IX. Museum Tour

The Board was led on a tour of the Dickson Mounds Museum by Logan Pappenfort.

X. Adjournment

Donna asked for a motion to adjourn. Tamira moved to adjourn, Andrea seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.