

**ILLINOIS STATE MUSEUM
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Minutes of the Meeting
March 9, 2015, 10:00 a.m.
Rm 2-029, James R. Thompson Center, Chicago**

1. Call to Order – Guerry Suggs

The regular meeting of the Illinois State Museum Board of Directors was called to order at 10:20 a.m. on March 9, 2015, at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago. Those in attendance were the Board Chair Guerry Suggs, Vice Chair Dr. Brian Butler, Secretary Dr. Lorin Nevling, and Board Members Jessica Jagielnik, Mary Jo Potter (via phone), Dr. George Rabb, Dr. David Sokol, Leo Welch, and Rosemary Winters. Also attending were ISM Director Dr. Bonnie Styles, DNR Chief of Staff Jason Heffley, and ISM staff members Karen Everingham, and Jim Zimmer.

2. Approval of the Minutes of December 8, 2014, Board Meeting

Chair Guerry Suggs asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 8 Board Meeting. David Sokol moved to accept the minutes as presented, Jessica Jagielnik seconded, and the motion carried.

George Rabb made a motion to permit Mary Jo Potter to participate in the meeting by phone, Lorin Nevling seconded, and the motion carried.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the December 8 Executive Session

Guerry Suggs asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Executive Session of December 8. David Sokol moved to accept the Executive Session minutes as presented, Lorin Nevling seconded, and the motion carried.

4. DNR Report – Jason Heffley for Director Wayne Rosenthal

Jason Heffley reported the state budget is in pretty bad shape and we are all feeling the pain. The DNR budget has been cut and a good deal of funding had been pulled from the Museum's line. We were able to get that put back in. We expect a lump sum budget and from that the Museum will be made whole at the end of the day. Jason also said he discussed the Museum Board with Bonnie and that he didn't think there would be any changes to the Board. Guerry noted there is one vacancy on the Museum Board. Jason said to let him know if we have a candidate.

5. Museum Director's Report – Bonnie Styles

a. Transition Update

Bonnie reported that Governor Rauner visited Dickson Mounds Museum along with Director Rosenthal, who had a more thorough tour of the facility. We also hosted the Sportsman's Caucus Legislative Reception for Director Rosenthal. We had 15 legislators in the museum that morning and many enjoyed tours of the *Mary Ann MacLean Play Museum*. We are also following up to get Mrs. Rauner into the Museum because of her interest in early childhood education. We've made contact with her assistant and hope to get Mrs. Rauner to the Museum on a Saturday to see our Satur-Play and Super Saturday programs that engage elementary age children.

b. Budget Concerns

Bonnie reported we had a great meeting with Jason Heffley and Doug Florence, the new Chief Fiscal Officer at DNR. The 1M cut was not actually a million dollar cut, but was closer to \$400,000 when compared to the FY15 appropriation. We have been assured by Doug that with the lump sum appropriation from GRF allows for flexibility and we should be fine. Bonnie said it has been a roller coaster ride from being cut completely to the current state of affairs, but we seem to be in a good position at this time. Jason noted that of all the transition documents DNR received, the Museum's was by far the most thorough.

c. Critical Positions

Bonnie said that the biggest concerns we have now are the critical hires. We just filled two guard positions at ISM-Springfield, which had been vacant for a while. The next highest priorities for us are the Director and the

Building & Grounds Laborer at SIAAC. We have closed the SIAAC on weekends through the end of March. Beginning April 1 we will re-open on the weekends to catch the tourists traveling through the area. We are looking at either a Wednesday – Sunday or a Tuesday – Saturday schedule moving forward. At this point we can't keep it open seven days with staffing as it is. We understand DNR is reviewing the critical positions list, but we don't know when we will hear on that. Jason said they are moving through it quickly and we are on the list. Bonnie noted we also have three staff retiring soon. She noted that Museum staffing is down about 32% since 2000. We have Carole Peterson our Museum Tech in art who is the main registrar for Art retiring in May. We also have Dr. Tim Cashatt, Chair of Zoology, and Dr. Jeff Saunders, Chair of Geology, retiring at the end of June. All three of these positions are critical and are on our critical hire list. Guerry Suggs noted that they have all been with the Museum for decades, and Bonnie added they take with them a great deal of institutional and professional knowledge.

d. Museum Advocacy

Bonnie reported that she did not attend the American Alliance of Museum's Advocacy Day this year, but she did get all the materials. Those materials are in the Board packets and she encouraged everyone to look those over. Bonnie also noted the State advocacy day was set for April 23 and that she would be getting in touch with Jason on this. She noted that DNR administers the Public Museum Capital Grants Program and that Director Rosenthal will be invited to attend. She said there would likely be some controversy there because of the suspension of the grants and she wanted to make sure Director Rosenthal was aware and prepared. Lorin asked about the status of those grants. Jason noted a letter was being sent out to ask awardees for an accounting of their progress as well as directing them to freeze spending.

e. Promotions and Raises (Recommendations to Board in June)

Bonnie reported that in June she would be putting forward some promotions for staff, some of whom are in the union. We are still not entirely clear about how these promotions will be received. We have to follow the policy we have as well as the union contract. She said we haven't given promotions to the management staff since our last reorganization. She said she doesn't know what DNR has in the budget or whether they will support these promotions. Guerry noted that we have also not reviewed Bonnie's salary and that we would do that with the personnel committee also.

Bonnie noted that the list of the Museum System legislators is in the Board packet. She said despite the fact that she was unable to go to Washington, D.C., a number of Illinois colleagues visited with our representatives. She said that those legislators were sent packets containing our education and economic impact statements and other materials on the Museum System. Bonnie said her out-of-state travel was not approved, her flight was cancelled multiple times, and she had bronchitis so she did not go. She was disappointed that the travel was not approved but she said there seems to be a ban on out-of-state travel right now.

6. Dickson Mounds Museum Update

Bonnie reported that the Governor's visit, arranged by Chris Young Head of DNR Communications, was great for us. She said Mike Wiant gave him a great tour, and he appeared to be impressed with the facility. We then gave Director Rosenthal a thorough tour emphasizing Emiquon and environmental education opportunities. The Emiquon Symposium was well attended as was the Winter Gathering. They had 250 people at that event. Eagle Day had 566 attend and Artifact ID day had good attendance despite poor weather. Attendance is up significantly at the facility and very positive things are underway. Mary Jo Potter noted that the Tracy Family Foundation might be a good source of support for programming at Dickson Mounds. Bonnie made note of the information.

7. Art & History Update

Jim Zimmer reported that we have conducted a couple of test history roundtables as proposed in the NEH planning grant submission. We decided to work with our partners—the Illinois Humanities Council and the Illinois State Historical Society—to pre-test the effectiveness of proposed round table discussions. Our first "test" round table was held in Springfield last December. We held a second "test" discussion in January, in Chicago, which was convened in the offices of the Illinois Humanities Council. Participants at the Chicago round table were very eager to assist us in whatever ways they can down the road. One very positive result

has already surfaced. One of the participants put us in contact with Shawn Healy, Civic Learning & Engagement Scholar for the Civics Program at the Robert R. McCormick Foundation. Mr. Healy traveled to Springfield to meet with us and see the Illinois State Museum. Whereas he is not directly involved with the foundation's philanthropic programs, he was impressed with our planning for the exhibition and agreed to introduce us to Don Cook, Director of Philanthropy, when the time is right. The Robert R. McCormick Foundation routinely annually funds up to \$70-80 million for projects. A round table was held with ISM staff was held in February, and two more are scheduled for Dickson Mounds staff on March 12 and another for ISM volunteers on March 16. We should know sometime in early April whether we received the NEH planning grant.

Jim reported another of our recent collaborations has begun with the Lincoln Funeral Coalition. The Museum came on board early as one of the now more than 150 partners involved in planning a series of learning programs and once-in-a-lifetime living history events to honor the leadership and legacies of Abraham Lincoln. The Art Section participated by creating an exhibition called *Remembering Lincoln* that served as a kick-off event on February 1 for the remaining programs leading up to the re-enactment of the funeral cortege in Springfield. The exhibition is an excellent way for us to participate since the iconic image of Abraham Lincoln appears in various forms among the collections of the Illinois State Museum. The exhibition features rarely seen objects that honor the memory of our 16th president. Highlights include a hairwork necklace worn by the wife of Lincoln's bodyguard on the funeral train from Washington D.C. to Springfield, a near life-size sculpture of the president by Lorado Taft, and a mysterious painting by Douglas Volk of the president bearing a cross on his forehead. The exhibition will be on display through May 10 in temporary|PERMANENT Gallery on the second floor. In addition to the exhibition, the ISM co-hosted three educational events for adults held in our auditorium. The first event on February 1 featured Dr. Christine Todd, Medical Humanities Chair, SIU School of Medicine, and was entitled "I Saw His Face: Mourning and Physical Presence from Lincoln's Era to Modern Times." At the same event I presented a PowerPoint called "Remembering Lincoln Visually." On February 15, Brian "Fox" Ellis assumed the role of Walt Whitman in a dramatic reenactment of the poet's history with Lincoln. The final program on March 1 will feature Julia Marsh, Curator of Community Engagement at Allentown Museum of Art of the Lehigh Valley in Pennsylvania, who presented "Looking At Lincoln: Pictures and Persuasions," taken from a book-length manuscript on which she is currently working. The exhibition has received very favorable attention in the press and elsewhere. Jim said he was interviewed by two television stations, and there was a fine article with an image in the State Journal-Register. The exhibition even received mention by the *Chicago Tribune* in an article about the Lincoln Coalition programs.

Two exhibitions opened this past week. *Pro-Text: When Words Enter Visual Art*, curated by Robert Sill, opened with a Members' Preview on March 5 at its second venue, in Springfield. This exhibition was the primary driver for establishing the *Pro-Text* Partnership with the University of Illinois-Springfield, Lincoln Land Community College, and the Springfield Art Association, who are also featuring text-related art in their galleries. An evening of progressive receptions for all sites is scheduled for Friday, March 13. Nine of the thirty artists in our exhibition are Springfield-area artists. They will participate in a series of three, public "Text Talks" moderated by Sill on the third Thursday of March, April, and May, 7:00 p.m.

Footprints Through Time: Artists Inspired By History, curated by Jane Stevens, premiered last week at the ISM Chicago Gallery. Friday, March 6 was the reception, which drew approximately 250 people. Public programs planned in conjunction with the exhibition include a Women's Film & Video Screening on March 27, 1:00-3:00 p.m. and gallery talks on Thursdays at noon on April 23, May 14, and June 18. Jane will provide a brief tour of the exhibition for the Board today after our lunch.

Four new exhibitions that will premiere this year are in the making. Bob Sill is assembling text-related works from the collection for an exhibition in the temporary|PERMANENT Gallery that will complement *Pro-Text*. Doug Stapleton is putting the finishing touches on two new exhibitions: *Stillness*, featuring still lifes from the collection for the temporary|PERMANENT Gallery, and *Translations: Collage and Assemblage*, which will open in Chicago in August. Angela Goebel-Bain is working on a new exhibition that will feature spectacular quilts from the collection by Bertha Stenge, the Chicago Queen of quilting, and Jean Lohmar at the Southern Illinois

Art and Artisans Center. Lohmar is an award winning artist who has donated more than fifteen quilts to our collections.

We are currently negotiating loans of ISM works for offices in the Capitol. Also, several works from our collection will we on loan to other institutions for exhibition purposes. Among those are:

- Several of the ISM's Manierre Dawson paintings will be used for an exhibition on the artist at the Muskegon Museum of Art and the Kalamazoo Museum of Art.
- Elgin Community College will feature several of our models and maquettes in an exhibition about the Capitol Development Board's Art-in-Architecture Program.
- Several works, yet to be determined, will be loaned for the *Making Their Mark* exhibition at the Peoria Lakefront Museum that will focus on women artists of the 1940s and '50s.
- Ted Halkin and Fred Berger works will be loaned for the *Monster Roster* exhibition at the Smart Museum, Chicago, in early 2016.

Jim also reported he is working on a general operating support grant proposal from the Illinois Arts Council for the Art Section. The grant proposal is due on Monday. David Sokol asked if Board members could have an opportunity to see the art collection. Jim said he would be happy to accommodate the Board. Bonnie said we could do the June meeting at the RCC so Board members could have a tour of the art range.

8. Science Section Update

Bonnie reported that Dr. Eric Grimm is recovering from his recent surgery. He has started back on a part-time basis, and he sends his greetings. Bonnie reported that we are getting ready to open a new exhibition in the Hot Science Gallery. She said both the temporary|PERMANENT Gallery and the Hot Science Gallery have been great for the Museum and allow us to showcase more of our collections and research. She said the new Hot Science exhibition will focus on extinction. The exhibition will present the research of Drs. Jeff Saunders and Chris Widga on the chronology and ecology of the extinction of mammoths and mastodons at the end of the Ice Age. We will have a panel on the ideas of re-wilding and de-extinction. We are linking our research to issues people may have read about. The exhibition will open on April 10 in conjunction with a Second Friday event entitled Hot Science, Hot Art, Hot Food. Those events have been very successful and bring in new audiences. The temporary galleries have also inspired our thinking on the new history exhibition. Dr. George Rabb asked if we had been in contact with the de-extinction group. Bonnie said we were not but had received the literature that Dr. Rabb sent and that it was forwarded to the exhibition team. Rosemary said it's a great idea to tie into current issues and diverse interests. Leo Welch noted how important the de-extinction question is to a wide variety of issues including plant life.

9. ISMS Report

Guerry reported that the Trustees are in the process of reviewing the stores. Since 2010, we have lost over \$100,000. He said many of the losses are tied to over-staffing. We are taking a hard look at that and made some adjustments. He noted that we lost about \$17,600 in the first six months of 2014, but this year we have made over \$1,000 overall. He noted that we closed the kiosk at Dickson Mounds Museum and that we are closing on slow days at SIAAC. He said Chicago has been a bright spot with some of its major sales, but he wanted the Board to be aware of the issues we are facing. Bonnie noted that we closed the Dickson Mounds Museum kiosk over the winter, but are hoping to find a volunteer to run it on busy weekends or for events. She said it will never support a full-time staff person. She said at the SIAAC. the store has lost a great deal of money. The Society had three full-time staff and several part-time people. At the end of the fiscal year we let all the part-time people go because we can't afford to subsidize the operation any longer. In the past we had sufficient indirect funds to cover it, but that is no longer the case. She said visitors want stores and we know the public expects it, so we are trying to find new ways to staff the operation. David Sokol pointed out that this is not a unique problem in the museum world. A lengthy discussion of museum stores ensued as well as sales at our stores. Bonnie noted that our store in Chicago is pretty strong and Springfield has good and bad years. Brian Butler suggested exploring internship opportunities with Rend Lake Community College. Bonnie said these are all ideas to explore as we move forward. She said it is imperative we have a director on-site at the SIAAC to implement our strategies.

Guerry noted the *1877 Fund* appeal has been pretty successful. We received \$55,069 in 2013 and \$55,391 in 2014. We are looking at that on a quarterly basis, and we are using that money to support our programs. Bonnie noted that despite the fact that we are bringing in more monies each year, it is really not a large amount of money. She said it is not money that we use for general operating support, which is what we need. She said she is excited about the fundraising initiative put forth by the Board and is looking forward to the April meeting.

Guerry noted the Society Board met on January 29. He said we had a good year as shown in the Sikitch audit. He also said we are going to request bids for the audit for the next three years as a matter of best practices.

10. Old Business

Guerry reminded the Board to turn in their certifications of the ethics training for Board members as well as their Statements of Economic Interest and Supplemental Statement of Interests.

11. New Business

Bonnie noted that the Illinois Artisans Program is doing a collaborative exhibition with the Robert Morris Gallery. The exhibition is called *Made in Illinois: A Celebration of Thirty Years* and will be hosted at the Morris Gallery on State Street. The exhibition will run through June of 2015 between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Lorin Nevling re-emphasized the importance of the Museum stores and hoped that we would find a way to maintain them. The group again discussed the issue and was in complete agreement.

Jim Zimmer added that during the governmental transition, the art staff learned that new Treasurer Michael Frerichs is a Lincoln buff. At his request, Jim and Bonnie provided him with a private tour of the *Remembering Lincoln* exhibition as well as the rest of the Museum. Bonnie said he was very impressed with the exhibition and the Museum.

Dr. George Rabb made a motion to commend Dr. Bonnie Styles for all her work in support of the Museum System. Dr. David Sokol seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

12. Adjourn

Guerry Suggs moved to adjourn the meeting, David Sokol seconded, and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Approved:

Guerry Suggs, Chair

Date

Lorin Nevling, Secretary

Date