

**Illinois State Museum
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting Minutes
10 a.m., September 14, 2015
Research and Collections Center**

Attending: Guerry Suggs, Chairman; Dr. Brian Butler, Vice Chairman; Dr. Lorin Nevling, Secretary; and Board Members Jessica Jagielnik, Mary Jo Potter, Dr. George Rabb, Leo Welch, and Rosemary Winters; ISM Director Dr. Bonnie Styles, DNR Communications Director Chris Young; ISM Staff members Karen Everingham, Dr. Eric Grimm, David Hood, Charlotte Montgomery, Carolyn Patterson, Paul Stromdahl, Beth Shea, Dr. Michael Wiant, and Jim Zimmer.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Guerry Suggs called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes from the June 8 Board Meeting and Executive Sessions

Guerry asked if there were any corrections or additions to any of the minutes as presented. Hearing none he asked for a motion to approve. Leo Welch moved to approve the minutes, Dr. Brian Butler seconded, and the motion carried.

Guerry welcomed Chris Young from DNR to the meeting. He said he is here to answer or pursue any questions we have. Guerry also thanked the Board Members for their support during this challenging time—especially Mary Jo Potter. He said she has been particularly helpful to him. He encouraged Board Members to speak their minds as we move through the meeting. He said he doesn't think this is about saving money for the budget; it's about jobs. Why else would you terminate the Director and the Human Resources Manager? He said he thinks there is an attempt to make sure DNR has control of the jobs going forward. He said he also thinks that this necessitates getting rid of the Board because we would not rubber stamp any hires. He is very hopeful some of the management team will be recalled, and he said he hoped Mike Wiant would be able to help accomplish some of that in his duties going forward. The people we have on this team are excellent staff members and great assets to this Museum. Again, he said my thanks to the Board for their support.

He said SB317 is in the works, and he suspects it will be passed, however it probably won't help us in this instance. He said the Governor will just say it's an unfunded mandate and there is no budget to keep the Museum open. But, he said, moving forward it could be very valuable, and that is why he is continuing to pursue the matter. He added that he hoped the closure will not be for too long. When the Museum reopens it will have a new Director or acting Director and a likely a new Board, because again he said we will not be a rubber stamp Board. He again emphasized his gratitude to the Board members and reiterated that they should feel free to express themselves as they wish.

Mary Jo said the Guerry had gone above and beyond to support the Museum. She said he has made himself available to speak to anyone at any time and that the Board appreciates him.

Guerry said Dr. David Sokol sent a note to him extending his best wishes to the staff at the meeting today. David also wrote that he would appreciate an update on the meeting, adding that he would put his time at the Temple to good use; he knows what his prayers will be about.

3. Executive Session to Revise Recommendations for Promotions and Raises

Dr. Lorin Nevling moved that the Board go into executive session to review recommendations for promotions and raises, Brian seconded, and the motion carried. The Board went into executive session at 10:06 a.m.

Dr. George Rabb made a motion to leave executive session, Jessica Jagielnik seconded, and the motion carried. The regular Board meeting resumed at 10:33 a.m.

Guerry asked for a motion to confirm the recommendations for raises and promotions from the June meeting and the effective date of July 1, 2015. Jessica moved to confirm, Lorin seconded, and the motion carried.

Guerry also asked for a motion for the Board to send a letter to Director Rosenthal concerning the obligations of the Board and the lack of communication from DNR to the Board with regard to actions they have taken. Guerry said he wanted it to be on record that the Board should have been consulted on the closure of the Museum and the personnel decisions made by DNR. Rosemary Winters moved to send the letter, George seconded, and the motion carried. Guerry said he would take care of writing and distributing.

4. DNR Report

Chris Young thanked the Board for inviting him and said if there were any specific questions the Board would like him to carry back that he would do so. Guerry said the Board will send the letter directly to Mr. Rosenthal, but thanked Chris for his assistance.

5. Issues Related to the Closure of the Museum

a. Retained Staff

Bonnie reported that the retained staff included Mike Wiant as the curatorial expert to deal with the collections in the three facilities, Linda Kloppe who is assistant facilities superintendent, and Nick Klobuchar who maintains the archaeological site file. We had lobbied to keep Nick to maintain the site file and because his position is partly federally funded, but not as a curatorial expert. The recommendation was to keep four curators to deal with the 13.5M artifacts and specimens. However, the decisions have been made by DNR and those are the people we have. We are very concerned about monitoring and security of the collections in the main Museum building. She said Mike Wiant had a walk through with Dave Hood to go through the concerns with that building, which is managed by the Secretary of State. The building contains our most sensitive art collections and works on paper. Those collections are maintained in what were state-of-the-art environmental chambers in the 1970s, but now we have a lot of problems with them. We have a maintenance agreement with Honeywell to monitor and fix those as needed. She said they often have temperature and humidity issues. The alarms for those are set now to go to Dave Hood. We will change that to Linda Kloppe at the end of the month, and she will have to deal with getting the Honeywell repair staff into the chambers to correct any issues. They would have to be accompanied by a curator so Mike would need to make himself available. She said that is the issue she is most concerned about. She said Mike will be at Dickson Mounds and periodically at the RCC, but not having a curatorial person at the main museum is worrisome. Leo asked about the security and other types of maintenance requirements. Bonnie said DNR had informed her that they were trying to make arrangements for contractual security. Both Leo and George expressed disbelief and concern. Bonnie said that is what she was told by DNR in two meetings, that it would be an outside contractual security firm. She said Dave Hood raised the question regarding the use of contract staff on the Capitol Complex for a building managed by the Secretary of State (SOS). She said the Capitol Complex police are union and that would probably create an issue. Leo asked who would oversee a water pipe break in February at a given location. Bonnie said the facilities engineers will be at the various collections-holding facilities [ISM-Springfield, Research and Collections Center, and Dickson Mounds Museum]. Leo asked if they would be onsite. Bonnie said yes, engineers are stationed in our collections-holding facilities. Dave Hood noted that the engineers stationed at the main building also oversee four other buildings on the Capitol Complex. He said our lead engineer has left because of this issue. He said our engineers are usually pulled to another building in the event someone is sick or out. Bonnie said our main concern is the main building where we have our fine art collection and our most expensive exhibition pieces. That building will not have a Museum employee stationed there, but it will have SOS employees and engineers and, quite possibly, other-non-Museum employees who can access the Museum via the tunnel. We have many security concerns, and they have been communicated to DNR. Mary Jo said that with such a reduced staff, no one will know if something is missing. How can you verify the 13.5M objects are there? Bonnie said that we will have security cameras running. She said we don't allow SOS or CMS staff into the major collections ranges, but you are right, without Museum staff to monitor the items, it is a risk. This is why we wanted at least one staff member in each collections-holding facility on a daily basis. However, that is not the decision that was made by DNR so we will do the best we can. In all our facilities we are removing collection objects that are not in locked cases or secure and placing them in the collections ranges. For example, she said several objects in the *Peoples of the Past* exhibition will be removed to storage. She said we have done our best to secure anything

that is not locked down, and I assume Mike will be making rounds to inspect the buildings and collections periodically.

b. Access to Collections-Holding Facilities

Guerry asked about access for Museum Society employees and others. Bonnie said we have asked that the Museum Society and the Academy of Science remain in the main Museum building. She said she has been inquiring about this issue since June 4 and has yet to receive an answer. She said she understood from comments made at another meeting that they might be moved to the RCC. She said if we were able to maintain those Offices and persons, we would at least have more bodies in the Museum for security purposes. But we haven't received a response and we need to know whether we will be moving these functions because it will require a lot of work. Guerry asked Chris if he could inquire and let us know. She said there are also Society and Museum staff members who have ongoing National Science Foundation grants who also need access to the RCC to complete the work. She said these are Federal projects, and we need to complete them. She said we have a variety of other smaller grants and contracts we are also working on. She said she gave a specific list of people who needed access to DNR but again she has heard nothing. She said now we have only two weeks left to do what is needed. The lack of response is making it increasingly difficult to plan. Dr. Eric Grimm said he has a current NSF grant that has major expenditures planned for October. He is assuming he will not have access to the RCC. He said he will need to communicate with Natalie regarding these activities, but it is not clear where she will be or whether our email will work. He asked how issues with e-mail access will be addressed if our IT expert isn't here. He said the situation is a mess and very frustrating. Bonnie said we also have numerous smaller grants and contracts and a major curatorial agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers. We have asked if the Society employee working on that contract may have access and that would also provide another layer of security. It also helps ensure we do not break the curation agreement with the Army Corps. She said she thinks if DNR would agree to give access to those working on grants that would help us meet our obligations and help keep a lid on things to a degree. She said she doesn't think it's an unreasonable request, and these people are not members of the general public. She said she really hopes DNR will make a decision on this soon. There are only two weeks left. Jessica asked if we can't meet our agreements, are we at risk of a lawsuit? Bonnie said we pointed out the risk of lawsuits early on. She said some of the curation agreements specify access for education and research. She said she is very concerned with access for research and the completion of grants and monitoring of the collections. Guerry said that the State of Illinois would be the entity that would be sued in the event we fail to meet our contractual obligations.

c. Retirements

Bonnie reported that since the last meeting Debra Tayes, the last member of the professional staff at the SIAAC, retired. She said she has many concerns and questions about what will happen with that facility. She said it is located in a somewhat isolated area at a rest stop off the interstate and is highly vulnerable to vandalism. We were told by DNR that we didn't need to remove any state property from state-owned branch facilities, but we will remove records. The SIAAC does not hold collections, but she reiterated that she is very concerned about that facility. She said other retirements at the end of June included Chair of Geology Dr. Jeffrey Saunders, Chair of Zoology Dr. Tim Cashatt, and Curator of Anthropology Dr. Jonathon Reyman. She said currently those retiring at the end of September include herself, Director of the Sciences Dr. Eric Grimm, Chair of Anthropology Dr. Terrance Martin, Curator of Anthropology Dr. Robert Warren. These retirements leave the Museum with no Museum Director, no Director of Science, no chairs of any Science departments, and no anthropologists in Springfield, where the largest archaeological collections are held. She said there are others who have not yet made the decision whether to retire, take another position, or be laid off with a hope of being rehired. Those that have been impacted the most are the Leadership Team who received letters terminating them, are not eligible for recall, and were given no options for insurance other than the very expensive COBRA. She said Charlotte and Mag Rolando were also both terminated. She said copies of all the personnel records have been sent to DNR, and the Museum's fiscal office is basically gone. She said that Tammy Wheeler, who was Charlotte's assistant, is slated to be moved to a new position at DNR, but Bonnie noted that she is not sure in what position or if she will be dealing with anything concerning the Museum. She said there are others who will retire or take other positions. There are quite a few interviewing and looking for other jobs, and some union staff have opted to take other state positions when the Museum is closed to the public. She said it's clear that regardless of how long we are closed, this action has already had

devastating effects for the Museum, including decimation of the Science Section and the Illinois Artisans Program. Guerry asked Mike for help with recalling staff of the management team because they are incredibly valuable. Mike said he would do what he could.

d. Board Appointments

Bonnie reported that Board members were asked if they wanted to continue to serve, however she was told by DNR that it would be unlikely that many of the current Board members would be retained. She said she is not privy to who might be retained. Guerry said he believes when the Museum re-opens, if it re-opens, it will be under a new Board.

e. Legislative Issues

Bonnie said that SB317 is on the calendar for a third reading in the House. This bill contains the language that the State shall operate a state museum and it shall be open to the public. It is expected to pass, but it is likely the Governor will veto it. Without any funding included in the bill it will not help in the short term. She said it would be good for the future. Guerry concurred and added if the Governor vetoes the bill, there should be enough votes to over-ride him. Bonnie said SB1728 that would move the Museum under the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency has passed both the House and the Senate, but is being held by Senator Cullerton. Guerry said he didn't think the bill would move forward as is, but probably something similar would be introduced.

f. Wrap Up

Bonnie said we have kept our programming going through the end of September. She said the *Play Museum* would close a few days early so staff can give it a thorough cleaning and put away objects. She said the Museum is also co-hosting the Annual Conference of the Illinois Association of Museums on September 24-25. She said Karen Everingham has served at the Conference Chair and organizer. She said we are having the opening reception for the event as well and she invited Board members to attend. She also said she is giving a presentation at the Conference on the AAM Accreditation process. She noted she still serves on the Accreditation Commission and will continue to do so.

Jim Zimmer reported that the *Spectrum* exhibition in Springfield looks at some of the objects that were the foundation for the art collection and features several objects that have not been on display in a long time. The exhibition also includes a variety of media from both the fine and decorative arts collections. He said we've had great press on the exhibition and a very successful opening reception. In Lockport, the *Peoples Exhibition* continues with works from members of the community. In Chicago, we installed the *30/30* exhibition that includes items from the collections of the James R. Thompson Center. The collection has not been displayed since 9/11, and it was a good opportunity for both the JRTC and the Museum. We are pleased we've been able to provide these exhibitions to the public. Bonnie added that we've continued with the Brown Bag presentations, including Bob Warren's presentation today on the repatriation of a few Native American items. She asked Mike to talk about the programs at Dickson Mounds. Mike said they have a number of schools scheduled to tour and programs will run through the end of the month. Bonnie said we've tried to keep the Springfield and Chicago stores open as long as possible. Carolyn Patterson said we are having our last Art Spree this weekend. Most of our Chicago staff have other career opportunities so we will have to close the Store by September 21. Bonnie said we are bringing back records and equipment that belongs to the Museum and Museum Society from our non-collections holding, branch facilities. She said she, Jim and Carolyn would be reviewing what items will come back. She said we were told by DNR that we didn't have to remove everything from state-owned facilities. Leo asked about the *Under the Prairie* collection and the exhibition. Mike said those projects are on hold. Bonnie said one more trip will be made to SIAAC for equipment and records. She said she and Dave Hood will also be meeting with Mike on issues related to the main Museum facility. She and Mike also plan to meet with curators to review concerns for various types of collections.

6. ISMS Report

Guerry reported that the most recent meeting of the Society Board was on July 30. He said the Museum Board meeting is being held here at the RCC today because the Society audit is ongoing and they are using the Board room at the Museum. He said we retained Estes, Bridgewater & Ogden who were the low-bidder for the

annual audit. He said they were also willing to do all three years at the same price. He said there are a few new Society Board members. Bonnie reported that Renee Johnson is a new Society Board member. Guerry said the officers are Sandy Bauer, President; Mark Steger, Vice Chair; Lisa Weitzel, Treasurer; and Maureen Bluhm, Secretary. Guerry said the Society continues to function. Bonnie added it needs to continue to operate because we have many ongoing grants and contracts. She added it is a private non-profit organization, and the Museum statute states that the Museum is to provide space for them.

7. Resolutions for Retiring Staff Members

Guerry said we have resolutions for retiring staff members. Those staff are Debra Tayes, Dr. Eric Grimm, Dr. Bob Warren, Charlotte Montgomery, Dr. Terry Martin, and Dr. Bonnie Styles. He said the board is also granting emeritus status to those staff as well. Bonnie said the Board needed to vote on those that were not already approved, and ratify those that were approved via email. Guerry asked for a motion to approve emeritus status for the stated staff members and ratify those approved via email. Brian made the motion, Jessica seconded, and the motion carried.

8. Old Business

There was no old business.

9. New Business

Guerry said there was one item of new business. He asked George to share the petition to protect the public interest with the Board. The petition will be sent to the Attorney General's office if the Board is in agreement. Guerry asked the Board to review the petition and he noted the key words of the document are at the end which state "In consideration of these several evident harms to the public interest, the Board of Directors of the Illinois State Museum therefore request the Attorney General immediately uphold that the gubernatorial closure directive is not valid for this substantial institution—important for the natural and cultural heritages of the State. The Illinois State Museum would thereby continue in operation, its facilities would continue to be open to the citizenry and the staff fully employed in their responsibilities—all to the benefit of the public interest." Guerry said he doubted this would be successful, but he felt that the Board is obligated to do all it can to stop the closure of the Museum. He said George and Rosemary worked to put this together with some pro bono legal advice. He asked for a motion to submit the petition. George moved to submit the petition, Rosemary seconded, and after brief discussion the motion carried unanimously.

Guerry asked for any last remarks from the Board. He said he thought this might be the last meeting of this Board. Lorin asked how the Board would know if they were relieved of duty. Guerry said it would likely be conveyed in a letter. Guerry said and Bonnie confirmed that Board members serve until new Board appointments are made according to the statute. Lorin asked how we will notify the public of the closure and what is to be said. Bonnie said she did not know at this point, but assumed the language would come from DNR. Mary Jo asked how school groups would find out. Guerry said they will likely call and not get an answer. Bonnie said school group visits to ISM-Springfield s are scheduled through the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and they as well as schools in Springfield and communities surrounding our facilities are aware of our situation. Beth Shea asked for guidance on what staff should leave on their voice mails. Mary Jo also asked about the website. Bonnie said she didn't see why that could not remain active but should be updated to include a notice of the closure of the facilities. She asked Chris to look into what messaging we needed to implement. Guerry also reminded those present that they should not use private emails for Museum business. Bonnie said we did get a note from DNR that any Board correspondence with staff members should come to state email addresses.

Rosemary said she would like to compliment all the staff members who have done a wonderful job, especially during these difficult times. Jessica added she would like to thank Bonnie specifically, and that she has enjoyed working with her for many years. She said she has always conducted herself in a very professional and ethical manner that brought great dignity and pride to the Museum. The Board applauded.

Eric Grimm noted he came here twenty-eight years ago to interview for a job from Minnesota. He said, "It was a small institution and why did I come? It's because I'd heard of some of the people here like Russ Graham, Jim King, Bruce McMillan, and Bonnie Styles. I knew their research and their service in national organizations

of which I was a member.” He said he wanted to thank the Board members and, specifically, Bruce McMillan and Bonnie Styles. They created a wonderful institution where scholarship could flourish, where curators could follow their interests to obtain grants and could do research—interdisciplinary research. He said, “It’s really quite something that an institution of this size, built under their leadership, direction, encouragement, and example, has become an institution that has a sterling national and international reputation and I am very proud to have been a part of it.”

Leo stated that his relationship with the Museum has been from primarily from an educational standpoint, other than his service on the Board. He recalled visiting as an undergraduate zoology major and creating a general ecology course that included a stop at the Illinois State Museum as a professor at Southwestern Illinois University. He said his students were amazed at the exhibitions and objects in the Museum’s collections, and that he used a variety of Museum publications for his classes. He said he and his students benefited greatly from the educational resources the Museum offered over the years. He finished by saying it was an educational tragedy that this Museum is being impacted in the fashion that it is.

Bonnie followed by adding that the Museum is one of the best institutions for sharing original research with the public and we have a very integrated program. She said as an Accreditation Commissioner she feels she can say that with confidence having reviewed more than four hundred museums during her tenure on the Commission. She said the Museum is one of few that really takes the research and collections and ties them into the exhibitions and the educational programs. It has been a tightly integrated sharing of our own research and that is evident in our exhibitions and programs. She said she hopes that when this institution reopens, it can move forward with that same level of professionalism and passion, and that the Museum doesn’t become a place where you have people appointed that don’t have that level of passion and expertise. She said what has separated us from a lot of government-run museums is that we have people who are highly qualified and insanely passionate about what they do. She said she has been asked many times why people work fourteen hours a day and has been accused of exploiting the staff by auditors because of the long hours people work. But she said, she can’t get people out of the building. They love what they do, and they benefit from it as has the public. It has been a tremendously strong program, and I hope it continues.

Guerry added that he recalled an instance where the Board was approached about hiring a particular individual that he happened to know. He said that person was not qualified; the Board opposed the hire, and the individual was not hired.

Bonnie said she would like to thank the Board—a governing Board, not an advisory Board. She said the role of the Board in hiring has kept this institution highly professional. She said the composition and qualifications of the Board are critically important and will continue to be moving forward. Guerry said that was his greatest concern. He said he anticipates the new board will just be a rubber stamp. He said that is not the role of this board and that is why he will not be part of it. Bonnie concluded by saying the role of the Museum Board is governance and advocacy and that she is proud of this Board.

Lorin said he started working with the Museum when Bruce McMillan was the Director and he was the Director of the Field Museum—quite a long time ago. He said the two were involved in the Association of Science Museum Directors, and he said Bonnie had been President of that organization as well. He added the Illinois State Museum has been a key player in national and international museum issues for decades and that Bonnie has admirably continued to carry that forward throughout her tenure with her work on Accreditation. He said he would like to thank Bonnie and all of the staff members who have worked to move this institution forward so far, especially in the last ten years. He added that there are great things happening at Dickson Mounds as well, and he thanked all for their efforts.

George said he would like to second what Lorin said from his own background of coming from the oldest museum in America—the Charleston Museum to his work at the Brookfield Zoo and with the Field Museum. He said he came to the Board of Directors of this institution because of Bruce McMillan who was seeking someone with his background. He said he has been pleased with the developments under Bruce, especially with the elevation of Bonnie to her current position. She is a nationally, indeed, internationally esteemed professional. He added the work of staff like Eric Grimm on climate change and the Neotoma database are

extraordinary. This work should be recognized, praised, and emulated. He said he feels very strongly and cares very deeply for this institution. He said, "I did not sleep last night, thinking about the fate of this institution. On a planetary scale as I think about advocacy for a world environmental organization, we need institutions like this enhanced, encouraged, and appropriately supported by governmental resources."

Brian stated he was a fairly new board member, but his primary experience with the State Museum was as an archaeologist. He said he admired the work and accomplishments of the archaeology staff at the Museum. He said in coming to the Board he has learned of the much greater scope of the Museum's programs. He is very impressed with the quality of the entire staff under Bonnie's leadership and the intense dedication of the staff to their work and the institution. He said he hopes these are things that can survive going forward.

Lorin said he wanted to thank the tax payers of the State of Illinois for their support of the Museum over the years.

Guerry added that in his final comments in the hearing on SB317, he said that the Museum does not belong to the Governor or the legislature, it belongs to the citizens of Illinois, and we thank them.

Guerry read the resolutions of the retiring staff present at the meeting including Director Bonnie Styles, Science Director Eric Grimm, and Director of Resource Allocation Charlotte Montgomery.

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Approved:

Guerry Suggs, Chair

Date

Lorin Nevling, Secretary

Date