

**ILLINOIS STATE MUSEUM
BOARD MEETING
February 6, 2023, 10:30 a.m.**

**Illinois State Museum
502 South Spring St., Springfield, IL**

Attending: Officers: Chair Donna Sack, Vice Chair Lisa Lee, and Secretary Sarah Doherty; Board Members Tamira Brennan, Andrea Carlson, Chris Pappan, Beth Shadur, and nikhil trivedi; Illinois State Museum Society Board Chair Bryan Finn and Staff Member Jamila Wicks; Illinois State Museum Staff Members Jennifer Edginton, Erika Holst, Meghan Lindstrom, Heather Miller, and Robert Sill; DNR Designees Jose Burgos and Jamie Reynolds; two members of the public, Amanda Bryden and Dannyl Dolder.

I. Welcome

Chair Donna Sack welcomed attendees and the meeting was called to order at 10:39 am.

II. Roll Call

Meghan Lindstrom called the roll and a quorum was present.

III. Approval of the Minutes of November 7, 2022

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

New Business

Donna recommended that the tour of the exhibition *Growing up X* be moved forward in the agenda. The Board agreed. Curator Erika Holst presented *Growing up X* and explained that the exhibit is an exploration of Generation Xers' formative years. The gallery featured a wide range of items from the 1970s to the 1990s and featured major events such as the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the AIDS crisis, and the War on Drugs, along with personal stories from Generation Xers.

Jenn praised the staff for their work on the exhibit. She explained that the work was completed the week after Cinnamon's passing and the exhibit was dedicated to her. Erika said that some of Cinnamon's mixtapes were featured in a display.

The exhibit will be on view in Springfield until September 4th and will then move to the Lockport Gallery and open in November.

Erika led the Board on a guided tour of the new exhibit until 11:30 am.

Donna welcomed Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff members Jamie Reynolds and Jose Burgos. Board members and Museum staff gave brief introductions of themselves and their areas of expertise.

IV. Remembering Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko (1972-2023)

Donna invited the Board to remember Museum Director Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko, who had recently passed. Board members shared stories of their work with Cinnamon. Donna affirmed the Board's determination to honor Cinnamon's legacy by continuing her work, particularly in the areas of decolonization and DEAI.

V. Chair's Report

Donna reminded the Board that one of their duties by state statute is to assist in the selection of a permanent director. She reached out to the Director's Office to schedule a meeting with the new director of DNR, Natalie Phelps Finnie, to discuss the search process. Bryan Finn asked if there were any updates about the selection of an interim director and there were none. Nikhil asked how long the previous director search lasted. Donna said the previous search was complicated by the museum system's closure, the firing of senior staff, and the tabling of accreditation. The search was led by a Board committee. The first launch resulted in no viable candidates. The second effort resulted in two finalists, who toured system sites and were introduced to museum staff. The ISM Board recommended Cinnamon Caitlin-Legutko to DNR. Once the department approved the hire, Cinnamon was offered the position. The entire search took around one year.

Beth asked what the process would be to select an interim director. Donna said the process was not set yet and she would discuss it with Director Finnie. Jamie Reynolds said that Director Finnie was still busy meeting people across the department but she was aware of the pressing need for an interim director. Beth asked if the lack of an interim director would adversely affect the Museum. Donna reassured the Board that she expected quick movement on the selection of an interim director so it should not heavily impact the Museum.

Tamira asked if Director Finnie was originally from the department or an outside hire. Jamie shared that Director Finnie had been with DNR since 2021 and had formerly been deputy director. Donna stated that her understanding

was that Director Finnie was familiar with the Museum and ongoing projects. Lisa suggested the Board read the Director's biography in DNR's press release.

The Board broke for lunch at 12:05 pm.

The Board reconvened at 12:41 pm.

Donna asked if the Board had seen the ProPublica article series on the Museum, particularly the third article with an in-depth look at Dickson Mounds Museum. Lisa said she wished the current work on repatriation and decolonization had been included and was curious about how the staff felt about the articles. She proposed leveraging the articles and public opinion to promote further repatriation work. Heather had spoken with the reporter and was informed the series would continue and include a piece on proposed changes to the Illinois Burial Law, but she did not have details on how the Illinois State Museum system would be featured. Donna asked if the future articles would focus on active repatriation work. Heather did not know but agreed that ongoing work was completely overlooked in the released articles. Heather had also asked the reporter to include more Tribal perspectives and interviews in future articles.

Lisa asked what procedure should be followed if a Board member was asked to provide a comment on the articles. Jenn said that the leadership team had also already received questions from the public and from Museum staff. Discussion ensued about the best way to coordinate messaging. Andrea hoped that they would reach out to the DEAI committee to help coordinate any statements. She asked what actions the Board could take if they do not agree with a statement made by the Governor's Office. Jose outlined DNR's process for consulting experts for legislation or statements, which in the case of the articles would include Heather as Director of Tribal Relations, so any statement made publicly about the articles would be well-informed.

Lisa asked if the DEAI committee could resume the regular meeting dates, despite the lack of an interim director. Donna agreed.

Donna recommended that the Board start to develop talking points in anticipation of an official response or the release of more articles. She said they would need established messages for triaging, particularly that the Board had already determined the importance of decolonization and that staff and DNR are working in unison. Lisa clarified that the Board was committed to decolonization before Cinnamon was hired, in every way including

repatriation and Landback. She recommended the Board take advantage of the press's attention to the museum field to raise awareness of the Museum's work to attract funders interested in supporting repatriation. Donna recommended the Museum use this as an opportunity to educate the public about current work. Jose detailed some of DNR's process for outreach work for groups like students, legislators, and the public. Donna expanded the list of groups and communities that might have questions to staff, donors and potential donors, and Native people. She said the Board, DNR, and Museum staff should work together to determine how to respond to questions from each group.

Jenn recommended that the Board and Museum's Leadership Team take care to be transparent to staff during this period of transition. She further recommended that updates be given on the Board's work at the monthly staff meetings, particularly once the search for a permanent director begins.

VI. Leadership Team

Jenn reported on staff changes for the Museum. Douglas Stapleton, curator-at-large in the Chicago area, was promoted to Curator 3. Susan Collins, Exhibit Preparator, retired after 36 years. Lorna Shuman, Curator of Education, accepted a new position heading the education division at DNR. Interviews were being scheduled for the Associate Director of Exhibits position. Other positions in the queue include a Site Tech for Dickson Mounds and an Associate Director of Education for the ISM.

Jenn shared that the ISM was invited to run History Day in Illinois starting in 2024. It is a competition for middle and high school students in the style of a history themed science fair. The Museum hopes to increase participation from outside the Chicago Metro area.

Jenn also shared that the ISM was chosen to work with the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience to fulfill a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. ISM was one of ten sites chosen to participate in a pilot program to strengthen relationships with a community that is not currently represented in the Museum's collections or programming.

Heather introduced the "Understanding Native American Sovereignty Series", a series of four virtual panel discussions hosted by the Museum. The first virtual panel was "The Legacies of Removal" and the three remaining panels will discuss Federal and State Indian Law in the 21st century, the Landback movement, and food sovereignty. Donna asked if the series was being

recorded. Heather confirmed they are being recorded and will soon be posted to the Museum's YouTube account. Donna asked if the Landback discussion would feature Illinois. Heather confirmed that Illinois would be part of the discussion.

Bob provided updates on the Museum's current facility projects. The ISM was undergoing emergency upgrades to the fire suppression system and track lighting, which was considered an emergency because of the risks posed by the Museum's bad wiring. The Museum's loading dock had deteriorated significantly and the restriped parking lot did not allow enough space for the Museum's box truck to access the dock. The Museum will have to work with the Office of Realty and Capital Planning to submit a User Budget Request (UBR) to renovate the loading dock, along with other building improvements including the roof, auditorium accessibility, and window replacements. UBRs are also being created for the RCC, including HVAC, replumbing, mechanical upgrades, and an external garage to secure Museum vehicles. The RCC will soon get a new roof as it has already gone out to bid. The DMM upgrades for the HVAC system, roof, sky deck, and exhibit are on track to start in the spring. There have been discussions about the south wing's possible demolition and the reinterment of ancestors underneath it. Technology upgrades have been completed at the ISM and the RCC, the Lockport Gallery is currently upgrading, and the DMM will be next.

Donna asked why the Museum on Spring Street had no handicapped parking. Jenn explained that the Museum originally had two accessible parking spots on weekends but after the lot was rezoned all accessible parking was relegated to the Secretary of State side. Visitors must park in the designated visitor's lot two blocks west or use metered parking spots on the street. Beth expressed concern that the lack of accessible parking might break federal law. Donna suggested the Board find a way to leverage that to help Museum staff to create accessible parking.

Deaccession

Erika Holst presented a deaccession request for a mahogany sideboard in the History collection. It was recommended because it has a weak connection to Illinois and is of negligible aesthetic, historical, or interpretive value; serious condition issues which would be expensive to repair; and takes up significant amounts of collections storage space that could be better served housing objects more relevant to the Museum's mission. Erika said that if the sideboard was deaccessioned it would be offered to the Aurora Historical Society, since it originally came from a family in that area. If turned down it

would go to auction. Tamira moved to approve the deaccession request. Beth seconded, and the motion passed unanimously

VII. DNR Report

None given.

VIII. Society Report

Donna congratulated Bryan Finn on his appointment as the new Chair of the Illinois State Museum Society Board. Bryan introduced himself to the Board and shared a brief biography.

Bryan reported that the Society Board meeting once set for January was canceled after Cinnamon's passing and had not been rescheduled yet. She had encouraged the Society Board to reach out to similar organizations for collaborations and Bryan will propose the Society Board create a task force to continue that work. He is currently working with Society accountant Patty Chamberlain to manage day-to-day operations. He plans to continue outreach to legislators to ensure they understand the critical work being done by the Museum.

Bryan reported that the Society had hosted several events benefitting the Museum over the last few months, especially for *Growing up X*. The trivia night event to raise money for the exhibit went extremely well and the Society Board is planning to continue such events in the future and hope to expand further.

Lisa asked how many board members were on the Illinois State Museum Society Board. Bryan confirmed there were currently thirteen board members with two more vacant positions, which he anticipates will be filled soon.

IX. Old Business

Donna stated that the strategic planning process was temporarily on hold and she will work with consultant Laura Roberts to determine a new timeline to create the Museum's strategic plan.

Tamira said that at the previous Board meeting it was suggested that the members have some legislative training and a template letter for members to use. Donna said they were both part of the strategic planning discussion and will be addressed in the future.

Lisa asked about the status of the State Historic Sites acquisition. Donna said that Cinnamon reported to her that the legislative language for the acquisition was making its way through the system. Jose said that Director Finnie had mentioned the State Historic Sites merger publicly, so the project was still moving forward. Jenn reported that the last few meetings to discuss it were canceled but Director Finnie had been involved through the entire project. All larger projects had also been paused, such as the 1908 Race Riot exhibit.

Donna reminded the Board that a quorum would need to be physically present at any meeting location in order to conduct business. Once a quorum was present the Board could vote to allow a member to attend by other means.

Andrea asked if the Board could ask members to step down if they consistently do not attend meetings. Donna said that Board members could be asked to step down for lack of attendance. The Governor is responsible for Board appointments.

Heather said that she had been working with Cinnamon to create a group of Native people who would be on a decision-making level similar to the Board. Andrea recommended that subject be considered at the next DEAI meeting.

After a brief discussion, the next Board meeting location was determined to be the Lockport Gallery at 10:30 am.

X. Public Comment

None given.

XI. Adjournment

Donna asked for a motion to adjourn. Sarah moved to adjourn, Chris seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.