

**Minutes**  
**The 62<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the**  
**MONTANA HERITAGE COMMISSION**

Friday, August 10, 2007 8:30am – 3:30pm  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Virginia City, MT

***MISSION***

*Manage, develop and operate Heritage Commission properties by preserving, stabilizing, rehabilitating, interpreting and exhibiting buildings and artifacts; overseeing and encouraging profitable commercial enterprises while creating and maintaining credible relationships with all stakeholders and partners, and protecting these historic resources for the educational benefit and enjoyment of all.*

**Commissioners Present:** Mary Oliver, Chairperson; Bill Howell, Vice Chairperson; Sen. Lynda Moss; Rosana Skelton; Rep. Diane Rice; Richard Sims; Vicki Hucke; Andy Poole (conf. phone)

**Commissioners Absent:** Joe Maurier; Leslie Schmidt; Maureen Wicks

**Staff Present:** Paul Reichert; Karlee Smith; Jim Carpita; Tenlee Atchison; Jeff MacDonald; Janna Norby; Cecile Gevock; Julie Johnson

**Others Present:** Amy Sullivan, Montana History Foundation; Ellis Thompson; Shelly Elaine Theimer, Living History; Terry Beaubois, MSU; Mike Peed, MSU; Jim Jarvis; Sheri Jarvis

**The meeting was officially called to order by Mary at 8:16am**

Mary welcomed everyone to the 62<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Montana Heritage Commission. She welcomed Sen. Lynda Moss who was appointed to replace Senator Bob Hawks. Mary also announced that Rosana Skelton and Pat Keim have been notified by the Governor's office that their positions on the Commission have been reappointed. Mary thanked Rosana for her ten years of service. Mary welcomed all MHC program managers.

- Call for motion to approve minutes with two minor changes. **Minutes for June 15, 2007 were unanimously approved**

**Director's Report – Paul Reichert**

Paul invited the program managers to showcase their works and accomplishments related to the Virginia City and Nevada City projects. Jim Carpita introduced each person.

**Education** – Via video recording, Bill Peterson presented his goals and accomplishments. He listed some required resources needed to continue meeting Commission goals previously requested of staff. Partnerships with Washington State will continue next year. Mary complimented Bill for his weekly articles in the Montana Standard. This publicity creates a broad awareness of the historical significance of the collection.

**Preservation** – Jeff MacDonald announced that he has been asked to facilitate panel discussion at the National Historic Preservation Trust Conference in Minneapolis. Jeff's staff of four has been making great

strides in preservation. Each year a particular property has been chosen for restoration. The recently finished Daems House is an example of collaboration among the various departments. This home is furnished with items from the collection to represent what it would have looked like during that period. The Virginia City Institute, modeled after the National Parks System, has grown in revenue and popularity. Jeff sees the historic preservation process moving from the east to the west. VC is becoming nationally recognized in that regard. Jeff has made several related connections in this direction and it is hoped that through technology and video mediums MHC can continue to expand these partnerships.

**Curatorial** – Janna Norby invited everyone outdoors to review the Bozeman Cab — an example of one of many collections that has yet to be restored due to lack of resources such as labor, time and money. There are over 1,000,000 artifacts in the VC/NC collection. Due to a lack of storage, moving artifacts is slow to be accomplished. The detail of many artifacts has yet to be discovered.

**Archaeology** – Cecile has been able to utilize the services of volunteers to accomplish many projects. She will be doing more work in Nevada City for the long range building program. Some artifacts have been found that may show evidence of a Native American fur trading post. Cecile is hoping this find may open up some grant and other funding areas.

**Visitor Services/Maintenance** – Julie Johnson is the first line of public communication/contact for MHC. She supports all areas of work in VC and NC. Julie was asked to be a grant reviewer for FEMA. MHC applied for a FEMA grant but the application was not successful. That grant will be applied for again this year. Living History has added some handmade items for sale at the Nevada City depot gift store. Julie is working on the possibility of having sarsaparilla and root beer brewed under the Gilbert brewery label. Julie expressed the need for electricity and security in additional buildings to extend the season.

**Business/Marketing** – Karlee presented some website statistics indicating number of hits and areas of interest. There had been preliminary discussion with Travel Montana for collaboration on the web site. Plans to do a complete revamp of the websites probably will not happen this year due to funding, but MHC staff will revise and update the website hopefully with help from Travel Montana. As a result of the new MHC membership campaign, approximately \$10,000 in membership fees have been received, representing 97 new members and 38 from out-of-state. A well planned membership campaign continued to be a recommendation of past commissioner Judy McNally. Tours are taking place in the pioneer cabin at Reeder's Alley. Some donations have been received and volunteer tour guides are giving most of the tours.

### **Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives**

#### **Funding**

**Historic site plan** – The Town of Virginia City received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for \$15K to contribute toward the historic site plan. This is a master plan for VC and NC. The total budget for this project is estimated at \$60,000.

**Financial reports** – Karlee presented current financial reports. Andy Poole questioned the “goods for sale” expense items as compared to. Jim Carpita explained inventory was increased including a bulk calendar order. He went on to say that an increase in retail sales is expected to offset the increase in expense. There were discussions on past suggestions related funding and increasing reserves. The F & M committee will meet to make a recommendation in this regard. The Commission was reminded that we are now going to a Fiscal Year format. Comparison reports will continue to reflect calendar year at a glance.

**Budget** – Paul presented a draft FY 08 budget with a memo outlining income and expense impacts. With NPS funding coming to an end, a considerable reduction in income will be realized in our operations budget. The NPS appropriation allowed us to charge some administrative and operational costs, however the new long range monies are much more restricted. The F & M Committee will meet August

28 at 8:30 a.m. in Ennis at the First Valley Madison Bank to review and further discuss the FY 2008 Budget to make final budget recommendations to the commission. Senator Moss requested that staff present prioritized project list to the F & M committee prior to the August 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Partnerships and Relationships**

Terry Beaubois, Professor from the MSU School of Architecture, presented an intriguing model of our evolving partnership using 3-D virtual learning environments. He is proposing to use VC as a historic preservation training site with long-distance learning capabilities. Mike Peed presented the results, in booklet form, of the “way-finding” signage proposal. Their presentations generated a lot of interest and excitement.

**Montana History Foundation Update** – Amy Sullivan shared her board’s decisions for funding to MHC this year. \$25,000 in undesignated funds will be used for the site plan; \$10,000 toward MSU contract for signs and “way-finding”; \$15,000 for walk-in cooler in McFarland Curatorial Center. The MHF board requested more detailed information on the sign project as well as more information on the freezer since the Foundation owns the building. They would like:

- total budget, time line and contact person
- which signs would be added/replaced
- building plan for the freezer, how and where it will be installed.

The Curator of Collection salary & benefits (\$37,000) will continue this year. Going into the future donors would rather fund projects than overhead and projects thus MHC will have to fund this cost for the FY09 budget. A \$24,088 donation was given for work on the music machines to be accomplished by Mike Edwards. In the future donors would like to see a more secure place for the music machines. Amy reported that there is still one-time-only money (\$89,000 left from the \$200,000 original donation) but she is recommending leaving some of those funds for reserve.

### **Public Comment & Local Govt. Presentations**

**Madison County-** Sheri Jarvis reported for the Madison County Law and Justice Center. She provided updated information that will be presented to residents of VC on August 14. Sheri said the changes to the initial plans were made to address concerns of county employees and the community. County engineers and architects are working on the MOU and accompanying archaeology in cooperation with MHC. Construction will hopefully start in spring in 2008.

**Town of Virginia City** – Jim Jarvis shared that funding has been secured for a trail project linking VC and NC. The trail already exists on an old tailing ridge that was flattened for a stagecoach road, known as the Depot Trail. **The consensus of the Commission was to obtain written legal advice prior to making a decision to allow the Town of VC to improve the existing trail. Concerns were stated regarding a 20 year trail use agreement as required by the outside funding source (FWP). Jim will check with that funding source to see if an “extreme circumstances clause” will be allowed. If MHC is given legal written consent, a vote will be taken by email.**

### **Governance and Internal Structure**

**Land Issues** – Paul shared a copy of the district court order the “Y” railroad track in regard to the Bardswich land issue. A Surveyor has been hired and the results of his findings will be discussed with legal counsel.

The MHC legal counsel is awaiting a response form Boling’s attorney. A land swap is desired by Boling. An engineering survey of the subject area has been completed by Stahly Engineering of Helena.

There was a suggestion that a proposal be made to the Governor’s office requesting to have the State of Montana fund a survey of the VC and NC properties purchased in 1997.

**Draft ARM rules** - Karlee and Paul gave an update on progress toward developing Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) required for the sale of property by the Commission. Paul described the three types of property held by the Commission and explained the different processes involved with disposing of each. **Staff was directed to continue working on the draft ARM rules and move ahead with the process.** The next step will be passing Secretary of State review and holding public hearings on the proposed rules.

**Committee Organization** – The Executive Committee will review and possibly realign various committees of the commission.

**Hiring of Exec. Director Position** – Three of four hiring committee members have reviewed the 20 applications received. The committee will meet over the next two weeks to decide who will be interviewed. It is expected that three to four applicants will be interviewed. The Interim director's contract expires in October 2007.

### **Other Business**

**Nevada City restrooms** –The state hired Architect has been released from this project allowing us to value design it and award a construction contract soon after. The contractor will allow for construction for the extent of DOA funding. The project will be completed by with staff and volunteers.

**National historic designation for Nevada City** – Karlee reported that the independent party (student) working on this project for their thesis has recently requested a map. Bill Howell stressed the importance of completing this project as soon as possible for federal funding opportunities. It was mentioned that the register designation may be easier to obtain given Cecile's latest archaeological discoveries in Nevada City.

**Richard Sims** was pleased to announce that the Historical Society will be partnering with MHC in regard to educational and interpretation opportunities next summer. ???He and his staff plan to live in VC for a good part of the summer.

**Paul met with Michael Fox the Curator of History for the Museum of the Rockies** and the museum is committed to a permanent exhibit for Virginia City. The museum also plans a gallery exhibit of VC. They plan their exhibits three to five years in advance. Partnering with the Museum of the Rockies will give our collection great exposure. When Senator Hawks served the commission he was always hopeful of a partnership with the Museum of the Rockies.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:12pm.**

**Next meeting will be November 16 in Virginia City.**