

Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund Board Meeting
February 22, 2008

Hitching Post Inn, Cheyenne

Present: Dave Reetz, Tom Empey, Susan Hladky, Sara Needles, and Mike Shonsey.

Guests: Mary Humstone, Research Scientist, U.W. American Studies
Kurt Graham, Buffalo Bill Historical Center

Staff: Renée Bovée

The meeting was brought to order at 9:35 a.m.

Chair Dave Reetz, thanked Susan Hladky for her service and the honor of working with her this last two years. He expressed his appreciation for her work in the beginning of the WCTF. The Board gave her a round of applause.

Agenda approved a presented by concensus.

Chair Reetz welcomed Kurt Graham of the Buffalo Bill Historical Center. Graham, wanted to let the WCTF know how that grant the BBHC to do an online archive of the Buffalo Bill collection. Grant funds were leverage from OCLC, a national library Consortium. The first 2,000 documents of Buffalo Bill material, which will be searchable, will go live in about a week. He noted that a documentary is also in the works. He also spoke of the value of the WCTF grants, and a personal comment on the value of fewer grants in larger amounts.

Mike Shonsey asked about the \$300,000 legislative appropriation for the Buffalo Bill Papers Project? Graham remarked on the matching efforts involved. The dollars from the State have already been matched by private donors and the BBHC is in the process of seeking federal support as this will be a multi-million dollar project. It will be a digital documentary edition of the Cody papers, similar in scope and project comparable to the Lewis & Clark papers done in the Midwest. Graham remarked on the value of local match, which illustrates local support.

Chair Reetz commented on how the change in technology has made this information more widely shared and reach out to more people. Graham also spoke of the value of scholarship research that can occur through digital distribution, as Cody is a remote location that is expensive to visit.

Chair Reetz then introduced Mary Humstone from the University of Wyoming. Humstone will be speaking to the board later in the agenda.

Minutes

Tom Empey moved and Sara Needles seconded to approve the October 24, 2007 conference call minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Department Update

Needles noted the fine dinner last night and the communication opportunity between the boards that were in attendance. She provided a quick legislative update on the WCTF budget items. The Governor recommended a \$3 million increase in a footnote under our standard budget. The JAC recommended only \$1.5 million. Sen. Mike Massie has found a possible alternative for finding additional dollars and will try an amendment to raise the amount back up to \$3 million. The department Fiscal Officer Bryan Sandlin is listening in today and will let us know if the amendment is introduced.

Needles also noted the status of the State Historic Preservation Office historic context request and the amendments which are pending at this time. There are four contexts put forward in the exception request. While the Governor recommended full amount, the JAC recommended half the amount and then put on a footnote about requiring a match. Amendment has been put out by Rep. Rosie Berger to eliminate the matching requirement. Sen. Massie will place the amendment on the Senate side on third reading today.

The Contexts, if reduced to two, will probably be focused on Historic Schools and the New Deal, as there is already research started on these contexts. It is important to get them started and completed quickly to help illustrate the value of these contexts.

Needles spoke on the two staff requests in the Division exception request (SHPO and WCTF). The Governor recommended one position instead of two, which is a workable solution within the department as there are granting programs within SHPO that could be handled by the WCTF Administrator. Chair Reetz expressed appreciation to the department for being willing to stretch and flex so that we have continuity in the Trust Fund administration.

Additionally, Needles reviewed a recent Attorney General opinion on lobbying versus informing by board members (see attached). Milward Simpson recently attended a cabinet meeting where there was a lot of concern expressed about how board members were lobbying legislators. After discussion with Chris Boswell from the Governor's office, it appears that the issue isn't that big, but board members need to use good common sense in providing information to legislators. Board members are expected to and need to provide information and to speak to legislators. However, it was noted that board and commission members cannot be reimbursed travel expenses when their sole reason for traveling is to meet with legislators.

Humstone asked Needles on the status of the historic architect within the SHPO budget. This is a contract position with matching funds coming from Wyoming Main Street Program. To date that budget is intact and there has been no comment on it.

Needles commented on several upcoming events. The Preserve Wyoming Conference at the historic Plains Hotel in Cheyenne, May 14-16. This is a joint project between SHPO and Wyoming Main Street, with partnerships from tourism, Wyoming Historical Society, Tracks Across Wyoming, etc. Needles and Renée Bovée reviewed several of the sessions being planned for the conference. She also noted the awards program that will be part of the conference and provided nomination forms to the board members.

She passed the board members a “Save the Past for the Future”, an ethics brochure for visitors to our historic sites and site stewardship.

The Department will be helping celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the New Deal with an early May celebration at Guernsey State Park. The celebration will involve a free-day at the park with events at the Museum which is a CCC constructed building. Additionally, there will be traveling exhibition which is being put together by the State Museum. The Governor’s Arts Awards will be the kick-off event for the year-long celebration with Big Band era performances and she distributed a list of the many events which will be occurring around the state.

Needles provided the board a copy of the newest SHPO newsletter, and showed the new SHPO state plan. She also provided an update on the ongoing search for a new SHPO.

WCTF Update:

Susan Hladky presented information on the AVA Memorial Fence Project, which was funded by the WCTF last year, with a sample of the fencing material and sketches fence design. Hladky noted that a native garden will be part of the project. The oral history of the project brings in the stories of the people of Gillette that then correspond with images placed on the fence.

Bovée provided a brief update on several other projects that have been completed at this time. The Hot Springs Greater Learning Center has completed a planning document for a cultural center at Hot Springs State Park. Representatives of the group are speaking to the State Parks and Cultural Resources Commission this morning. The Fort Casper Museum recently hosted a donors reception to highlight the new exhibition space. Wyoming Territorial Prison’s grant award to restore the prisoner painted work, has completed one painting’s restoration – and it is a very well done restoration. Lander Chamber of Commerce had a very successful bronze art show and festival this last October. Grand Teton National Park’s White Grass Ranch restoration project has concluded the restoration of one of the dude ranch’s cabins and it is forming the basis for the for a new program of log restoration.

Budget Update

Bové provided an update on revenue projection that shows a potential of \$300,000 in available funds for granting in the June grant round. She also reviewed the expenses of the program for the year to date, which is still being provided by the Cultural Resources division.

Wyoming Historic School Buildings Presentation:

Mary Humstone, with the University of Wyoming American Studies presented information to the board on historic school buildings located in Wyoming, their conditions, and the impact of the schools in their communities. Humstone explained the evolution of schools and their architecture as they reflect the communities feeling of the status of education and the role the school itself takes within the community. Humstone reviewed several of the challenges facing communities as they look at closing historic schools, re-using them as community centers, and a comparative analyst on the cost advantages of restoring these buildings and keeping them active as schools versus the costs of new construction. A general discussion was held on the impact of the Wyoming School Facilities Commission's statute that does not address rehabilitation or reuse or evaluation of historic schools and their guidelines are based on that statute. The lack of incentive for preserving these historic buildings is a challenge, as the current system doesn't accommodate any evaluation of re-use versus new in the formulas being used.

Humstone also updated the board on the status of a WCTF grant to American Studies to hold charettes in Lingle and Pine Bluffs. Lingle was slated for demolition shortly after the grant was awarded, but as no action has been taken on it there may be some new interest generated in the community to keep the school. The scheduling of the charette in Pine Bluffs has been challenged by several competing interests within the community. The Pine Bluffs charette has now been scheduled for May 17, right after the Preserve Wyoming conference.

The meeting paused for a lunch break.

The meeting resumed at 1:15 p.m.

Humstone continued her presentation looking at several rehabilitation and re-use case studies on historic schools from other states. Tom Empey asked whether the road blocks on the Natrona County High School is coming from the school district or from the School Facilities Commission? Humstone noted that both parties are using each other as an excuse. Empey noted the value of the auditorium in the school as it is the primary facility for the performing arts in Casper. Without the development of a new performing arts center, it is vital to Casper to have this facility and to have it updated.

Mike Shonsey inquired of Humstone whether the recommendations from the 2005 study were followed. Humstone noted they went to the legislature, but there has been no action. There hasn't been the necessary ground swell of support on these issues.

A general discussion was held on how the Cultural Trust Fund could be of assistance with this issue. The board discussed the idea of establishing a policy statement or at least supporting an initiative to broaden the discussion in the local communities to assure the continued evaluation and use of historic buildings. Empey and Shonsey both mentioned the idea of establishing written positions in supporting this issue and using our granting powers to support the issue. Chair Reetz noted the opportunity of developing coalitions with such as Wyoming Economic Development Association (WEDA) and Wyoming Main Street, to help bring the Wyoming Business Council resources into the picture as well. Needles noted that we will know within two weeks how the Historic Context's funding will shake out and if funding is made available, or otherwise raised, then one of the first contexts to be created will be the Historic Schools context. In developing these contexts researchers are required to hold workshops, community discourse, training and research. It would be possible to assure that the scope of work for the contractors be developed to focus on how the development of the documents can be used for education of the community. This would help in the general concept of providing education to the public on the value of these historic schools.

Needles did note that the political capital that could be used in this process could jeopardize future historic contexts. Chair Reetz noted that while that may be, but if you can get the public to make the position through the high road of an educational approach, you are able to get change without using up political capital. Empey suggested the idea of picking one educational project to follow up on, such as Natrona County High School, can then provide the example for others.

Chair Reetz noted that we should help get Humstone's presentation out to other groups who are in the position to help make these decisions. He also suggested that we take this information, look at possible partners, and continue this discussion in our next meeting.

Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust Fund:

Chair Reetz welcomed Kim Fowler, Vice-Chair of the Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust Fund to the meeting. Bovée remarked on the need for information between our boards because of ongoing comparisons between the Trusts and to better understand where we have commonalities and differences.

Fowler reviewed the Wildlife Trust structure of nine governor appointed board members appointed from judicial districts. The start-up process was very similar to the Cultural Trust, with the creation of rules, hiring of an executive director and establishing an application process. The legislature provided an initial \$300,000 for the first year to establish the organization, after which interest earnings would be available for grants. Fowler presented a map handout that has been used with the legislature to illustrate the scope of projects that have occurred around Wyoming. Fowler commented on a recent survey that noted that most Wyomingites want to see the Wildlife Trust fully funded. He also noted the change in public opinion that as occurred with the making of grants as people discover the value of the projects that have been implemented. Current investments are generating a return of investment of \$6 to \$1 in cash (with the inclusion

of in-kind around \$25 to \$1), plus they have drawn other contributions, such as from the Nature Conservancy for grants for grassland projects. Bovée inquired whether Wildlife Trust board members visit the projects in the field. Fowler confirmed that board members conduct these visits in the grant review process. The Wildlife Trust works with non-profit and governmental agencies; work with private landowners on easements is handled through non-profit conservancy groups. The Wildlife Trust has two grant cycles each year. Shonsey inquired where the funding for these site visits are drawn from. Bovée noted that the Wildlife Trust fund has an administrative line that supports this activity. She explained to Fowler that the Cultural Trust Fund does not have a separate administrative line at this time. Chair Reetz inquired what the corpus of the Wildlife Trust is at this time. Fowler stated they currently had \$48 million in the corpus, plus they get an additional \$3 million in general fund dollars to support projects. They are hoping to get another \$35 million in the corpus and an additional \$5 million in general fund dollars from legislature this session.

Needles remarked on seeing the larger map on display at the legislature provided by the Wildlife Trust, which the handout is based on. The board commented that the Cultural Trust should generate a comparable handout and display. Bovée will work on that and also noted that she is working with the department webmaster on developing an interactive website to illustrate the Cultural Trust distribution.

Fowler also commented on several smaller grants the Wildlife Trust has received from other groups, such as Rocky Mountain Elk, Sportsman for Fish and Wildlife, etc. These funds also have a legislative match (for every \$5,000 raised the Wyoming Legislature will match it). All of these are used as part of their granting programs. He also noted of some Encana funds that the Wildlife Trust is handling as a fiduciary and Needles commented on how some of those funds will be applied for by the State Archaeologist for documenting some prehistoric sites. Needles will find out more details on this fund.

Fowler stated that the Wildlife Trust is also looking at concentrating on the larger grants that have a larger and longer-term impact, versus the smaller grants which while are important don't have the wider impact. Chair Reetz inquired what was the Wildlife Trust's the largest grant. Fowler noted that one in the pipeline now is \$350,000 to help with the wildlife migration routes up around Pinedale and through the developed Anticline area.

Bovée provided a quick overview of the Cultural Trust fund grant processes, noting the similarities and differences between our Trusts. Chair Reetz asked Fowler for any "lessons learned" which he can share. Fowler noted that showing the demand really helped turn around opinions on the Wildlife Trust. Fowler suggested that taking the message to your legislators, constantly speak with legislators on a regular basis and take legislators out on site visits to illustrate what is happening throughout Wyoming. As board members of the Wildlife Trust it is their obligation to speak with legislators and keep them informed.

Chair Reetz thanked Fowler for coming to our meeting.

Revised Grant Application:

Bové reviewed the proposed changes to the WCTF grant application. She explained the changes recommended by the board at the last grant round including tighter language on endowment requests requiring a full cash match; and establishing documentation on governmental or education review processes. The Attorney General's office has also provided review on Indirect Cost language and limits. She also reviewed the changes on the cash expense page, which now breaks down cash expenses attributed to WCTF funds and matching cash funds, in addition to in-kind expenses.

Empey moved and Hladky seconded to approve the revised grant application. Approved unanimously.

Housekeeping:

Bové reviewed the evening's activities.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Schedule Next Meeting:

The board agreed to schedule their next meeting in Evanston, June 13 – 14. It was the preference of the board to meet all day Friday beginning around 9:30 a.m. and conclude by Noon on Saturday.

With no other business, Shonsey moved and Hladky seconded to adjourn at 3:40 p.m. Unanimously approved.