

**00000000HISTORIC ARKANSAS MUSEUM COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 17, 2023**

Commissioners Present:

James Warren, Chair
John Greer, Vice Chair
Gordon Rather, Secretary
Frances Mitchell Ross, Chair Emerita
Vanessa Norton McKuin
Marshall Butler
Tracey Hendren

Commissioners Absent:

Rex Nelson
Ann Jennings Shackelford
Kyle Wilson

Historic Arkansas Museum Staff Present:

Stephanie Haught Wade, Executive Director
Joleen Linson, Assistant Director
Ellen Korenblat, Community Engagement Director
Victoria Chandler, Curator of Collections
Ian Beard, Education Director
Mark Mourier, Accounting

Visitor:

None.

Call to Order: Commission Chair James Warren called the meeting to order at 12:00pm. The meeting was held via Zoom with an in-person meeting option as well.

Approval of Minutes:

Commission Chair James Warren requested a motion to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2023, meeting as distributed. Commissioner John Greer moved to approve the minutes, Commissioner Tracey Hendren seconded, and the motion passed.

Financial Report:

Museum Director Stephanie Wade reported on the balance of state funds. As of March 6, 2023, the Historic Arkansas Museum state funds balance was \$1,263,130.04, and the financial reports show that everything is in good standing. Ms. Wade sent additional February budgets for the Conservation Tax fund and the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council fund to the Commissioners for review. These two funds reflect the majority of money available in the museum budget.

Museum Update:

Museum Director Stephanie Wade shared the February 2023 visitation numbers which totaled 2,299. In February of 2022, there were 1,475 visitors. Museum store sales for February 2023 totaled \$5,940. Ms. Wade stated that every department has been extremely busy with their work, including increased school group tours, 2nd Friday Art Night, Living History Saturdays, Knife Gallery opening and curatorial donations.

Museum Assistant Director Joleen Linson reported on site and facilities. The site manager position is now closed, and candidates will be interviewed next week. Natalie Fulton, Security Supervisor, who started the position in January 2023 has now resigned. She had a second full time job in addition to her position here and realized it was too much for her to handle. The position will be posted soon. Replacement of security cameras will move forward in the upcoming weeks, as well as continued maintenance repairs on the historic grounds.

Education Director Ian Beard stated that numerous out-of-state visitors have been at the museum this week due to Spring Break in Texas. KATV filmed a segment in the print shop with school programs coordinator Casey Marshall, and it is now available for viewing. Attendance for Living History Saturdays in February 2023 totaled 181 and the theme was “Sew the Seeds of Love” - the programming included sowing seeds for a spring garden and hand sewing techniques by textile artists. As part of Black History Month, wedding traditions in the enslaved community were discussed. The March 2023 theme will be “Ho for the Diggings!” as the popularity of the California Gold Rush is explored. This will also be the programming for Spring Break on the Grounds during March 21 – 25, 2023. School Fair will be held April 5 and 6, 2023 and every available time slot is full – a great response from the schools! The focus will be on trades around the historic grounds and working hard for a living. Camp Historic Arkansas will be June 12 – 16, 2023 from 9:00am - 3:00pm for ages 8 through 12 years old. The theme will be “Making Arkansas Home: Homesteading in the 1800s.” For the March 10, 2023, 2nd Friday Art Night, the Education staff offered programming in the trades building/Woodruff Kitchen. Ian Beard, Leon Tidwell, James Rowe, and volunteer Erin Jacobsen attended a 4-day letter press workshop with John Horn at his shop. It was extremely interesting and educational. On February 27, 2023, Tim Richardson and Don Lewis provided a survey workshop. Amy Armstrong and Casey Marshall participated. Victoria Haynes from Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts provided a 3-day 19th century foodways workshop for several staff and volunteers on March 10 – 12, 2023. The workshop was highly praised, as the attendees learned a great deal that can be applied to our living history programming.

Curator of Collections Victoria Chandler presented the Exhibits, Collections and Arkansas Made report. Ms. Chandler reported the refurbished Knife Gallery will open on Saturday, June 17, 2023, and will be a full day of family-friendly activities, speakers, etc. Curatorial staff will participate in the James Black Festival at Historic Washington on April 20 and 21, 2023 and potentially display some knives from the collection for the event. Ms. Chandler showed a recently acquired abstract painting by Ms. Cozetta Quinn, who was originally from Toad Suck, Arkansas. The piece is 20” x 24”. Curatorial is also working on a 50th Anniversary exhibit in the Trinity Gallery which will open June 9, 2023 at 2nd Friday Art Night. The exhibit will showcase some of the artists who displayed their works in the Trinity Gallery over the past 50 years. Director Wade advised that Ms. Lark Buckingham, who had served as Registrar, resigned and is now at the Old State House Museum.

Museum Community Engagement Director Ellen Korenblat reported that Jacob Hicks was recently hired as the Museum Store Manager. The part-time store assistant position closed yesterday, and interviews will begin soon. On March 10, 2023, 2nd Friday Art Night was nicely attended with music by Fonky Donkey and beer by Native Dog from Camden, Arkansas. The April Art Night will have music by Marquis and Mood and silhouette artist, Lauren Muney from Maryland, will be here cutting likenesses for visitors. Ms. Muney will also be at the museum the following day for Saturday living history programming.

Historic Arkansas Museum Foundation:

Ms. Korenblat reported that the membership program brought in \$3,944 since the last Commission meeting. The next Board meeting will be March 30, 2023.

Other Business:

None.

Next Meeting Date:

The next meeting of the Historic Arkansas Museum Commission will be held Friday, April 21, 2023, at 12:00pm via Zoom. Museum Director Stephanie Wade will send instructions to join the meeting. Lunch will be provided in the Loughborough Conference Room.

Adjournment:

With no other business to discuss, Commission Chair James Warren adjourned the meeting at 12:20 pm.

Gordon S. Rather, Jr. Secretary