

**Minutes of Public Meeting of the  
Board of Directors of the  
Arizona Historical Society  
Friday, October 15, 2021**

1. **Call to Order** – President Linda Whitaker.

Meeting called

2. **Roll Call** – Recording Secretary – James Burns (for Bruce Gwynn)

Board members present: Kelly Corsette, Richard Powers, Janice Bryson, Greg Scott, DeNise Bauer, Desirae Barquin, Sherry Rampy, Robert Ballard, Linda Elliott-Nelson, Wynne Brown, Deborah Bateman, Linda Whitaker, Tom Foster, Ileen Snoddy, Colleen Byron, Bruce Gwynn, Jim Snitzer, Linda Elliott-Nelson, Sharon Holnback

Board members absent: Valerie Welsh-Tahbo, Vance Bryce

Staff members present: James Burns, Jace Dostal, Yanna Kruse, Nathan Samoriski, Debbie McKinion, Marilyn Murphy, Trish Norman, Liz Kapp, Shannon Fleischman, Melba Davis, Isabel Cazares, Vanessa Fajardo, Bill Ponder, Lora Key, David Turpie, Kim Bittrich, Eric Gonzales, Todd Bailey, Jenifer Hunt, Tawn Downs

3. Discussion and action, if any, to **approve the draft Minutes** of the September 24, 2021, Board of Directors meeting.

Brown moved that the minutes be accepted as presented; Byron seconded. All approved.

4. **Call to the Public** – Consideration and discussion of comments from the public. Members of the public wishing to address the Board should identify their interest at this time via the chat box. Those wishing to address an item on the agenda will be called upon when that item is being discussed and given up to five minutes. Those wishing to address an item not on the agenda will be allowed up to three minutes. Such items may not be discussed by the Board but may be directed to Staff for study and consideration at a later date.

Members of the public present: Anne Lupica, Susan Dale, Cathy Shumard, Gwen Groth, Charlotte Madden, Ann Pollock, David Breeckner, Marilyn Hammarstrom, Pat Loven

No members of the public wished to speak on agenda items. Three members wished to make general comments.

Groth reminded the board that Arizona is a very diverse state, and she cautioned about not working in silos. She emphasized the need to bring the chapters and the support groups together, and to remember that visitors, volunteers, and members are all potential donors.

Pollock, Treasurer of NAPHS, shared some important information about her family's history over three generations in Arizona and encouraged board members to visit Flagstaff.

Madden, President of NAPHS, shared information about the new exhibitions at the Pioneer Museum and about all of the improvements to the property. She reminded AHS to pay attention to the Pioneer Museum, expressed displeasure about AHS giving Riordan Mansion State Park back to Arizona State Parks and Trails, and invited the board to visit Pioneer Museum and Riordan Mansion State Park.

5. **Summary of Current Events** – Brief summary of current events by the Board Chair, pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.02(K). The Board will not discuss, or act on, any current event summary. – Whitaker

No updates at this time.

6. **Sunset Review and Performance Audit** - Update and discussion regarding status of sunset review. – Whitaker

Deferred to agenda item #10.

7. **AHS Board Health**
  - a. Status of appointments – Whitaker

There are no updates from Boards & Commissions since the last meeting. Whitaker did make an inquiry about the status of the vacant seats. Two of three staff at Boards & Commissions have been on leave.

8. **Listening Tour Report and Recommendations**
  - a. Review of listening tour, Southern Arizona – Snoddy and Brown

Snoddy welcomed everyone from northern Arizona and said she looks forward to getting up to the Pioneer Museum. Brown and Snoddy went on a listening tour, starting with stakeholders in southern Arizona. She advised that the Board is eventually going to have deal with chapters and support groups. There will always be divergent points of view, but the current relationships are very unhealthy for AHS. She cautioned that the Board needs to be concerned not only with chapters but with the staff, and their mental and physical health and well-being on the job. Snoddy and Brown met with many staff; they are a talented group of people who are very invested in AHS. Snoddy advised the board to make sure it is providing the staff with the tools and opportunities to do their jobs. Brown cautioned that the Board needs to be really concerned about losing more of the organization's in-house talent due to issues with lack of funding and support.

**Southern Arizona Chapter /Arizona History Museum Staff**  
**AHS State Board “Southern Arizona Listening Tour”**  
**September 2021**

**BACKGROUND**

The 2013 Sunset Review of the Arizona History Society (AHS) recommended that the State Board of Directors review the status/need of Chapter organizations and define future working relationships.

New board members Wynne Brown and Ileen Snoddy volunteered to open a dialogue with the Southern Arizona Chapter (SAC) and the Arizona History Museum (AHM) staff in an effort to get a true pulse of the situation with “fresh ears” and to establish renewed trust, transparency, and collaboration. Board President Linda Whitaker gave her approval.

We considered the discussion with SAC as high priority because representatives of that chapter are the most vocal “public” in attendance at AHS board meetings and have continued interaction with the AHM staff.

We conducted our “Southern Arizona Listening Tour” late August through September 2021.

**THE “LISTENING TOUR”**

- **SAC:** We met with current SAC President Craig McEwan on August 27, 2021, at AHM to listen to concerns regarding SAC and their long-time involvement with AHM.
  - Priority SAC concerns:
    1. Lack of an open communication between AHM and SAC
      - No one answers his emails
    2. 1107 Funding
      - Approval of how funds were to be spent vs allocated
    3. Advisory role/capacity
    4. SAC’s Charter
      - Lack of understanding why Charter is not being honored by AHS
    5. Lack of SAC member appointment to the AHS State Board of Directors
      - What is the hold up?
    6. Fear that AHS will close the Tucson facility (AHM) and move everything to Phoenix

The conversation was pleasant, and we closed

- with an understanding that relationships do need to be repaired,
- agreeing that open discussions are needed so that everyone understands the environment and how to move forward in a positive manner,
- a request from us that SAC emails to AHM staff be limited as staff are not in the position to make AHM/AHS-wide decisions,
- a commitment to work on developing a method for how to best handle communications.

Several cordial email exchanges with Mr. McEwan and Ms. Linda Head, president of Friends of Arizona History, followed.

As usual, the September 24, 2021, AHS State Board of Directors meeting included the call for “public” discussion. The tone/demeanor in which SAC president Mr. McEwan spoke and the choice of topics to discuss came as an unpleasant surprise to us as we thought these issues had been discussed/answered during the meeting and emails.

- **AHM Staff:** We also met with six staff members on September 8 and September 21 to hear their concerns about interactions with SAC and other matters. We assured each individual that their remarks would be confidential.
  - Staff concerns regarding support groups/SAC:
    1. Support groups appear to feel “entitled” and don’t have a clear idea of their appropriate role:
      - Volunteers behaved as if they had “free rein” at AHM: they came and went as pleased in restricted staff areas, congregated casually in public areas on site while loudly bad-mouthing the agency, came into AHM when not scheduled for volunteer work/assignments.
    2. Members of support groups often questioned staff credentials and disrespected staff in public meetings/settings.
    3. SAC and support groups initiated far too much contact through emails and personal interaction. They demand immediate responses, and, with the limited AHM staff, the barrage of inquiries is “overwhelming and the response never seems correct.”
    4. Volunteers need to be properly vetted and trained; training materials need to be drastically improved.
  - Staff concerns regarding AHS content:
    1. AHM/AHS needs to continue to address current events: “cannot just be about cowboys and winning the wild west.” Sometimes contemporary topics can be uncomfortable, but the museum should be a place for all and help to interpret and guide discussions.

### **“LISTENING TOUR” OBSERVATIONS AND SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS**

After meeting with both SAC and AHM staff members we recognized a common thread regarding

- appropriate/expected communications,
- moving forward in a collaborative manner as opposed to against each other, and
- mutual respect.

The AHS State Board of Directors, along with AHS management, will need to develop a plan for making these relationships positive and win/win for all.

- SAC: Chapters/support groups are very vocal and often appear to work behind the scenes against the best interest of AHS/AHM in general. However, there will always be vocal groups who think their way/agenda is the only vision.

Potential next step(s)

1. Consider disbanding all chapters while expressing gratitude for all their years of service to AHS with a gift of free days and/or AHS coffee mug, etc.
2. Establish a new support group structure such as “Alliances” and invite groups formerly known as Chapters to join – no monetary role.

- **AHS/AHM:** The organization has an extremely talented, dedicated, knowledgeable, and capable staff. Although the Chapter issue has been divisive and hurtful, AHS management and the State Board of Directors should be much more concerned about the very real possibility of losing more of the agency's in-house talent. Staff cited lack of support, inadequate staffing in departments, salary inequity, and burn out.

Potential next step(s)

1. Find funding to add staff so that current employees no longer have to do the work of two positions.
2. Provide revised and updated training/onboarding materials.
3. Schedule regular meetings for updates, brainstorming of new ideas, and celebrating staff successes.
4. Provide opportunities for furthering optional staff education regarding research, exhibit preparation, community outreach, etc.
5. Provide all-hands-on-deck team-building activities such as an annual retreat to build agency cohesiveness and loyalty.

Rampy and Whitaker thanked Brown and Snoddy for starting the listening tour.

9. **Treasurer's Report.** – Jim Snitzer, Bill Ponder, Kim Bittrich

- a. Review of September 2021 financial statements and presentation of financial overview.

Snitzer urged everyone to read Bittrich's report. It is too early in the fiscal year to do much forecasting. There are no immediate financial clouds on the horizon. Long-term funding needs remain though. For now, the Finance Committee recommends staying the course.

10. **Sunset review compliance and progress report on contracts with not-for profit organizations that work with AHS** – Ponder, Burns

- a. Responses to draft letters to 501(c)(3) regarding contracts

**Historical League:**

From the first point of communication, the Historical League has indicated that they are fully in favor of a continued strong relationship with AHS. On the strength of that statement, the draft document was forwarded to Current President, Claire Nullmeyer. She has presented it to their Board. The Board officers reviewed the document and sent their comments back to AHS.

The League has documented an IRS determination letter that indicates their status is not one of a supporting organization. Although it was originally classified as a supporting organization under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 509(a)(3), as of 12/12/18 the IRS stated "we determined you meet the requirements for classification as a public charity described in IRC Section 509(a)(2) and updated our records." This status change is very important as it removes them from the structured requirements AHS is trying to achieve. They no longer fall into the category of support groups that the Auditor General was concerned about in their review.

The League has now chosen to voluntarily enter into a contracted relationship with AHS. As such the final agreement will be subject to more modifications than may have been originally perceived. However, it is still believed that the final document will define a relationship that

achieves the most important of the goals sought after. President Nullmeyer and President-Elect, Christine Hackett, have engaged in direct discussions and productive negotiations with AHS.

On Tuesday, October 12th, League President Claire Nullmeyer, President -Elect Christine Hackett and I met at the Heritage Center, concluded our negotiations and executed the contract between AHS and the Historical League. They should be recognized for their willingness and desire to enter into this agreement defining and solidifying our relationship.

### **Northern Arizona Pioneers Historical Society:**

NAPHS has been contacted. Their President, Charlotte Madden has received the draft document. She will present it to the board at their next meeting on September 28th. She will then contact Bill about a follow-up meeting to discuss what comes out of the board meeting. She did continue to reference the 1984 documents describing their first donation of collection artifacts and any strings attached thereto. (Note storage of certain artifacts in Conex boxes is a Sunset Review finding. It is not known if these artifacts were part of the 1984 donation. AHS has requested a formal legal opinion from the State's Attorney General.)

We know that NAPHS does support other organizations as well as AHS. If they elect to continue down the path of having a relationship with AHS, it may be informed by the work that comes out of our agreement with the Historical League.

Charlotte Madden has provided the following response to our draft agreement:

“The NAPHS Board met on October 6th to discuss the proposed contract between AHS and NAPHS. The contract was discussed in length and the Board felt more time was needed before a decision could be made.

The NAPHS Board did come to a consensus on a few points:

- The Board would appreciate a meeting with the new AHS administrator to discuss the contract before making any decision regarding the presented document.
- The Board will analyze our past relationship with AHS and examine what we would like our future partnership to look like.
- The Board will review NAPHS's goals and objectives. How does this agreement honor our commitment to support other historical organizations and preservation projects in northern Arizona?
- The Board will be reviewing other relevant documents pertaining to the relationship of NAPHS/AHS.
- NAPHS will continue to operate under the existing MOU of September 2015.

We look forward to resuming our conversation in 2022.”

### **Friends of Arizona History:**

President Vicki Schwager stated they are considering revising their bylaws but they have not met. They requested time to re-evaluate in 2022.

**Los Amigos:**

President Vicki Schwager stated this group is also considering revising their bylaws. The group has not met. She has requested has time to re-evaluate in 2022.

**Arizona Pathfinders**

A couple of reviews have been conducted with the Pathfinders President, Gene Kunde. Those meetings were cordial and productive. Gene doesn't see any major hurdles, but there is some ongoing discussion about an endowment of some sort that Pathfinders has. They continue to meet and have reached out to Tucson staff. An extension on the deadline would be appreciated.

Update: On September 28, staff received a communication from Gene.

“...wanted to advise the three of you that I have resigned from the board and presidency of the Pathfinders. Because of my passion for Arizona History and desire to help the Arizona Historical Society achieve its new vision, this was a difficult decision for me to make.” He went on to explain that it became evident that change was not going to be a possibility, and concluded by saying that: “Three other board members resigned at the same time, and the remaining group is now deciding on how to proceed or cease operations.”

While this is a sad end to negotiations, staff remains hopeful that there are individuals in Tucson, such as Gene, who may want to find a way to work together with AHS.

**Yuma County Historical Society**

James Burns met with Tom Hurt and Bruce Gwynn. By the end of the conversation they seemed satisfied and ready to meet with their board. Ponder reported to Burns that that meeting took place, and that a new YCHS President was elected. YCHS definitely wants to continue doing business with AHS, but we have to build a new relationship with the President, with whom AHS staff has not ever interacted with in the past. An extension of the deadline would be appreciated.

**Arizona History Convention**

James Burns met with Stuart Rosebrook, Mark Tebeau, and Katherine Morissey a couple of times. We negotiated the contract together, and there were no points of contention. They stated that they needed to take this to their board. They have not yet been able to find a date where they can get a quorum. An extension of the deadline would be appreciated.

**Friends of the Arizona Historical Society Inc.**

Bruce Gwynn and James Burns had a great conversation. All questions were answered, and no substantial concerns were expressed. Due to Gwynn's travel schedule, he was unable to attend the 9/23 FAHS meeting. There was not a quorum at the meeting, so nothing could be voted on. FAHS is hoping to schedule an emergency meeting prior to October 15. If that is not possible, an extension on the deadline would be appreciated.

Update: The emergency meeting did not happen. Instead, the board agreed it would be best to proceed with its regularly-scheduled October meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The contract discussion and vote has been agendized.

Snoddy asked if the Board need to vote to extend the deadline for the organizations actively working to negotiate a contract. Whitaker responded no and advised that staff should continue to work with the groups that wish to establish a contract with AHS.

Powers recommended creating a tracking document. Burns responded that he had done so and that it had been shared with Ponder and Whitaker and could be regularly updated for the full Board.

**Snitzer expressed concern about the groups waiting until there is a new executive director on board. He emphasized that the contracts are not being done at the recommendation of the executive director. Rather, they are being done in response to the sunset review. The Executive Committee directed staff to negotiate the contracts. The need for contracts will not change with a change in administration. There is no reason for contract negotiations not to continue.**

Whitaker agreed that extensions are wise, and noted that the process is interesting both in terms of learning what the State is looking for and what AHS is learning about these support organizations. The Historical League's contract may be a model for other support organizations, as well as their new IRS designation, which seems to make the reporting structure less onerous. This information might be something that could be shared with the other support groups. The contracts need to be submitted with the rest of AHS' sunset review materials in 2022 before the sunset review site visit in 2023. Some of the language in the contracts may feel punitive; it isn't intended that way, but it provides a sense of the structure and reporting that the State expects.

Ponder observed that the contracts can be customized, depending on the support organization's legal status with the IRS.

Whitaker asked Historical League representatives how their status got changed. Did they request it? Susan Dale reported that they sought an IRS opinion. Anne Lupica offered to meet with the other groups to discuss the differences between IRS designations.

## 11. Committee Reports

### a. Community Outreach Committee Report – Foster

Checks for certified historical institution grant awardees will be sent soon.

### b. Library, Archives, and Collections Committee Report – Scott

No report at this time.

### c. Property and Buildings Committee Report – Bauer

Eric Gonzales met with the committee and informed them he is leaving AHS. The committee met in person at the Arizona Heritage Center.

### d. Governance Committee Report – Corsette



The committee has not met since the last board meeting. A meeting is scheduled in the next couple of weeks.

## 12. Executive Director's Summary 2018-2021 and Next Steps – Burns

### Organizational Accomplishments:

- American Alliance of Museums Accreditation for the full agency – a first
- Modern mission and vision statements
- Transition from a divisive geographic-based organization to a function-based organization resulting in greater efficiency
- Resolution of 19 of the 22 sunset review findings from 2013
- New partnerships with organizations in communities across the state

### People

- A board appointment process that has resulted in a sea change on our state board of directors, bringing together the most diverse group of people ever represented on this board, a group that is beginning to reflect the demographics of Arizona's population
- The most professional, highly trained staff the organization has ever had in its history
- Highly successful and influential new members of the Friends of AHS Inc. who can help lead a capital campaign

### Interpret and Disseminate

- The award-winning Journal of Arizona History, once focused on territorial-era military and pioneer history, now includes 20th and 21st century topics about cultural, educational, social, and environmental history in Arizona – subjects seldom covered previously.
- AHS' first-ever interpretation and education plan
- Virtual programming that has reached audiences not previously served
- Digital History Hub
- New temporary exhibitions and permanent exhibition updates that reflect the demographics of the population of Arizona

### Collect and Preserve

- AHS' first-ever collecting plan
- Establishment of a thoughtful, judicious deaccession program to enable the organization to continue to collect and preserve Arizona's history
- Inventories of Yuma and Flagstaff collections
- Massive cleanup of Tempe and Tucson collections storage areas

- Acquisition of objects and archival materials from communities AHS had long ignored
- Acquisition of major collections (Markow photographs, mining archive, etc.)

#### Facilities and Finances

- Over \$1 million in capital improvement projects funded and completed – statewide
- \$1.6 million dollar fund for capital campaign / fundraising expenses
- \$950,000 in COVID relief funding
- Weathering the worst year museums can remember only having to use \$5,000 in reserve funds
- Grants from multiple new funding sources
- New revenue streams (virtual programming, micrographics)

#### The Future of AHS

- Continue to make bold and tough decisions that have been avoided for a very long time
- Continue to emphasize relevancy to modern-day, diverse audiences
- Capital campaign to bring greater stability to the organization
- Resolve relationships that keep the organization stuck in neutral
- Diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion
- Competitive compensation to ensure the organization can not only attract, but retain a highly qualified team

#### 13. **Resilience Playbook Work Plan Presentation** – Bauer, Snoddy, Elliott-Nelson, Rampy, Brown, Gonzales, Neely, Cazares, Key, Samoriski, Norman, Fleischman, Adams, Fajardo, Davis, Burns

What is the resilience playbook?

A project developed by Gail Anderson & Associates, Santa Fe, NM. - Gail Anderson, Dina Bailey, and Ann Ackerson, three highly regarded consultants with several decades of collective experience in the museum field.

What is the purpose of the resilience playbook?

- It was developed to assist not-for-profits struggling to reinvent themselves during the pandemic.
- Designed to help organizations develop more resiliency, become more relevant, and more sustainable.
- The foundation of the playbook is based on embedding diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion in organizations.

Who participated in the resilience playbook?

- A cohort was formed (the first since the playbook was developed): Arizona Historical Society, Arizona State Capitol Museum, Sharlot Hall Museum
- A board member, a staff member, and the director of each institution participated.
- From AHS, the representatives were James Burns, Vance Bryce, and Vanessa Fajardo
- We began meeting in April, and had our last meeting on October 13.

What are the outcomes of the project?

- A work plan designed to incorporate what we learned from the project into AHS.
- When complete, the plan will include long and short-term goals and accomplishments, initiatives, action items, and measures of success.
- Thus far, the initiatives and action items have been developed. That’s what we are sharing with you today.

Who participated on the task force?

DeNise Bauer	Ileen Snoddy	Linda Elliott-Nelson
Sherry Rampy	Wynne Brown	Valerie Welsh-Tahbo
Eric Gonzales	Liz Kapp	Mike Goodwin
Isabel Cazares	Melba Davis	Lora Key
Nathan Samoriski	Trish Norman	Jaynie Adams
Shannon Fleischman	Vanessa Fajardo	James Burns

## PREFACE

Agile Leadership at the Arizona Historical Society takes many forms. Oversight leadership is represented by the State Board of Directors and boards of AHS’ History Partners. Administrative leadership is represented by the AHS Executive Director and staff department heads. Staff subject matter experts are leaders at all levels of the organization. AHS is committed to supporting leadership development through funding, mentoring, time, space for inclusive dialogue, and recognition.

### Goal 5 Advancing Agile Leadership

Play 17 Organizational leaders are focused on sustainability, adaptability, resilience, dynamism, collaboration, and efficiency, guided by a clearly defined mission, vision, and flexible strategic plan.

AHS will clearly define the roles and responsibilities of staff, boards, and stakeholders, revise and update the existing strategic plan, and build the institution’s capacity to adapt through professional development for all stakeholders.

Play 18 Organizational leaders are focused on creating an inclusive, value-driven, transparent, integrated, and adaptable organizational culture.

AHS will increase consistency and transparency of communication at all levels of the organization, between departments, between administrative leadership and staff, and between staff and the State Board of Directors, will develop a shared set of board/staff organizational values, and will provide tools to help leaders throughout the organization navigate vastly divergent interests and points of view among stakeholders.

Play 19 The institutional structure and culture are designed and integrated for maximum mission fulfillment and resiliency, and the organization regularly evaluates and realigns as necessary to meet the needs of its evolving audiences.

AHS will periodically realign to meet strategic goals and ensure compliance with the 2013 AHS sunset review findings by establishing written mutually-agreed-upon roles and responsibilities for chapter boards, contracts with 501(c)(3) support organizations, and volunteers.

Play 20 Organizational leaders will define, establish, embed, and reward a learning mindset and culture in the institution, eliminating barriers for board, staff, and stakeholders to pursue knowledge and bring about continuous transformation.

AHS will increase learning opportunities for board and staff, develop a learning mindset and culture in the institution, and establish an ongoing relationship with diversity and inclusion consultants.

#### Goal 1 Activate Equity and Inclusion

Play 1 The organization embraces and reflects diversity, inclusion, and equity in ideology, practice, policy, and representation, encourages ongoing assessments and examines assumptions and biases through task forces, focus groups, and external input.

AHS will implement diversity training for staff, board members, and volunteers, recruit more diverse voices from the communities it serves, and signal that it is a safe space for Arizona's diverse demographics.

Play 2 The organization is committed to examining and addressing exclusionary, embedded practices that inhibit inclusion, recruiting staff and board members from diverse backgrounds, maintaining a culture where everyone is comfortable sharing their experiences, and developing systems to improve equity and inclusion.

AHS will become more accessible to constituents and communities in all of its locations, solicit more diverse community voices in planning, and update interpretation in exhibitions that may be offensive or hurtful.

Play 3 The organization is committed to weaving diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) into all of its decision-making processes and planning initiatives, with the understanding that decisions send messages to stakeholders, to realign practices and

examine assumptions through a lens of inclusion, and to continue to prioritize DEAI into its programs and operations.

AHS will develop a staffing plan to ensure equitable representation of the diverse peoples in the communities it serves, commit to presenting a balanced, factual interpretation of Arizona history, and work with indigenous groups to review and evaluate AHS holdings.

Play 4 The organization is committed to sharing its institutional history/origins and understanding the implications for stakeholders, examining and addressing longtime biases, assumptions, and behaviors to rectify exclusionary practices, to assessing and modifying processes and practices through an inclusion lens, and advancing new practices and performance measurements accordingly.

AHS will openly share its origins and institutional history, and evaluate, update, and revise policies on a regular basis.

## Goal 2 Renegotiate Community Value

Play 5 The organization regularly assesses local and global realities, needs, trends, community organizations, and shifting demographics. It connects with community stakeholders to determine how it can best make a difference in the lives of people through community involvement that takes the institution outside of its traditional arenas to integrate new and different ways of engaging the public and making peoples' lives better.

AHS will assess its internal organizational culture and external landscape to identify gaps in community needs, creating a model for diversity and sustainability by emphasizing the need for ongoing change over time in order for the institution to survive.

Play 6 Organizational leaders identify opportunities in which the museum can be a key player in the community and beyond, balances inwardly driven decisions with actions that advance the well-being of the community, and seeks opportunities for meaningful work for the institution to contribute to the greater good.

AHS will incorporate outreach as essential to all aspects of its operations, prioritizing community needs to increase visibility statewide, both physically and digitally, in underserved communities.

Play 7 Organizational leaders leverage staff, programming, collections, and facilities to add the greatest value to the community and to engage in regular assessment of its work.

AHS will reallocate resources to allow for development of a nimble response process for the staff and public to react to current events.

Play 8 The organization acts for the greater good as an integral part of society, actively contributing to social and cultural vitality and health by identifying service gaps and

determining how best to meet those needs to achieve community value and increase the museum's impact.

AHS will assess its environmental impact, expand educational outreach, and seek grant opportunities for new program development.

### Goal 3 Reimagine Impactful Role

Play 9 The organization examines its historical roots that define its ideology and role in engaging communities, cultures, heritage, artifacts, histories and traditions, and educates its audiences to sustain relationships by actively addressing exclusionary practices.

AHS will engage with the public and together explore how AHS learns about the past, has presented history, and how the institution will incorporate previously unrecognized and underrepresented stories in the future.

Play 10 Organizational leaders support institutional assessment to update best practices, maximize relevancy, and prioritize inclusion, transparency, and integrity.

AHS will establish departmental philosophies and incorporate external assessments into its operations in order to understand what methods work with its audiences.

Play 11 The organization has a relevant mission, inspirational vision, and a commitment to equity and inclusion, and utilizes these to build meaningful connections and relationships with diverse stakeholders to maximize its current and potential impact . The institution's mission articulates a powerful rationale for its existence, how it makes a difference, and impacts the future.

AHS will evaluate how meaningful and actionable its mission is and develop interagency procedures that further develop the institutional strengths to better serve the public.

Play 12 Organizational leaders keep the mission and impactful role front of mind as the institution responds to conversations with community, stakeholders, and audiences, and use planning methods to make updates and revisions as necessary.

AHS will incorporate scenario-planning and professional development opportunities into its normal operations that the institution is both updated on best practices and prepared when AHS cannot operate as usual.

### Goal 4 Retool Financial Mindset

Play 13 Organizational leaders regularly question financial assumptions to factor in shifting external environments, create forecasting and reporting tools, and incorporate risk management discussion, financial scenario planning, and trend analysis into ongoing financial management

AHS will provide all supervisors with a clear understanding of the organizational budget, best practices for financial management, and reporting tools to analyze finances and forecast financial trends factoring in external environmental factors.

Play 14 Organizational leaders plan for financial health by diversifying revenue sources, aligning staff to meet revenue goals, and committing to transparency and accountability to internal and external stakeholders, regularly conduct a cost benefit analysis of programmatic activity, and ensure inclusion, equity, and community value in programming.

AHS will ensure that diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion goals are reflected in its annual budget based on a list of prioritized projects, with an emphasis on temporary exhibitions and programming.

Play 15 The organization uses scenario planning to anticipate the impact of external and internal realities on its financial health to maintain financial equilibrium and be responsive.

AHS will utilize best practices for financial management, promote a reserve fund, and incorporate scenario planning into budgeting based on a priority list of expenditures, allowing for flexibility in cost reductions and the ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances.

Play 16 Organizational leaders assess the financial aspects of all activities against mission and impact, using rigorous metrics to evaluate performance, seeking to reimagine its future, focusing on community needs.

AHS will conduct an institutional capacity assessment focused on staff workload, build financial literacy throughout the organization, and promote financial transparency through regular feedback.

What are the next steps?

- Joint board/staff task force continue to meet regularly to complete the missing components of the work plan.
- Task force meets with the new Executive Director to brief them about the work that has been done thus far.
- Executive Director works with staff and board to determine how to implement the work plan.
- Idea – the work plan could serve as the foundation for a new strategic plan.

Rampy observed that working with the task force was enlightening. The entire staff is amazing! It is rare to see a staff with such a desire to improve the organization they are with. It was such a genuine effort on everyone's part. Powers asked if the full draft plan would be shared. Whitaker asked Burns to do so even though there is more work to be done. Whitaker observed that this work is a strong start for a new strategic plan.

#### 14. **Search Committee Report** – Whitaker

There were 90 total applicants for the position of Executive Director; 38 resumes were forwarded to the search committee. Those were all reviewed by the committee, which met 14 times. Nine applicants were interviewed in the first round. Of those, four advanced to second interviews. The committee spend nearly 330 collective hours on the search. Whitaker thanked Burns for help in the initial phase, acting in the role of a search consultant. This process saved AHS approximately \$60,000, the cost of hiring a search firm. The search was nationwide, and the process worked well. The committee quickly reached consensus about finalists.

#### 15. **Executive Session** – Discussion and presentation of finalists to Board.

The board went into executive session at approximately 1:35 p.m. to discuss final candidates.

The board came out of executive session at 2:21 p.m. and returned to the public meeting with staff and members of the public.

#### 16. Reconvene regular meeting for **possible action to approve making an offer**

Bateman made a motion to make an offer to candidate #1, and if not accepted to make an offer to candidate #2, contingent upon successful reference checks, and also to authorize the President of the AHS Board to negotiate salary and hire date; Powers seconded. All board members presented voted in favor.

Discussion ensued about making an announcement to the public, staff, etc.

To clarify next steps:

1. The Governor's Office **does not require, nor does it seek** approval of the selection of an AHS Director. By statute, Director hire is determined solely by the AHS Board. As a courtesy AHS will notify the Governor's Office when a candidate accepts the position.
2. AHS is **exempt** from employee background checks. Why? Certain agencies such as Department of Corrections are governed by legislative language that mandates employee background checks in their statute. Our governing statute, ARS 41 821-826, does not have that language which means there is no background check delay in making an offer.
3. AHS is obligated, however, to vet candidates' references and will do that as quickly, thoroughly as possible.
4. Once that is done, a phone call to the candidate(s) with an offer can be made.
5. This is followed by a formal letter generated by HR and signed by the board President extending the offer which the candidate may or may not accept or want to negotiate.
6. The sequencing of the formal announcement will be determined by Ponder, Davis, and Downs and reviewed by Whitaker for the announcement to all stakeholders including the Governor's Office and then to the public.

#### 17. **Announcements** and other matters for consideration in future board or committee meetings.

Whitaker will propose a schedule for executive committee and board meetings occurring in 2022.



**2021 AHS Board meetings:**

December 17, 2021 – Virtual

**2021 AHS Executive Committee meetings:**

Monday, October 25, 2021

Monday, November 22, 2021

Monday, December 27, 2021 (tentative)

**Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 2:31 p.m.

Dated this 15<sup>th</sup> day of October 2021

Arizona Historical Society



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Linda Whitaker, Board President

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