

A Meeting of the  
**MONTANA HERITAGE COMMISSION**

June 9, 2017

Rehearsal Hall

115 Idaho Street, Virginia City

Helena, MT

MISSION

*The Montana Heritage commission preserves and manages historic resources in Virginia City, Nevada City and Reeder's Alley and promotes the appreciation of history through quality visitor experiences.*

**Commissioners Present**

Marilyn Ross, Philip Maechling, Andy Poole, Shera Konen, Stan Ozark, Timothy Lehman, Bill Beck, David Hoffman, Barbie Durham, Bruce Whittenberg, Pam Haxby-Cote

**Commissioners Absent**

David Hoffman, Matthew Marcinek, Bill Howell

**Staff Members Present**

Elijah Allen, Business Development Manager; Amy Barnes, Attorney; Bonnie Martello, Paralegal

**Interested Persons**

Harlan Olson, Joelle Olson, John Ellingsen

**Call to Order**

The Montana Heritage Commission was called to order by Chair Ross at 10:03 am.

**Approval of December 9, 2016 Minutes**

**Commissioner Durham made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Maechling seconded. Motion carried.**

**Public Comment**

John Ellingson, thanked the commission for their hard work and for being on the Commission.

Elijah introduced the Olson's who are the restoration experts for the wagons that the Commission have in their possession.

## Director's Report

Elijah discussed the new concessionaires that include; Jade Monkey, Nacho Mamas, Stage Coach rides, and Steffano Art Gallery.

Elijah shared with the commission that he is super excited about the Vigilante Family Pass, which consists of unlimited rides on the train, gold panning and the experience of the Living History Museum the retail value is \$99.00 and next week the passes will be sold in Costco in Montana.

The License plates are doing well, 300 plates have been sold.

Elijah discussed lodging needs in Virginia City and Nevada City. Elijah stated that there are 15 potential vacation rentals that could become a year-round revenue stream for the Commission. There are 42 businesses and the biggest issue is nowhere to lodge the seasonal employees.

Elijah presented the interpretive signs that have been produced from a donation from the Donnelly Foundation, there are 25 in total they are being installed in the Nevada City Museum and around Virginia City.

Elijah demonstrated the new [www.virginacitymt.com](http://www.virginacitymt.com) website. The website will be the main marketing venue. Elijah also encouraged the Commission to be involved in Facebook, this is how updates will be presented and is the best inexpensive marketing gateway.

Elijah discussed the two-million-dollar allocation through HB 2 to the Heritage Commission from the Parks Special Revenue account for preservation and maintenance solely in Nevada and Virginia City. Elijah proposed several structures to be repaired in fiscal year 2018 and for fiscal year 2019 concentrating on the structures on Wallace Street with fire suppression services and roof repair. (Commissioners did an on-site tour of the proposed structures)

Elijah and Commissioner Maechling discussed with the Commission the possibility of forming a hiring committee to produce a RFP for a Cultural Resource Project Manager to oversee the proposed projects. Commissioner Maechling stressed the importance of the project manager be a preservation specialist along with having project manager experience so that the proposed work is being adhered to the Secretary of Interior Standards. Commissioner Maechling feels that Elijah should not have to take on this additional task. Commissioner Maechling also stated that there will need to be some discussion on who the position will report to. **Commissioner Maechling motioned for the Executive Committee to produce an RFP for a Cultural Resource Project Manager who will work with the Commission on preserving structures. Commissioner Poole asked Commissioner Maechling if he is aware of an RFP that are like what we are looking for, Commissioner Maechling responded that downloaded a few to look though. Commissioner Durham seconded. Motion carried.**

## Land Donation

**Commissioner Lehman, moved for approval of Ms. Johnson's offer to donate her land located at S22, T06, R03 W., C.O.S. 7/1594, POR of BATTEN PLACER 1232 IN SEC 21 & NW4 SEC 22. (6.708 acres) to the Montana Heritage Preservation and Development Commission on the following conditions (1) that the Hazardous Materials Survey concludes there are no hazardous materials present on the land and (2) the Title Report concludes Ms. Johnson is the true owner of all property interests in this property and she has sole authority to convey all rights and interests in the property. Commissioner Durham seconded. Motion carried.**

**Commissioner Poole, moved to recommend to the Board of Land commissioners that acceptance of Ms. Johnson's offer to donate her land located at S22, T06, R03 W., C.O.S. 7/1594, POR of BATTEN PLACER 1232 IN SEC 21 & NW4 SEC 22. (6.708 acres) to the Montana Heritage Preservation and Development Commission on the following conditions (1) that the Hazardous Material Survey concludes there are no hazardous material s present on the land and (2) the Tittle Report concludes Ms. Johnson is the true owner of all property interests in this property and she has sole authority to convey all rights and interests in this property. Commissioner Konen seconded. Motion carried.**

### **Financial Report**

Elijah reviewed the Commission's Financial statement with the Commission. Elijah stated that with the Vehicle tax and the parks fee that the Commission receives a portion of is staying consistent. Historically June is the best month for the vehicle tax that averages around \$60,000. Elijah discussed visitor services which consists of the stay and play packages, vacation rentals, trains rides, museum entrance fees, and the vigilante family pass is on point, he does not see any problems of not making the project \$80,000. Donations are up from last year. Elijah explained to the Commission that June is the most expensive month and the month that most of the revenue comes in. Elijah asked for approval of projected working budget for FY 2018 in the amount of \$2,184,664. **Commissioner Maechling motioned to approve the FY 2017 MHC budget as presented. Commissioner Ozark seconded. Motion carried.**

### **Legislative Auditor Report**

Chair Ross shared with the Commission that the audit report was a favorable audit and Sarah Carlson was very helpful and easy to get along with. Commissioner Ozark expressed that this audit was very well put together, but the comments are recommendations. Commissioner Poole also commented that the audit report is good even with the minor issues and the recommendations provide the Commission a better understanding of what their rules and responsibilities are. The report will be presented to the Legislative Audit Committee in June 27, 2017.

### **Interoperative Plan Update**

Commissioner Maechling presented the concept of offering interoperative programs that relate to the history of Nevada and Virginia City. Commissioner Haxby-Cote stated that she was very inspired with this project and Commerce has several grants that could be utilized for this program.

**MHC Commissioner Comments**

The Commission set the following dates for the upcoming meeting:

September 8, 2017 in Virginia City

**Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.