

# Levy Oversight Committee

Meeting Minutes for June 13, 2022



## **LOC Members - in Person**

Co-Chair Dilg  
Co-Chair McKeel  
Bill Bennetts  
Jennifer Burns  
Elka Grisham  
Lib Pruden

## **LOC Members - via Zoom**

Scott Forrester  
James Harrison  
Glenn Taylor

## **Other Attendees - in Person**

Kerry Tymchuk, OHS  
Eliza Canty-Jones, OHS  
Sophie Carter, OHS

## **Other Attendees - via Zoom**

LeAnn Stehpan, Troutdale Historical Society  
Helen Wand, Troutdale Historical Society  
Sandy Cartiss, Crown Point Country Historical Society  
Sue Piazza, Gresham Historical Society

## Welcome

Co-chair Jan Dilg welcomed attendees to the meeting and discussed the committee's recent tour of the OHS Vault.

Paul Park, Multnomah County Liaison to the LOC, announced that this will be his last Levy Oversight Committee meeting, after which his replacement, Giovanni Bautista, proceeded to introduce himself.

## Updates from Organizations Receiving Levy Funds

### *Gresham Historical Society*

Sue Piazza announced that GHS will be having a few events to fundraise for maintenance to their building. They also received a grant from the American Rescue Act to hire a part-time employee to record oral histories.

### *Troutdale Historical Society*

LeAnn Stephan announced that THS had an event for the train depot that was very successful. They will be holding two free outdoor concerts this summer and hope to return to their usual three concerts next year. She attended the vault tour, which helped inspire her team in organizing their own collections. They are in the process of designating their property's chestnut tree as a heritage tree. They had their annual meeting in April, at which they approved a proposal to turn the old city hall into an

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English pub and brewery, thereby saving the building. The old jail cell doors will be integrated into the design.

Helen Wand then explained THS' recent history scavenger hunt, a new educational activity in which they write clues, give participants three weeks to find answers, and then they are rewarded via raffle. It was an idea from their young new board members, whose involvement she is very excited about.

## *Crown Point Country Historical Society*

Sandy Cartiss announced that CPCHS will not be opening by the beginning of next year as she had hoped, as they are having trouble getting the parts for their front door; however, their septic system is in place and the HVAC installation is on track to take place shortly. They are currently fundraising and writing grants to gain funding for their capital projects.

## *East County History Organization*

Gwen Nothwang from ECHO was unable to connect via Zoom but submitted a written report stating that open houses at the Heslin House continue the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month. The Zimmerman House is awaiting good weather for a repainting. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dairy Days Car Show will also be held at the Zimmerman House on July 10 and will feature food carts, prizes, and a raffle. Donors continue to provide information and materials for the Heslin House, and a Zimmerman relative in Colorado recently donated to the Zimmerman House.

## *Oregon Historical Society*

Kerry Tymchuk announces that Eastern Oregon historical societies are due to send financial reports to OHS by January 15 and July 15 of each year according to their recently adopted agreement. He then presented on recent developments at OHS, including growing attendance and website engagement, updates to the website, new library collections, the upcoming issue of the *Quarterly*, and new exhibits, among other updates.

## Discussion of Role, Boundaries & Goals of Levy Oversight Committee

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Co-chair McKeel explained that the Levy Oversight Committee's job is to confirm that the levy money is being spent in accordance with the language of the levy. They can give counsel, but do not control or manage the historical societies in their purview, and they can report to county commissioners if they encounter any red flags. The committee will also give a complete report to the county commissioners this fall.

Glenn Taylor asks about the levy allotments to non-OHS historical societies; another committee member explains that you can find their tax information online.

In response to committee questions, Mr. Tymchuk explains that the levy has given OHS and the other historical societies a solid foundation on which to build programs, exhibits, and more. Without the original levy eleven years ago, OHS may not have survived or would be a very different organization today. The levy comprises approximately one-third of OHS' budget. He added that OHS receives calls from other historical societies seeking to emulate OHS' model.

The representative from the Aurora Colony Museum voiced her enthusiasm for increasing the amount of levy funding designated to the four east county historical societies, especially as it is currently fixed at \$50k. She noted that competitive salaries and paid internships are important to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in the museum field. In response, Ms. Piazza discussed GHS' near loss of their new director to a competing institution that offered her a 45% higher salary.

Mr. Park shared that his draft bylaws for the Levy Oversight Committee will be circulated by Mr. Bautista and will be up for discussion at the next meeting, after which the meeting was adjourned.