

The Ohio Historical Society
Board of Trustees

Thursday, January 19, 2006 – 10:30 a.m.
(Ohio Historical Center, Columbus, Ohio)

Trustees Present: Patricia Eldredge (President), Grant Douglass (Vice-President), Richard Ruppert (Vice President) Marian Vance (Secretary), Robert H. Jeffrey (Treasurer), David Baker, Marnie C. Black, Joyce E. Brown (via phone), Jon Elsasser, Linda Herrnstein, Joseph Leonard, Ann Lowder, Neil Mortine, Ted Prasse, Mac Stewart

Trustees Absent: Cathy Crain, Nancy Dix, Bob Goldberg, George Kulchytsky

Ex Officio Trustees

Present: Ann Aquillo (representing Governor Taft), Dan Baker (representing Speaker of the House), Samantha Herd (representing Senate Minority Leader), Claudia Vecchio (representing Ohio Department of Development), Bill Muthig (representing Ohio Department of Education), Richard Simpson (Development Board), Michael Herschler (President, Ohio Academy of Science), and Patricia Smith (OAHSM)

Others Present: Bill Laidlaw (Executive Director), Fritz Milligan (Legal Counsel), Rachel Tooker (Deputy Executive Director), Lucy M. Porter (Trustee Emeriti), Ron Bednar (Chief Financial Officer), Todd Kleismit (Director of Government Relations), Glenn Peters (Director of Museums), Scott Mueller (Director of Institutional Advancement), George Kane (Director of Facilities Management), Jim Strider (Director of Collections, Historic Preservation and Statewide Outreach), Melanie Nye (Director of Human Relations) and Brenda Neale (Executive Assistant)

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- I. **Key Issues** – Claudia Vecchio reported on partnership opportunities between the Ohio Division of Travel and Tourism and the Ohio Historical Society.
 - II. **Call to Order** - President Eldredge called the meeting to order at 10:45 a.m. as she welcomed newly appointed trustee Linda Hernnstein, as well as ex-officio trustee representatives Samantha Herd (representing Senate Minority Leader) and Dan Baker (representing Speaker of the House)

- a) Approval of Minutes: Jon Elsasser made a motion, which was seconded by Marian Vance, to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2005 meeting of the OHS Board of Trustees as submitted. The motion was approved unanimously by the Board.
- b) President's Report: President Eldredge reported new initiatives, board goals, recent grants received, programming initiatives, establishment of Young Professionals group, and actions by the Executive Committee. Mrs. Eldredge thanked Board members for their support of the Annual Fund as she encouraged the support of those that have not yet contributed.
- c) Executive Director's Report: Executive Director, Bill Laidlaw, reported on recent legislative visits to Washington, D.C. by Pat Eldredge, Ted Prasse, Todd Kleismit and himself, management's progress with strategic planning process, new plans to revitalize exhibits, recent gifts from trustees, progress in recruiting new marketing director, organization's continued focus on education and economic development. Rachel Tooker was asked to comment on the "REV It Up" project to revitalize exhibits at the Ohio History Center. Rachel Tooker outlined plans on management's strategies for revitalizing and bringing meaningful changes to the exhibit floor of the Ohio Historical Society. The goals of the exhibit planning process are: 1) establish a changing exhibit space, 2) create the first four new exhibits over the next year, and 3) ramp up space for public programs. Management is using an organization-wide approach to accomplish its goals and is combining the talents of various staff members across inter-departmental lines. The first exhibit is scheduled to be launched on Memorial Day Weekend, "Kid Stuff: Great Toys from our Childhood," and will be followed by "Picturing What Matters" and "The Armory Wall: A Tribute to September 11th" in the fall 2006. Negotiations are also underway for two additional exhibits.

III. Physical Structures & Locations Committee: Dick Ruppert presented a report on behalf of the Physical Structures & Locations Committee.

- a). Capital Projects Status Report – Dr. Ruppert reported on the status of scheduled completion of FY '06 capital projects. A total of \$3.4M in OCFC funds and \$590k in federal and private grant funds will be spent during FY '06 on fifty-six projects scheduled to be completed during the current fiscal year. This compares to original budgeted estimates of \$3.6M in OCFC funds and \$270k in federal and private grants to complete work on thirty original projects.

- b). Prioritization of Public Space Projects – The PS&L Committee has met several times with Karlsberger architects to evaluate recommendations for renovating and revitalizing the Plaza Level entrance with a focus toward providing access to the plaza level for handicapped visitors. Final plans were presented on December 1, 2005. The total cost estimates (\$4.0M) exceeded \$1.0M originally set aside for the project. The PS&L Committee presented a recommendation to the Executive Committee at their December 13, 2005 meeting to defer the Plaza Level project with the intent of evaluating its priority in relationship to other capital needs relating to the FY '09-'10 capital request. A subsequent proposal was presented by the PS&L Committee and endorsed by the Executive Committee to re-allocate the \$1.0M for the Plaza Level renovations to improve public areas and other projects endorsed by management, which would include some of the areas identified by Karlsberger architects.
- c). Stowe House and Fort Jefferson State Memorial – The Citizens Commission on Youth (CCY) has submitted a request to terminate their agreement to manage the Stowe House and Fort Jefferson State Memorial. The CCY has managed this site since 1982. Subsequently, the PS&L and Executive Committees have reviewed a request by management to enter into an agreement with the Friends of the Harriet Beecher Stowe House to assume responsibility on a temporary basis to allow management an opportunity to investigate and implement a public process to determine if a transfer of the property would be appropriate.

The following resolutions were presented on behalf of the PS&L and Executive Committees to the Board:

- 1) *To authorize an agreement between the Society and the Friends of the Harriet Beecher Stowe House for the management of Stowe House State Memorial, with the terms and details to be established by staff. Further, that the Citizens Commission on Youth be honored for its stewardship of the Stowe House with the presentation of the attached resolution (Resolution to Honor the Citizens Commission on Youth for Their Work at Stowe House State Memorial).*

Action: Ted Prasse made a motion, which was seconded by Marnie Black, to approve the above resolution as proposed by the PS&L and Executive Committees. The motion was approved unanimously by the Board.

- 2) *To authorize staff to conduct preliminary investigations and implement a public process for information gathering in order to*

evaluate the potential transfer of Fort Jefferson State Memorial to the Neave Township Trustees.

Action: Marian Vance made a motion, which was seconded by Neil Mortine, to approve the above resolution as proposed by the PS&L Committee. The motion was approved unanimously by the Board.

IV. **Collections Committee:** Ann Lowder, Chair of the Collections Committee, reported on the initial meeting of the committee. The committee met on January 11th and reviewed the committee charge and goals for FY 2006. Critical issues include: shortage of appropriate storage space, judicious communication on new collections, accessioning items that are out of the scope of our mission, relocation of Historic Preservation offices to the Center, and the establishment of physical and intellectual control. The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for February 2006.

V. **Marketing Committee:** Neil Mortine, Chair of the Marketing Committee, reported on the initial meeting of the committee. The committee met on January 11th and reviewed the committee charge and goals for FY 2006, status of corporate marketing sponsorships, current marketing efforts, and was updated on the recruitment of a new marketing director. The committee will be working closely with management and the new director to develop a basic marketing strategic plan.

VI. **Government Relations Committee:** Ted Prasse, Chair of the Government Relations Committee, presented a report on behalf of the committee.

- a) Government Relations Strategic Framework – Ted Prasse introduced a proposal to the OHS Board to approve a strategic framework developed by management and approved by the Government Relations and Executive Committees for recommendation to the OHS Board. The intent of the strategic framework is to guide OHS' government relations efforts through the end of FY '06 as they relate to public policy issues, messages, activities and outcomes sought by the Society.

Action: Ted Prasse made a motion, which was seconded by Joe Leonard, to approve the strategic framework guidelines for OHS' government relations efforts through the end of FY 2006. The motion was approved unanimously by the Board.

b) **Miscellaneous Government Relations Issues:**

- Acting on the recommendation of OHS management, the Executive Committee authorized management to submit a request to the OBM that \$336k be included in the State Corrections bill which is expected to be introduced early in 2006. Funding requested is to restore operating hours at the Archives/Library reading room as well as funds needed for the National Afro-Am Museum.
- Representatives from the Board and Management traveled to Washington, D.C. in late November to meet with federal stakeholders, including legislative staffers, as well as representatives at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Parks Service, and the American Association of Museums.
- OHS is leading a coalition of statewide history organizations toward an advocacy event on March 1st intended to communicate the importance of history to state legislators.

VII. **Finance and Audit Committee:** Tad Jeffrey presented a report on behalf of the Finance and Audit Committee.

- a) **YTD Results and FY '06 Forecast** - Chief Financial Officer Ron Bednar reported on the financials for the first six months of FY 2006. Results are strong with a positive net change in assets of \$1.6M which is \$1.0M above budget. Earned revenue is \$169k behind budget with site visitation being down 8.3% and special events ahead of budget by \$30k. Gains from investments total \$507 to date. Marketing sponsorships are projected to fall \$200 short of budget. Management will utilize December results to adjust forecasts and incorporate new courses of action for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- b) **FY 2007 Budget Issues** – The management team has developed a tentative schedule for the budget process for fiscal year 2007 and has identified issues and challenges to be addressed in this year's budget.
- c) **FY 2005 Audit Report** – The Auditor of State's office certified OHS' financial statements for FY 2005 on December 20, 2005 with no changes.
- d) **Process for Selection of New Auditor** – OHS is working with Auditor of State's office to prepare RFP for audit work for the four years. The RFP was sent to eleven firms on December 16th. OHS has chosen four firms to bid on the proposal. A recommendation is anticipated by the March Board meeting.
- e) **Allocation of Funds** – Management has been reviewing accounts of the Foundation to discuss purposes and planned utilization of funds. Accounts are being opened with Vanguard in accordance with

guidelines established in the new Investment policy approved by the Board.

- VIII. **Development Board**: Scott Mueller reported that OHS has achieved fifty percent of its Annual Fund goal, which has been supported by eighty percent of OHS trustees. Also, the Society has received \$1.9M in government grants, \$9k in endowment gifts, and \$295k gifts to fund special projects year to date through December 31, 2005.
- IX. **Nominating Committee**: Marnie Black, Vice Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented a report on behalf of the committee. The Nominating Committee met on January 5th to discuss current vacancies and identified potential nominees to fill current vacancies. An ad is being placed in the March/April edition of Echoes to solicit nominations to fill the three membership-elected positions with terms ending in 2006.
- X. **Executive Session**: The OHS Board adjourned into an Executive Session at 3:00 p.m.
- XI. **Adjournment**: Following the Executive Session the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.