



Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Oregon Heritage Commission Meeting

The Oregon Heritage Commission is a group of leaders from across the state that works collaboratively to champion resources, recognition, and funding for preserving and interpreting Oregon's past. Founded in 1995 by the Legislature, the Heritage Commission is comprised of nine gubernatorial appointments and nine ex-officio members. The Commission is designated in [ORS 358.570-595](#) as the primary agency for coordination of heritage activities in Oregon.

Commission Members:

Anne Levant Prah (Chair); Laura Ferguson (Vice Chair); Maureen Battistella Rosemary Johnson; Chelsea Rose; Kerry Savage; Matias Trejo de Dios; Chrissy Curran, State Historic Preservation Office; Ross Fuqua, State Library of Oregon; Amit Kobrowski, Department of Education; Larry Landis, Higher Education Coordinating Commission; Mary McRobinson, Oregon State Archives; Kerry Tymchuk, Oregon Historical Society; Michelle Woodard, Travel Oregon

October 23-24, 2022 Minutes

October 23 – Tours

1. Phoenix Historical Society, 607 N Church St, Phoenix, OR 97535 (2pm)
2. Talent Historical Society, 105 N Market St, Talent, OR 97540 (3pm)

October 24 –Meeting

In-person Meeting - The Oregon Heritage Commission meeting will be held in-person at the Talent Historical Society, 105 N Market St, Talent, OR 97540

Concurrent Zoom Meeting - Meeting zoom registration available at:
<https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/OH/Pages/Commissions.aspx#OHC>

1. Business (9:00 a.m.)

- a) Introductions – Anne Levant Prah, Laura Ferguson, Chelsea Rose, Matias Trejo de Dios, Mary McRobinson, Larry Landis, Maureen Flannagan Batistella, Rosemary Johnson, Amit Kobrowski, Oregon Heritage Staff: Katie Henry, Kuri Gill, Cam Amabile
- b) Agenda Approval – Ferguson moved, Johnson second, approved
- c) Aug. 29, 2022 Meeting Minutes Approval – Rose moved, Johnson second, approved

2. Public Comment (9:05 a.m)

- Sue Densmore, Executive Director of Oregon Caves and Chateau in Cave Junction, updated Commission on restoration of the lodge and the grant they received.

3. Oregon Heritage Update 9:15 a.m. (Katie Henry, Information)

- Henry updated Commission on the following:
 - staff updates including Cam Amabile joining the outreach team and admin turnover

- Currently assisting organizations with MentorCorps and be able to give organizations free resources.
- The Oregon Main Street Conference happened earlier in October in Klamath Falls, the first conference since the pandemic started. Announced the Excellence on Main Awards and the videos. New addition to the conference, open door pitch contest.
- Fall workshops are going well, Henry thanked Batistella for her welcoming attendees in Medford. We will be adding a virtual workshop.
- Economic Impact Study will be release in the next couple of weeks.
- Two governor appointed positions available. Have an applicant for the Portland area position and having conversations with another individual to bring a tribal perspective.
- Preservation Plan Survey is running through December. Gill went over how the public workshops have been going. Some of the workshops have had a regional focus, some had a topical focus. Have a lot of people that sign up but don't actually show up so we added a few more.

4. LCIS Land Acknowledgment Recommendations 9:30 a.m. (Patrick Flanagan, Information)

- Flanagan said many state agencies were asking for guidance on land acknowledgement. The guidance that developed involved discussions with tribal councils on the matter. These discussions ranged from the opinion that land acknowledgements can be harmful likening it to pouring salt in the wound, others had the opinion that they can be a great place to start the conversation. Opinions differed among tribes and among tribal members within the tribes. The document is a living document and even since its approval changes in tribal councils have happened so perspective may change over time. The guidance asks agencies to use a thoughtful process and answer some questions about what our goal is and whether offering a land acknowledgement will actually accomplish that goal or just be performative. Think about where you are, which tribes you acknowledge, talk to the tribes in the area and ask them first and ask them to make the acknowledgement. Flanagan mentioned a perspective he read in an article in the Atlantic with the byline “Land Acknowledgements are just moral exhibitionism” and mentions the perspective that if we are not giving back the land, the acknowledgement just serves as documentation that we took the land. Who should be acknowledged is also fraught with issues, the safest thing to do acknowledge that this place was home to others before us but you can reference the federally recognized tribe and the guidance provides examples of those scenarios.
- Levant Prah asked if the solution was not to do a land acknowledgment but say something that contributes to all peoples that contributed to the place where we are. Flanagan responded to this that even the term “land acknowledgement” is a term with certain implications that is actually asking permission which makes it a loaded term and is now being utilized in a universally agreed upon way. Have a thoughtful deliberate process including what words you are going to use in accomplishing that goal. Ferguson responded that there is a distinction between acknowledging the history of settler colonialism and then the people that shaped Oregon.
- Ferguson asked Flanagan about focus on the collaboration with tribes and Flanagan responded with tribes want the outreach to talk to them. Flanagan goes on to say engagement is different with each tribe and its all about relationship building and diplomacy.
- Johnson asked about consulting with the tribe to do the acknowledgment versus us doing the acknowledgement which changes the meaning of it which way is recommended. Flanagan responded with asking the tribes but again comes down to the goal and intent.
- Gill relayed that OPRD has a tribal relations position held by Helena Kesch and she is working on the policy and it is a process since OPRD is land owning agency and we need to be a part of the process. Henry suggested we further discuss this at the next meeting and Gill added that the Commission could also inform OPRD as they are developing the policy. Rose suggested having a place hold in the agenda and working on inviting tribes.

Note: technology necessitated the move of the break below to this point in the meeting.

5. Main Street Impact Report & Upper Floor Study 10:00 a.m. (Sheri Stuart & Kuri Gill, Information)

- Stuart went over the impact of Oregon main street report:
 - i. Data from 2011-2021 shows that Oregon strengthens the network, bolsters economy, generates fiscal impacts, and fosters social connections throughout the state. (view full report [here](#)). Battistella asked Sheri to list some of the Southern Oregon main streets and the website was pulled up to look. Levant Prahel asked if we have our meetings in Main Street towns. Ferguson asked how Main Street fits into the All-Star Heritage Community designation and Gill responded that it is one of the criteria.
- Gill went over the upper floor study:
 - o Report was done because of widespread issue of properties in downtown where lower floors were in use and upper floors were vacant. Report was done in partnership with University of Oregon IPRE as a student project. Resulted in a report and a guide to inventorying an area's upper floors, a template for the inventory, list of funding sources and proforma template for those that have not done this work before or are not familiar with this type of work. Almost 50% of buildings in 33 downtowns over the state have unused upper floors. 30% had national historic districts in their downtowns. One of the major issues is that property owners aren't aware of resources available to them. Financing, code issues, and capacity to manage complexity of redevelopment were the major issues that arose during the study. (Full report, guide, and templates available [here](#).)

6. Oregon Heritage Plan Update & Evaluation 10:30 a.m. (Katie Henry, Discussion)

- Henry went over the four goals of the heritage plan and commissioners reported on examples across the state:
 - i. Landis mentioned the Leticia Carson project. A member of the public mentioned some audiotapes of Modoc tribes in their traditional language at Southern Oregon Historical Society and they are working with Southern Oregon University to digitize the tapes. Henry mentioned the Phoenix Museum and Talent Museum having welcoming materials in the Spanish materials and the Museums for All program and what museums are included in that. Battistella discussed a digitization project with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Siskiyou Smokejumpers base used qr codes for stories and signage and constructed accessible ramp. Henry brought up Northwest Digital Heritage. Henry relayed that the Oregon Main Street Confernece yielded some examples of cities handing out the impact report to decision makers, presenting at council meetings, and more. Henry also mentioned mentorcorps producing some measurables for organizations moving towards best practices. Ferguson mentioned responsive collecting such as Phoenix Museum as meeting the goals such as including more voices and promoting the value. Johnson mentioned a nationally designated hotel in Astoria that was in danger of demolition and citizens rallied and called on the city to save the building and they eventually made a plan and restored it using several funding sources such as grants rather than tearing it down. Community driven action can be counted under the value of heritage goal. Gill raised the point of encouraging great projects to submit awards and Henry brought up the new volunteer category in the awards process as being a vehicle for the awards.
- Henry went over the evaluation process for the next three years.

7. Break (10:50) – Moved to after land acknowledgement due to technology glitch.

8. Talent Disaster Preparedness 11:05 a.m. (Talent rep. & Kuri Gill, Information)

- Moon with Talent Historical Society mentioned disaster relief programs such as Resource Navigation to help find out where to get their needs met and DIRT which is a disaster relief team. Gill relayed that she was doing a CLG check in several weeks ago and that Talent is continuing to be proactive about responding and preparing for a disaster. Gill also mentioned that Oregon Heritage is partnering in a FEMA grant to extend the community resilience disaster process to additional communities.

9. Northwest Digital Heritage 11:30 a.m. (Katie Henry, Information)

- Henry had the digitization kits at the meeting for commissioners to view and went over the content of the digitization kits and the camera kits. McRobinson celebrated the kits and mentioned that Oregon State Archives has been working with Ross on getting a born digital collection into the Northwest Digital Heritage OmekaS instance. Landis said that folks had been talking about the concept of Northwest Digital Heritage over 14 years ago and it is great to see it come to fruition to help small organizations digitize their collections.

10. Working Lunch, Local organization presentations 11:50 a.m. (Local org. reps, Information & Discussion)

- Representatives from Talent Historical Society, Southern Oregon Historical Society, McKee Bridge Historical Society, Jackson County Cultural Coalition, Rogue Valley Genealogical Society, Guardians of the Eagle Point Museum, Historic Jacksonville, Phoenix Historical Society, Southern Oregon Railway Historical Society gave an overview of their organization and some of the challenges. Volunteer engagement, lack of volunteers, aging volunteers was mentioned several times as being a primary challenge.

11. 2023 Summit - *Investing in your Volunteers: Engage, Sustain, Value* 1:20 p.m. (Katie Henry, Discussion)

- This Summit is coming up in April and Henry asked Commissioners if they had great examples of volunteers to include in it to let Oregon Heritage Staff know as they will be assembling panels for it.

12. Commissioner Reports (1:40 p.m., Information)

- Johnson – Cruise ships are coming back in the ports so visitor numbers are going up
- Flannagan Battistella – Southern Oregon Research Extension Service celebrated a 111 years, Rogue community health center celebrated 50 years with a big focus on second wave feminism and Hugo ladies club celebrated 100 years of sewing service, working with Jefferson Radio Station on a new project
- McRobinson – updated Commissioners on State Archives legislative concepts
- Landis – updated the Commission on the Leticia Carson Project including a visit from students from Leticia Carson school and learned about the archaeology and the current use of land and they did some artwork. Benton County Historical Society is beginning strategic planning which fits into Goal 4 of best practices.
- Trejo de Dios – working on different Hispanic heritage celebrations for Hispanic Heritage Month and presentations related to the recently released book in different communities and in Spain.
- Rose – Exploring Black history of Jacksonville tour with Oregon Black Pioneers and Southern Oregon Historical Society. Lincoln Heights neighborhood that burned in the fire and helping them with some virtual content.
- Levant Prah – Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education working on oral history interviews across the state. Working on gallery renovations to open a permanent human rights exhibits.
- Henry thanked Debra with the Talent Historical Society and Commissioner Flannagan Battistella for helping arrange the meeting and hosting the meeting.

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