

Actions of Council

The Council of the American Association for State and Local History met on Wednesday afternoon, September 14, 2022, during the 2022 AASLH Annual Conference in Buffalo, New York. AASLH Chair Norman Burns led the meeting, and Council took the following actions:

1. Approved the minutes of the June 22-23, 2022, Council Meeting.
2. Welcomed new Council members, whose terms will begin on November 4: Vice Chair-elect Christy Coleman, Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation; Secretary-elect Scott Wands, Humanities Connecticut; Treasurer for a second term, Rebekah Beaulieu, Taft Museum of Art; Lisa Anderson, UVU Museum of Art, who completed an interim term on Council and was elected to her own term; JerriAnne Boggis, Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire; Stacy Halfmoon, Choctaw Cultural Center; and Christie Weininger, Hayes Presidential Library & Museums.
3. Thanked retiring Council members, whose terms will end November 4: Past Chair of Council John Fleming, J E Fleming LLC; Secretary Dina Bailey, Mountain Top Vision, LLC; Jeff Matsuoka, Indiana Historical Society; and Alexandra Rasic, The Gamble House Conservancy.
4. Discussed preliminary information about the previous fiscal year, which ended on June 30, 2022. Although final financial reports were not available by time of the Council meeting, it was apparent that the year will end with a shortfall, due to low attendance at the 2021 annual conference and unexpected drops in membership, STEPS, and workshop revenue, as well as unexpectedly high software expenses. These problems are due to the continuing effects of the COVID pandemic. Staff knew our members would be hit financially in 2020 and 2021 which would trickle down to us in membership and continuing education enrollments. Losses are expected to be balanced by future receipt of an Employee Retention Credit from the federal government which will not be applied to the FY2022 budget, but will be extra cash.
5. Heard a report from Erin Carlson Mast, chair of AASLH's Making History Matter Campaign, which is tied to the nation's Semiquincentennial. This is a \$1 million campaign (75% endowment—25% programs) to build a more diverse and inclusive field and serve small history organizations in particular. All of Council and all Campaign Committee members have made personal commitments; an anonymous donor who is a longtime member of AASLH contributed \$150,000; Janet Vaughan committed \$50,000 in memory of her late husband Jim Vaughan; and the Conner Prairie Foundation committed \$50,000 in honor of AASLH Chair Norman Burns. In addition, the William G. Pomeroy Foundation is granting \$400,000 to AASLH over the next four years for work on the Semiquincentennial. This grant enables AASLH to help the history community prepare for the 250th and ensure small organizations can contribute to the U.S. commemoration to their full potential. AASLH will expand its fundraising goal past \$1 million to encompass the Pomeroy Foundation's gift.

6. Heard a report from AASLH President and CEO John Dichtl. Expanding from 11 staff members to 12, the AASLH office will welcome in October a new position, the Pomeroy Foundation Semiquincentennial Manager, a full-time staff member who will lead the development of resources for small organizations, support state-level planning and activities, and coordinate current and new national partnerships. AASLH has also signed a \$60,000 cooperative agreement with the Institute for Museum and Library Services as part of "IMLS 250: All Stories. All People. All Places," a new project to engage the nation's libraries, museums, and archives as they commemorate the 250th anniversary of America's founding. Staff also have been in conversation with the America 250 Foundation about AASLH's proposed Community Historians program.
7. Approved changes to the AASLH Employee Handbook to create a more expansive and generous parental leave policy, providing four weeks of paid parental leave for eligible employees, after one year of service, at 100% of salary.
8. Heard a report from Ashley Bouknight-Claybrooks, AASLH Senior Manager for Professional Development, about the launch of AASLH's new Arcus Leadership courses this fall. These are self-paced courses for emerging career to mid-level career professionals and will emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion. Bouknight-Claybrooks also reported on the success of the first in-person History Leadership Institute (HLI) in three years (due to COVID), held in June at the Indiana Historical Society. AASLH will be issuing an RFP for a new director of the HLI program, because Max van Balgooy will be stepping down from the role.
9. Approved the "Criteria and Priorities for Council Candidates 2023" that Council will be sharing with the Leadership Nominating Committee to help focus the Committee's search for and review of candidates.
10. Authorized the Executive Committee to finalize the staff-proposed Guidelines About Making a Public Statement, a rubric for taking advocacy positions.
11. Endorsed the Campaign to Establish the Julius Rosenwald & Rosenwald Schools National Historical Park within the National Park Service (NPS).
12. Endorsed the questions prepared by the Council of State Archivists (CoSA) for the nomination process for Dr. Colleen Shogan who was nominated for the position of Archivist of the United States. CoSA submitted the questions on September 12, 2022, to the United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs for consideration during Dr. Shogan's Senate confirmation hearing.