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**Field Services Alliance Annual Meeting  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
21 September 2005**

**Minutes**

Submitted by Corrie E. Cook

**Attending**

J.D. Britton, Ohio Historical Society  
Corrie E. Cook, Indiana Historical Society  
Robbie Davis, Smithsonian, Museums on Main Street  
Max Evans, National Historical Publications and Records Commission  
Timothy Glines, Minnesota Historical Society  
David Grabitske, Minnesota Historical Society  
John Harris, Indiana Historical Society  
Carol Harsh, Smithsonian, Museums on Main Street  
Jeff Larrabee, Army National Guard Historical Services  
Melinda Markell, Midwest Art Conservation Center  
Matt Mayberry, AASLH Professional Development Committee  
Tom McKay, Wisconsin Historical Society  
Pat Miller, Illinois Heritage Association  
Karla Nicholson, American Association for State and Local History  
Connie Rendfeld, Indiana Historical Society  
Elisa Redman, Midwest Art Conservation Center  
Jim Wallace, Kentucky Historical Society

**Welcome and Introductions**

Rendfeld called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and noted two AASLH annual meeting sessions lead by FSA members: "Governance of Small Museums" by Harsh and "Good Show! Exhibitions in Small Museums" by McKay. Each attendee made introductions and shared one new event or happening in his/her office since the 2005 winter retreat.

Minutes from the 2005 winter retreat were reviewed. Glines moved to approve the minutes and Miller seconded. Motion carried.

## **Status of Committees**

**Goal I: To maintain and further develop a forum to share information and promote collegiality among the field services professionals and other interested colleagues.**

Rendfeld reported that FSA wrote a letter of support for AASLH's incremental standards grant application to IMLS.

**Goad II: To strengthen the field services/AASLH collaboration.**

Miller reported that Nicholson organized FSA members to man the "Ask FSA" booth during the AASLH annual meeting. Harsh will continue to serve on the AASLH programming committee so FSA will be represented there. Members are encouraged to suggest FSA representatives who might serve on the AASLH council.

**Goad III: To develop a theory and methodology of practice for field services work.**

Grabitske reported that revisions of the FSA Code of Ethics continue and that the committee anticipates presenting a draft at the 2006 winter retreat.

**Goad IV: To develop access to materials, workshops, programs, and other resources which help field service professionals do their work.**

Harsh encouraged members to post announcements of new technical leaflets to FS-List and the AASLH web site. At future AASLH annual meetings, members are also encouraged to bring materials for "Ask FSA" booth visitors to take away with them. A roundtable on dealing with controversial topics was suggested as an FSA-sponsored session for the 2006 AASLH annual meeting.

## **Nominating Committee Report**

On behalf of the committee, Glines presented the following slate for the 2006-2008 term: Pat Miller, Chair; David Grabitske, Vice Chair; Corrie Cook, Secretary. Harris moved to approve the slate and Harsh seconded. The motion carried.

## **Informal Survey of Field Services Offices**

Rendfeld circulated results to date on the survey and reported several themes including:

1. Government-affiliated field services offices do exist but many remain empty due to hiring freezes.
2. New and potential FSA members have been identified through the survey.
3. Some states have lost their field services offices including Oregon, Nebraska, and Oklahoma.

In discussing the survey results, it was noted

1. that FSA is still defining field services as a profession.
2. that an effective way of quantifying or representing the results of field service work is challenging.

3. that the notion of field services as a necessary part of statewide historical organizations begins at the top levels of administration.

### **2006 FSA Winter Retreat**

The 2006 FSA Winter Retreat will be held in French Lick, Indiana, on March 12-14. More details will follow from Indiana hosts Harris, Rendfeld, and Cook, incoming chair Miller, and incoming vice chair Grabitske.

### **News from AASLH**

Nicholson reported that staff duties at AASLH are being reorganized. New AASLH staff member Bethany Hawkins will manage *Dispatch*. Nicholson now will manage *History News* and will work with AltaMira Press to increase AASLH's publication schedule from about six books per year to ten books per year. Members are encouraged to suggest constituent column ideas for *History News* and Small Museum Bookshelf ideas to Nicholson.

The newest AASLH affinity group focuses on military history. The AASLH Small Museums Committee is developing a small museums area for AASLH's web site including a link to the FSA web site.

AASLH's response to historical organizations effected by Hurricane Katrina includes a \$250,000 donation to perform need assessments through eight on-site teams of five members each. AASLH is in need of financial donations, volunteers, frequent flier mile donations, and follow-up help. Interested members should contact Nicholson.

Harsh moved that FSA recognize and applaud AASLH for its quick and effective response—especially given the timing of the upcoming annual meeting—to help historical organizations effected by Hurricane Katrina. Grabitske seconded and the motion carried.

Nicholson reported that AASLH was awarded a \$355,000 IMLS grant for its incremental standards project. Four teams of 10-12 people each will be charged with developing:

1. incremental standards in the areas of mission, vision, and governance; finance and fundraising; interpretation; audience development; historic preservation and structural maintenance; and collection management.
2. the program's structure and process.
3. sustainability for the program.
4. "train the trainer" programs.

The three-year grant begins on 1 October 2005 and Cherie Cook, formerly of the Oklahoma Museums Association, has been hired by AASLH to oversee the project. AASLH anticipates that the incremental standards will be in place by 2006, the six pilot states will test the standards and programs in 2007, and evaluations and any necessary changes will be made to the program in 2008. Britton will help coordinate eight test sites in Ohio. The project

includes FSA's involvement in developing three "train the trainer" workshops in 2007 to be presented in 2008.

### **AASLH Professional Development Committee**

Mayberry reported on the AASLH professional development committee's work to develop "canned workshops," or workshops for independent speakers to lead presentations of content provided by AASLH. One such workshop on fundraising has already been completed with favorable results. Members expressed an interest in observing one of the workshops and suggested interpretation and governance/board development for future "canned workshop" topics. For more information and to share input, contact Mayberry at [mmayberry@springsgov.com](mailto:mmayberry@springsgov.com)

Rendfeld thanked members for the opportunity to serve as chair during the last two years and adjourned the meeting.