

Actions of the AASLH Council

AASLH's Council met on Wednesday, **September 14, 2016**, at the Crowne Plaza Downtown Detroit hotel during the 2016 Annual Meeting of the organization. AASLH Chair Julie Rose led the meeting, and Council took the following actions:

1. Thanked departing Council members including Immediate Past Chair Lynne Ireland (Nebraska State Historical Society), Burt Logan (Ohio History Connection), Lorraine McConaghy (Museum of History & Industry), Donna Sack (Naper Settlement), and Phyllis Wahahrockah-Tasi (American Red Cross Serving Oklahoma).
2. Welcomed newly-elected Council members Vice Chair John Fleming (National Museum of African American Music), Melanie Adams (Minnesota Historical Society), Kim Fortney (National History Day), Kyle McKoy (Indiana Historical Society), and Scott Wands (Connecticut Humanities Council); as well as re-elected Council members Treasurer Norman Burns (Conner Prairie) and Secretary Linnea Grim (Thomas Jefferson's Monticello); and incoming Chair Katherine Kane (Harriet Beecher Stowe Center).
3. Approved the Minutes from the June 25-26, 2016, Council Meeting in Nashville, Tennessee.
4. Adopted the draft Strategic Plan framework, which Council created in June and staff developed over the summer, as the organization's working strategic plan while staff and Council detail additional specific actions within the framework. Council will revisit the plan at its February meeting.
5. Accepted the Treasurer's Report on Fiscal Year 2016, which ended on June 30, 2016. AASLH's actual total revenues were \$1,453,771, which exceeded the budgeted amount by \$73,475. Actual total expenses were \$1,348,859, which were below budget by \$28,336. Including the gains on investments of \$72,236, the budget was balanced and had an actual surplus of \$104,911. The Investment Committee and Finance Committee have AASLH on track for reducing its annual draw on the endowment; it has been as high as 7 percent in past years, usually has been 5 percent in recent years, and in the current fiscal year has been reduced to 4.75 percent. In the past three years, between purchases and gains, the endowment value has grown by \$300,000, and the Finance Committee and Investment Committee expect the endowment to be fully restored this year.
6. Heard the President and CEO's Report on operations and programs, which opened with the news that the AASLH office (1717 Church St.) will be moving to a new location (2021 21st Ave. South) in Nashville in mid-October. Although the AASLH has been in its current building for eighteen years, this will be the organization's ninth move since landing in Nashville in 1964.
7. Discussed the new handbook of personnel policies for AASLH employees. A committee of Council has reviewed and commented on the current draft, and the document is being reviewed by the association's attorney in Nashville.
8. Adopted changes to the AASLH "Statement of Professional Standards and Ethics" (2012) with regard to the Direct Care of Collections white paper (April 2016) issued by the American Alliance of Museums. The revised AASLH statement notes that history "institutions, particularly house museums and sites, may choose to accession their contributing building and landscapes"; that the institution

should delineate between building maintenance and preservation in its own policy; and that for “any contributing artifacts that are deaccessioned, the proceeds can be available for direct care and preservation of objects, archives, buildings, archaeological sites, and cultural landscapes that provide public benefit as outlined/defined in their collections policy.” The new “Statement of Professional Standards and Ethics” will be posted on the AASLH website in fall 2016.

9. Voted to create a modest fund and a process whereby the chair of Council and the treasurer may distribute travel assistance to Council members in need. Discussed additional ways to make Council meetings as accessible as possible to a wide diversity of Council members, such as facilitating virtual attendance through Skype, Google hangout, or similar platforms.
10. Formed a task force to work with the Awards Committee on defining more detailed criteria for the Award of Distinction.
11. Voted to appoint Erin Mast to be the Council’s representative on the Executive Committee, replacing Burt Logan whose term on Council has ended.