

## **Actions of Council**

The Council of the American Association for State and Local History met virtually on June 23 and 24, 2021 using Zoom. AASLH Chair Norman Burns led the meeting, and Council took the following actions:

1. Approved the minutes of the March 24, 2021 Council Meeting.
2. Reviewed the organization's summary financial report for the first three-quarters of the fiscal year, July 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021, and discussed how the fiscal year is likely to end. The second PPP loan, for \$104,855, was forgiven. Despite the pandemic, membership revenue did not see the large decline for which the organization prepared itself, the 2020 Online Annual Meeting was more financially successful than planned, and charitable giving by members has remained stronger than expected.
3. Approved the FY2022 Operating Budget as recommended by the Finance Committee. This is a forward-leaning budget of \$1,975,776 in revenues and \$1,973,698 in expenses that is designed to help AASLH take full advantage of multiple interrelated projects and focus areas. These will be building off of each other during the next twelve months: 250<sup>th</sup> themes and coordination, the Framing History research project, ongoing history organization visitation and census work, and fundraising.
4. Heard a second detailed report from our fund development consultant on interviews with AASLH members she has been conducting. This report concluded the feasibility research stage of her work and will result in a fundraising proposal for a comprehensive campaign that Council will consider at its September meeting.
5. Discussed several advocacy issues in which AASLH has become involved, ranging from supporting greater funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Archives and Records Administration, and National Park Service, to opposing efforts at the state level to restrict teaching and learning about racism in American history. The latter set of efforts, sometimes referred to as "divisive concepts" legislation, have already led to laws in nine states and attempts to enact similar laws in seventeen others. These laws generally seek to outlaw discussion and teaching in schools of topics that have to do with "uncomfortable" history (i.e., of racism) and are likely to have a chilling effect on museums and other public history institutions.
6. Discussed the process and criteria by which annual meeting cities are selected and how ongoing and emerging advocacy crises in some states, such as the "divisive concepts" legislation or the recent spate of anti-LGBTQ legislation, affect those conference-siting decisions.
7. Heard a report from President and CEO John Dichtl on all projects, programs, and operations within each of the AASLH's four strategic goals: promoting inclusion and

equity, promoting relevance, advancing professional development, and connecting the history community to field-wide questions and to each other. Our efforts to achieve objectives toward these four goals are being helped by the energy of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States.

8. Discussed specific annual goals for Council.
9. Approved changes to the structure and work of the Leadership Nominating Committee, as proposed by the Governance Committee and endorsed by the Leadership Nominating Committee. These changes will result in amendments to the Bylaws, to be taken before the AASLH membership for approval, which would add the Past Chair of Council and the Vice-Chair of Council to the Leadership Nominating Committee. The goal is to make a more stable and transparent nominating process and strengthen the committee's knowledge of the Council and of AASLH's strategic direction.
10. Discussed the Diversity & Inclusion Committee's plan to conduct an assessment of the diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) climate of, and the demographic makeup of, the Council, all of the AASLH committees and affinity committees, and the AASLH staff. The survey will take place in July.
11. Discussed the DEAI Framework— "a guide for decision-making related to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility at the...AASLH"—written by staff and the Diversity & Inclusion Committee. Council will vote on a final version at its September meeting.