

Actions of Council

The Council of the American Association for State and Local History met on Wednesday morning, September 22, 2021, during the 2021 AASLH/AMA Joint Annual Meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas. AASLH Chair Norman Burns led the meeting, and Council took the following actions:

1. Approved the minutes of the June 23-24, 2021, Council Meeting.
2. Welcomed new Council members-elect, whose terms will begin on October 1: Leo Landis, State Historical Museum of Iowa, who was able to sit in on this meeting; Roberta Carothers, National Museum of the U.S. Air Force; Luis Fernandez, Dominguez Rancho Adobe Museum; and Richard Josey, Collective Journeys LLC, who completed an interim term on Council and was elected to his own term.
3. Thanked retiring Council members, whose terms end October 1: Melissa Bingmann, West Virginia University; Stacy Klingler, Butterworth Center & Deere-Wiman House; Steve Murray, Alabama Division of Archives & History; and Richard Josey, Collective Journeys LLC.
4. Reviewed the organization's summary financial report for the previous fiscal year, which ended June 30, 2021. Total assets were \$3,183,463 and total liabilities were \$744,542. For the FY2020 Operating Budget, the actual total revenues were \$1,688,652, actual total expenses were \$1,380,799, leaving a budget surplus of \$307,853. The surplus was caused by several factors, most importantly two PPP loans (\$224,000 combined) and an Employee Retention Credit from the federal government, a highly successful Online 2020 conference, and stronger membership and fundraising revenues than expected. Part of this surplus, \$79,500, has been incorporated into the new fiscal year's Operating Budget as "Retained Earnings" to fund one-time expenditures. Depending on the financial results of the Annual Meeting, the Finance Committee is likely to recommend that the rest of the surplus be placed in the cash Reserve Fund that was started with the prior year's surplus.
5. Approved the Core Criteria and Strategic Priorities document that Council will share with the Leadership Nominating Committee (LNC) this year to help the committee in its work.
6. Discussed the results of the Council's self-survey, conducted by the Governance Committee, and the diversity matrix of Council that resulted. Decided to schedule a virtual meeting in a few weeks for a more detailed conversation about the comments collected in the survey.
7. Voted to adopt the new Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion Framework, a guide for decision-making related to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility within AASLH.
8. Voted to proceed with planning for a five-year, \$1 million comprehensive fundraising campaign to support the long-term health of AASLH and to address key priorities outlined by the organization and the field. On the eve of planning efforts for the nation's 250th, with improved capacity, AASLH can better help small and large history organizations prepare to take full advantage of the Semiquincentennial and resist efforts to erase or elide history.
9. Discussed several advocacy efforts in which AASLH is involved:

- a. Heard a report from Council Member Trevor Jones on the *National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers*.
 - b. Council Member Steve Murray and AASLH President & CEO John Dichtl spoke about *Educating for American Democracy*, “a call to action to invest in strengthening history and civic learning, and to ensure that civic learning opportunities are delivered equitably throughout the country.” EAD began in 2019 with funding from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities and involved more than 300 ideologically diverse scholars and educators.
 - c. Murray and Dichtl also reviewed the new *Learn from History* coalition, which AASLH joined in early September, along with NCSS, the AHA, and the OAH. The coalition is a messaging campaign to ensure that all students can learn accurate, thorough, and fact-based history, and its aim is to counter misinformation about what is being taught in classrooms about the history of racism and slavery. Council agreed to call a special issues meeting prior to the next State Historical Administrators Meeting so that it can discuss how AASLH and state leaders can work together on opposing the “divisive concepts” legislation and its effects.
10. Prior to moving into executive session, Council concluded with a discussion of the various initiatives AASLH has underway in support of 250th planning efforts.