Michigan Council for History Education

June 1, 2019 Board of Directors Meeting

Arab American National Museum, Dearborn, MI

Minutes

Those Present: Tamara Shreiner, Petra Alsoofy, Catherine Tuczek, Kailie Burk, David Hales, Michelle Anderson, Jim Cameron, Jim McConnell, Bill Warren, David Zwart, Sean O’Neill, Nick Orlowski, Scott Durham

Tamara called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

David Zwart reported that we have $23,464.93 in the bank. We don’t have any income outside of the USSYP program and we have no other expenses besides anything related to the conferences and awards.

Tamara talked about the USSYP program a little bit. She mentioned that Anne-Lise will be the leader of this effort. There have been some slight changes to the process and she will update us later in the meeting.

Jim and Tamara updated us on the State Standards process. Tamara has drafted a rough draft of a letter of support for the new proposed standards. Jim said that on June 11, the State Board of Education will vote to approve the new standards after a five-year process. He said that we have gathered a lot of information through the 20 listening sessions over the years and the final product is ready to go.

There was some talk about some misconceptions were corrected regarding the Sikh community. In the seventh-grade curriculum, Islam was added in Era 3, the Sikh community asked it to be included too, and was in Era 4, more in line with the timeline of its emergence.

Jim McConnell suggest that Jim Cameron has been the best Social Studies Specialist at the MI Department of Education ever. The Board agreed.

Tamara read the draft version of the letter of support for the new standards. Jim McConnell offered an amendment to remove the third-grade specificity around the Michigan History sentence by removing, “Beginning in third-grade,”. He mentioned that Michigan History used to always be a fourth-grade course. Maybe ten years ago some of that content was pushed into third-grade. David Hales suggested that there was some rationale for this as in the past third-grade used to skip from local to national then back to a Michigan focus in fourth-grade. So, the change tried to make the curriculum more linear – from local to state to national.

David Hales liked the acknowledgment that there is no perfect set of standards and how it was handled in the letter was nice. Jim McConnell moved the letter be sent, with minor revisions. The motion was seconded by Michelle Anderson. The motion was approved unanimously.

Jim McConnell gave an update about the proposed tour of Lansing historical sites in the fall. He has explained the process of meeting at the Capitol at 10am, a lunch, a registration fee, a walk-thru of the Historical Museum, visit the state archives, walking tour of the Library of Michigan, and a visit by the education director of the Supreme Court. The date is September 21, 2019. He will finalize the cost and all the details by the end of June. Sketches will be offered as well.

Jim suggested we start to think about how we can further promote historic sites and museums to history educators around the state.

Jim Cameron suggested that we split that day into two different sessions. He also suggested that we use some of our funds to pay for some of these expenses. He suggested that there may be some funds for PD opportunities with the new standards.

Catherine suggested that we might use of our funds to pay for busses to museums. This was agreed to by Petra, who said that was the big challenge for field trips coming to the Arab American National Museum.

David Hales suggested that this should be a sub-committee to look at this and volunteered to serve on that committee.

Tamara moved to the election and organization of committees. She mentioned there are a few people interested in serving on the Board. Tamara talked in more detail about these candidates. Petra made the motion, supported by Jim McConnell, to accept Nadine Hall to the Board of Directors. The motion was approved unanimously.

The next office up for election is Secretary. Scott Durham volunteered and was supported by David Hales. The motion was approved unanimously.

David Zwart will remain as Treasurer as he has another year in his term.

We moved on to the election of committee chairs. Anne-Lise volunteered to serve as Awards Chair. The motion was seconded by Jim McConnell and approved unanimously.

The next position to fill was Communications Chair. The Communications Chair will work with the Webmaster to keep people updated on the goings on of MCHE and history education. Currently Elaine Themm is developing the E-Notes and other communications. Tamara nominated Elaine Themm, seconded by Petra, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The last Committee Chair needed to be elected is the Events Chair, who would organize a committee that may discuss and plan things like an annual conference. Bill talked about the question we need to ask is do we need to have a conference and is it the best thing for teachers. Catherine talked about the idea of having PD at a great location, like a museum, and maybe focusing on getting 20-30 people at one place and do that several times rather than one event where we try to get everyone. Marcia loved the idea of Super Saturdays as well as make webinars available.

Michelle added some things about this. She mentioned she would like to get a logo developed – maybe in contest form for students. She said maybe we go in a different approach when thinking about the conference. She mentioned that Gilder-Lehrman offers a summer conference that is limited to a number of teachers. There is openness by the River Raison Battlefield to host something like this and maybe we could explore that avenue.

Michelle also suggested maybe we send someone to the NCHE Conference and start presenting there. Petra suggested that museums around the state are trying to get teachers to visit their conference as well.

Bill talked about trying to figure out how to get young people to become new teachers.

At this point, Catherine nominated herself as Events Chair and was supported by many including Jim McConnell and approved unanimously.

Tamara asked that these chairs now work to develop committees around each focus.

Petra suggested that bus/scholarships/etc. can be worked on by the Awards committee until there is a larger, more meaningful strategic plan. Michelle suggested we spend the summer figure out what we want to spend money on in a more strategic, planned way before we do that.

Tamara explained that Anne-Lise wants to have interviews for the finalists of the USSYP students. Anne-Lise will be reaching out with further information.

Michelle about the Gilder-Lehrman and recommended Paul Schiedler. Jim McConnell made the motion to approve the recommendation and seconded by Catherine which was supported by all with one exception.

Scott recommended Heather Quamme and Sarah Kennedy for the McConnell Elementary and Pre-Service teacher awards and will send out the bios of secondary teacher nominations – motioned by Jim McConnell and seconded by Michelle Anderson and approved unanimously.

Adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Durham  
Acting Secretary