

1991

Director's Meeting

Florida Historical Society
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FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

The semi-annual meeting of the officers and board of directors of the Florida Historical Society was convened at 8:40 a.m. in the Special Collections department of the University of South Florida library, Tampa, December 7, 1991, by Hampton Dunn, president.

Those attending included Kathleen H. Arsenault, William S. Coker, David R. Colburn, Sam Davis, Emily Perry Dieterich, Russell Hughes, Lester N. May, Stuart B. McIver, Joan P. Morris, Thomas Muir, John W. Partin, Niles F. Schuh, Jerrell H. Shofner, Rebecca A. Smith, and executive director Lewis N. Wynne. Also present were David Horne, Milton Jones, Thomas J. Kemp, Gary Mormino, and Marilyn Potts. Mr. Dunn announced that Arlene Commings has declined election to the board.

Nick Wynne summarized the Rossetter property proposal with a short slide presentation of the buildings and grounds. Two properties in Eau Gallie with endowments, have been offered to the Society. The Rossetter House itself would be maintained as a house museum, and the Rush House would serve as headquarters for the Society. The Rush House Project Assessment, distributed to board members, analyzed house condition, renovation recommendations and estimated cost, and possible funding through the Florida Historic Preservation Grants-in-Aid program. Wynne noted that the site is centrally located, 165-168 miles from Miami, Jacksonville, and Tampa. The Eau Gallie-Melbourne area has a population of about 400,000. State law requires five parking places for a facility of the projected size; twelve spaces can be placed in the "potato patch" empty lot without removing any trees. A small park, with a cemetery, adjoins the property. The Rossetters and the city are open to discussions of the transfer of the park to the Society.

Milton Jones, the Society's attorney, reported that the houses are in a family trust, which is willing to contract with the Society. Funding for the endowment is dependent upon the real estate market, as most of the family resources are in real estate. For these and other reasons, the donations for the endowments may

not be forthcoming immediately on the death of the Rossetter sisters. The sisters, however, are willing to enter a binding contract at this time.

Dr. Wynne noted that the Rush House could be donated in the near future. The Society has asked for \$260,000 in addition to the endowment to cover moving and renovation expenses. Mr. Jones added that the Society endowment would not be restricted.

Mr. Dunn introduced Tom Kemp, head of Special Collections at the University of South Florida library, who presented an assessment of the Society library. If the library is moved to Eau Gallie, the Society will need to hire additional staff; Kemp suggested three positions— librarian, archivist, and assistant— and a budget of \$80,000-\$100,000 annually for the positions. He recommended that \$50,000 annually be spent to build and maintain the collection. Concerning cataloging, he noted that the Society's collection is marked and tagged and could be downloaded into the Notis system. The Society's collection, in his opinion, is nice, but modest; the photographs are the premier holdings. Dr. Wynne remarked that 1) the Society has been offered space in Melbourne libraries, but not services; and 2) in two to three years the \$1,700,000 gift of lithographs possibly could be sold.

Dr. Wynne introduced David Horne, who led a group analysis and discussion of the proposed Society move to Eau Gallie. The meeting briefly recessed for lunch, then resumed with president-elect David Colburn presiding. Individual assessments were combined to form a composite analysis. The board favored the Rossetter houses site for location, services, marketing, and funding sources.

Dr. Colburn led a discussion of the analysis. Mr. Jones foresaw continued financial difficulties at the University of South Florida location and cautioned that the Society cannot move until after the Rossetter donation for the Society endowment and moving expenses have been received. Tom Muir urged that the financial gift be considered seed money upon which to build a larger endowment.

It was moved and seconded that the Florida Historical Society accept the offer and move to Melbourne, pending the signing of an agreeable contract between the Florida Historical Society and the Rossetter trust, and that this contract be negotiated and

executed by the executive committee. Dr. Colburn asked Jerrell Shofner to be included in the contract negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Wynne submitted Mr. Dunn's recommendations for committees to plan for the move to and operations at Melbourne: 1) Funding— Marinus Latour (chair), John Partin, Stuart McIver; 2) Marketing/Volunteers— Tom Muir (chair), Rebecca Smith, Niles Schuh; and 3) Library— Kathleen Arsenault (chair), Lester May, Joan Morris. A motion was made, seconded, and approved to establish these committees.

Dr. Colburn proposed that the winter board meeting be moved from December to late January in order to enable board members to examine the actual budget. The motion was approved. In the absence of Marinus Latour, Dr. Wynne led a review of the current budget and operations. He reported that the first issue of the *Junior Historian* has received a positive response. It was noted that, although a \$200 prize is given for the annual Patrick Award, only \$700 or \$800 is in the endowment fund; most of the prize, therefore, comes from general operating funds.

Five to six hundred copies of the *Florida Portrait* remain. Pineapple Press has a second printing. The Society is using its copies as a premium for certain membership categories and is selling copies to members for \$17.95, plus \$3.50 postage, and to stores at the same price for a minimum order of ten copies.

Dr. Wynne reported that the debt to the University of South Florida presently is \$16,500. Dr. Colburn asked that future financial reports include an endowment report. Dr. Wynne observed that an endowment report was unavailable at this board meeting because of the need to transfer the Society's account. A motion was made and seconded to transfer the Society's accounts from Shearson to Dean Witter. The motion passed. Those attending reviewed the proposed budget for 1992. Dr. Wynne anticipates no change in the University of South Florida agreement, which will be renewed in June 1992.

Hector C. Borghetty of Clearwater has donated \$20,000 to underwrite quinquenary-related projects. Three-quarters of the gift will be spent in 1992, the remainder in 1993.

Dr. Wynne noted that the number of copies to be printed for the second issue of the *Junior Historian* magazine will be reduced; the third issue will be by subscription only.

Those attending discussed and approved the increase of annual meeting registration from \$35 to \$45. The proposed budget reflects the increase. The proposed budget includes a 10 percent raise for the executive director who has not received a salary increase in three years. *Florida Historical Quarterly* expenses are expected to remain constant. The History Fair line item, \$1,000, is the final part of \$6,000 the Society agreed to provide over a three-year period.

Society Report expenses are expected to decrease, as layout is now being done in-house. Dr. Colburn suggested that the newsletter continue to be published quarterly, rather than bi-monthly, as the Society needs to operate with a conservative budget in light of the present economy.

A motion was made to approve the budget, with the adjustment that the Society Report be printed quarterly. The motion was approved.

In the absence of Dr. Proctor, Dr. Colburn read his *Florida Historical Quarterly* report. He urged the board to encourage people to submit manuscripts for possible publication.

The board discussed the need to find an editor when Dr. Proctor retires. Although Dr. Proctor has not yet determined when he will retire, all felt the need to begin planning for that eventuality. Dr. Colburn reported that he and Dr. Proctor have discussed the situation. Dr. Colburn will continue to monitor the situation and will submit a report at the May 1992 board meeting. He will also ask Mr. Dunn to appoint a committee of three to pursue the matter.

Dr. Wynne announced that the 1992 annual meeting will take place at the Ponce de Leon Resort in St. Augustine, May 7-9, 1992.

Those present reviewed the written report regarding the future of the Florida Historical Confederation, submitted by Sara Van Arsdel. Her report recommended: 1) that the Florida Historical Confederation be dissolved and reconstituted as a standing committee of the Florida Historical Society; 2) whatever funds are left be integrated into the Society's operating account; 3) that the Society continue to publish a biennial directory of local historical societies involved with Florida history, 4) that a liaison be appointed to serve as a representative of the Florida Historical Society with the Florida Association of Museums. After

discussion, the matter was tabled until the May 1992 board meeting.

Dr. Colburn commended David Horne for his efforts leading the discussion on the proposed move to Eau Gallie. Stuart McIver suggested that the nominating committee seek someone from Brevard County, where Eau Gallie and Melbourne are located, to serve on the board.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS . . .

1992

March 17- May 24	"Mosaic: Jewish Life in Florida," Henry Morrison Flagler Museum	Palm Beach, FL
May 7-9	FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY- 90th MEETING	St. Augustine, FL
May 7	FLORIDA HISTORICAL CONFEDERATION	St. Augustine, FL
June 11- Aug. 24	"Mosaic: Jewish Life in Florida," University of Tampa, Lee Scarfone Gallery	Tampa, FL
June 14-18	National History Week	College Park, MD
Sept. 16-19	American Association for State and Local History	Miami, FL
Oct. 7-11	National Trust for Historic Preservation	Miami, FL
Oct. 15-18	Oral History Association	Cleveland, OH
Oct. 30- Nov. 1	Southern Jewish Historical Society	Montgomery, AL
Nov. 4-7	Southern Historical Association	Atlanta, GA
Dec. 27-30	American Historical Association	Washington, DC