

1996

Board of Directors Meeting

Florida Historical Society
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MINUTES OF THE MAY 23, 1996
FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The Florida Historical Society Board of Directors held its semi-annual meeting on Thursday, May 23, 1996, at the Cocoa Beach Hilton Oceanside in Cocoa Beach, Florida. The following Board members were in attendance:

Patti Bartlett	Jenifer Marx
Thomas Bowman	Larry Rivers
William S. Coker	Dan Schafer
James M. Denham	James Schnur
J. Larry Durrence, President-Elect	Patrick Smith
Jose Fernandez	Robert A. Taylor
James J. Horgan	Cynthia Trefelner
Maxine Jones	Ted VanItallie
Marinus Latour, President	

In attendance also were:

Pamela Gibson, Society Member
Carolyn A. Macri, Director of Finances
Jerrell Shofner, Editor, *The Quarterly*
Nick Wynne, Executive Director

The meeting was called to order by President Latour at 2:10 p.m. Nick Wynne reported on the move of part of the Society's collection from the University of South Florida in Tampa. The items transferred were archival copies of *The Quarterly*, miscellaneous items relating to genealogy, and assorted miscellaneous records. The organized portion of the collection remains in Tampa.

The financial report for FY 1995 was made by Nick Wynne, because Finance Chair Larry Durrence was detained. Board members were given the preliminary financial reports for FY 1995 as compiled by Marilyn Potts. The Society ran a deficit of approximately \$17,000 during 1995, largely because of the expenses associated with the move of the Society's collection and offices to the new headquarters in Melbourne.

Board member Dan Schafer asked for an assessment of the new dues structure on the Society's financial position. Nick Wynne replied that it takes a year for any new increase to become effective,

but that the new rate, approved last year by the Board, was having significant impact on reducing the deficit and in meeting current operating expenses.

J. Larry Durrence asked the Executive Director about the current status of membership levels in the Society. Nick Wynne replied that membership was slowly increasing. The move to Melbourne has generated a good deal of interest locally and this interest is reflected in increasing membership numbers. Growth was slow, Wynne continued, because of the (a) lack of staff to oversee an expanded recruitment effort and (b) lack of mailing lists and funding for a statewide mass mailout. Wynne reported that his participation in the Florida Humanities Council's "Making Florida Home" program had produced several new members.

Dan Schafer asked why the receipt of the financial summaries for FY 1995 were given to the Board so late in the year and why no Board members had access to the figures beforehand. Dr. Wynne replied that the Board had been informed at its January meeting that the figures would be late this year because of the move from Tampa and the necessity of closing out the fiscal year by Marilyn Potts. Marilyn Potts took several months because she was engaged in finding a new position and then becoming familiar with that position. She worked on the Society's financial report on a limited part-time basis. The budget for FY 1996 had been approved by the Board at its January meeting. A formal financial report will be sent to the Board when the preliminary data has been reviewed and adjusted by Smith and Pirolozzi, the Society's accountants.

Ted VanItallie asked about the status of the proposed sale of the Kane-Greenberg cigar label collection. Wynne reported that he had been in touch with Sotheby's Auction House, which indicated an interest in the collection but who wanted them to be catalogued. The estimate for this is approximately \$15,000, and the Society does not have the funds available for this work. A-Plus Auctions, a local auction house is interested in selling the collection, but interest is not great. Ted VanItallie stated that he will check with some of his contacts for further interest at Sotheby's. Wynne cautioned the Board to not expect much, the Internal Revenue Service has lowered the appraised value of the collection from \$1.5 million to \$300,000 or less. The Society can expect to receive about 10% of this reduced figure unless it is willing to spend funds to catalogue, curate, and market the collection.

Dan Schafer reviewed Society income and expenses for FY 1995 and remarked that the sale of this collection would certainly remove any cash flow problems the Society might have.

Jenifer Marx asked what action was needed to improve the Society's perpetual cash flow problems. Wynne answered that much of this would be removed once the new dues rate was fully implemented, but warned that the projected move of the remaining portion of the Society's collection from Tampa could cost \$10,000 or more.

Nick Wynne reported on the saga of efforts by the Society and the City of Cocoa to acquire the Cocoa Federal Building. After a trip to Washington by Wynne and the City's attorney and Redevelopment Officer to meet with the Department of Education, it appeared that the building was secured. However, the DOE refused the City's offer. Plans now call for the City to purchase the building outright and to offer it to the Society for use as a historical library/learning center.

The 1997 Annual Meeting was discussed. The Jacksonville Historical Society will be the host. Patti Bartlett moved that the meeting date be set for the last weekend in May. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote. The theme of World War I was discussed and adopted as a possibility. The Tampa Historical Society will be the host for the 1998 Annual Meeting. That meeting will commemorate the centennial of the Spanish-American War.

Nick Wynne reported that the Society had been offered a turn-of-the-century cracker house which would have to be moved to another site or it would be torn down. He also indicated that a local cattleman, Judge Platt, had offered 45 acres of land on a long-term, rent-free basis to the Society. A full proposal will be brought before the Board at its January 1997 meeting. Larry Durrence noted that the Polk County Historical Society had auctioned a house that had been given to them with the caveat that it be restored.

Jerrell Shofner reported on the status of *The Quarterly*. The Fall issue is almost ready, and the editor has enough material on hand for the Winter issue. Dr. Shofner asked for articles. He also indicated that it would be possible to generate some publicity by notifying the hometown newspaper of each contributor.

Nick Wynne proposed the passage of a re-mailing charge of \$5.00 for *Quarterlys* that have been returned because of the failure of members to notify the office of address changes. Each time a

journal is re-mailed, it costs the Society \$4.00 plus. Jenifer Marx offered a motion to add this charge. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

Nick Wynne reported that there had been two resignations from the Board of Directors— Tom Muir and Joe Knetsch. Their resignations were accepted with regrets by President Marinus Latour.

Robert Taylor, chair of the Nominating Committee, reported a suggested slate of officers and Board members. Larry Rivers made a motion to accept these nominations. Jenifer Marx seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Nick Wynne introduced the new Director of Financial Operations, Carolyn A. Macri, to the Board. He also notified the Board that outgoing Board member, Cynthia Trefelner, had agreed to become the new editor for *Journeys for the Junior Historian*, the Society's youth magazine.

President Marinus Latour discussed the creation of a long-range Review Committee to coordinate and review the various functions of the Society. Dan Schafer suggested that incoming President Larry Durrence appoint the members of the committee.

William Coker reported on the activities of the Search Committee to find a successor to Jerrell Shofner. The new editor, Kari Frederickson of Rutgers University, will begin her tenure on September 1, 1996. Dr. Shofner will continue his duties for another year in order to help facilitate a smooth and orderly transfer.

Jerrell Shofner asked for help in obtaining more nominations for the two book prizes the Society awards annually, particularly for the Tebeau Prize. The Tebeau Prize was originally established to recognize books with a youth orientation. Mike Denham suggested that publishers be notified of the award. Robert Taylor suggested that the *Publisher's Weekly* magazine be consulted.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Patti Bartlett
Secretary