

MEETING MINUTES
OCHC
Red Lion, Pendleton Oregon
May 4, 2007 3:15 – 5:00 pm

Robert Keeler called the meeting to order at 3:15 pm. All the Commissioners introduced themselves and Robert Keeler introduced Kuri Gill.

Present: Stanley Clarke, Nick Eddy, Judy Juntunen, Robert Keeler, Diana LaSarge, Dirk Siedlecki, Kuri Gill

Guests: Carole Knox, Glenn Jones, Lloyd Williams, Janice Conover

Approval of Minutes:

Nick moved to approve the minutes and Dirk seconded. All were in favor to approve the minutes. Dirk noted that the minutes were excellent and expressed appreciation to Kimarie for them.

Additions to the Agenda:

Stanley proposed the addition of discussion of two Oregon Department of Transportation Projects.

Commission Update:

New Appointments: A press release was sent out that included a call for nominations for the Oregon Heritage Commission and the Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council. Several letters of interest have come in including some from coastal areas.

Sub-Committees:

Education Committee: Judy reported that the committee is working on the technical booklets. The bibliography is almost complete. The next booklet will focus on marker symbols that appear most frequently in Oregon and including other sources.

Legislative Committee: Stan reported that the Commission is considering future legislative action including changing the date designation for an historic cemetery (possibly changing to a 50 or 75 year old dating system) and giving the Commission the authority through legislation to deny the removal of dedication of a cemetery. These are under research by the committee who will bring the discussion to the Commission. Other topics to be addressed by the legislative committee include seeking an amendment covering abandoned plots and how they can be reclaimed, a list of attorneys willing to volunteer time and group liability insurance. Stan noted that there is an Oregon non-profit association being formed that might be useful for cemetery groups and the Commission should stay aware of those developments.

Recognition of service of Stanley Clarke: Bob acknowledged the service of Stan who has been on the Commission from the beginning. Noted that his position can be filled, but he can't be replaced. Bob is pleased to hear that Stan will be at the upcoming meeting and that he will continue to be active on the legislative committee.

OPRD Update:

Historic Cemeteries to partner with other heritage Programs: In a fall workshop, several folks within heritage programs will host a fall research workshop.

Workshops:

Cemetery Maintenance and Preservation Workshop: To be held the following day, May 5, with Sally Donovan and Bruce Howard.

July Workshop: Records Gathering, Maintenance and Storage. Saturday July 21st, following Friday meeting. In Clackamas County.

October Workshop: Getting youth involved in cemeteries. Likely October 6th, Saturday following Friday meeting. In Coos Bay.

Website Content:

Genealogy group links have been added. After Kuri is trained on the web for OPRD there will be more frequent updates.

Grants Update:

Number of grant reports received is in flux as this is the prime project deadline. It looks like only a few will not complete. Those funds may be able to be diverted to other grants so no money will be wasted.

Upcoming Grants: Grants will be announced July 1, deadline for application if post-mark December 1, 2007. These must be approved by the Oregon Parks Commission, so notification depends on the dates of the Jan./Feb. meeting of that Commission. Likely notification by the end of February 2008.

Current Projects and Legislation:

SB 746 refers to the certificate of authority and registration of cemetery principles fees as regulated by the Oregon Cemetery and Mortuary Board. SB 746 has been altered to remove all of the annual financial reporting requirements from the language which is a good development. The number of interments for a cemetery to qualify as “exempt operating” has been changed from 25 to 10 per year, but it reinstates the one time \$100 fee and includes the \$50 fee for cemetery principles. It has been sent to the house. Kuri talked with the Oregon Cemetery and Mortuary Board. They say that the fees apply to cemeteries who are in the cemetery business, receiving payment for cemetery services and sales of plots. Bob noted that it is good that there is a communication with the Cemetery and Mortuary Board.

SB 823, the Oregon Trails Act has been altered to language stating that any land use decisions on property within 100 feet of the Oregon Trail would have to be forwarded to SHPO for review before approval and SHPO could regulate and condition any of those actions and there could be cemeteries that have right-of-way. The bill may not go forward as worded, but current language leaves the regulatory control at the county level. All the bills are accessible on the Legislature’s website at www.oregon.gov and click on Legislative information. The 1959 map or updated SHPO data, which ever is more accurate, would be the source to use for this bill.

Ways and Means Committee has removed the additional \$50,000 requested for grant funds for the OPRD budget request. It looks like that might be the way it stays, but it is not over yet.

Upcoming Projects:

Commission discussed the idea of a symposium or seminar about cemeteries to reach out to a different (scholarly) audience. Commission likes the idea. Suggests partnering with academic institution, seek grant funding (Oregon Council for the Humanities), Partner with OCHA, consider Richard Meyer and Stephen Dow Beckham. Commission likes idea of getting someone from the west coast, consider Douglas Keister, considering an accompanying exhibit. Could be the OCHC's contribution to Oregon 150. Could consider "reading the cemetery" symbols, landscape, context, etc. Also consider ethnic traditions, Japanese, Russian, Native American, Jewish. Bob suggests staff and commission research grant opportunities, subject ideas, partners and speaker costs for preliminary report at July meeting. Audience liked the idea.

Partnership Update: Staff reported useful meetings with OCHA and Oregon Genealogical Society. Received useful input regarding Commission's plans, overlap, etc.

Added Items:

Stan would like to be updated regularly on two ODOT projects. One projects is the widening of I-5 that encroaches upon the Columbian Cemetery. Mirra was involved in many ODOT meetings on this topic and they had a plan, OCHC would like updates. The second is the widening of Sandy Boulevard. Powell Grove Cemetery is at risk here and abuts the street. We should be made aware of the plans and impact. Stan states it is a METRO cemetery.

Public Comment (3-minute limit per person):

Glen Jones – Clark County Genealogical Society. He is involved in many projects in Washington and Oregon. Clark Co. Genealogical Society has cemetery burial records on line. Seeking a way to get markers back on graves. They are looking at trying to get the Old Vancouver Cemetery cared for. City maintains grass only. It was established in 1865. Still selling plots at \$700, Masons are selling them to Masons for \$10.00. He was happy to hear about the Commission's work. Commission noted that you can use one memorial for many burials, also some markers makers will give you ones make from scrap at a low price.

2007 Meeting Schedule:

Friday, July 20th, 2007 – Clackamas County

Friday, October 5th, 2007 – Coos Bay

Friday, November 2nd, 2007 Planning retreat, at a State Park.

Friday, March 7th, 2008 Salem

Chairman Keeler adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.