



Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries

State law established the seven-member Commission to maintain a listing of all historic cemeteries and gravesites in Oregon; promote public education on the significance of historic cemeteries; and help obtain financial and technical assistance for restoring, improving and maintaining their appearances.

Commission Members:

Milo Reed (Chair); Bev Power (Vice Chair); Sarah Baylinson; Charlotte Lehan; Lisa Sears; Sarah Silbernagel; Shawn Steinmetz

Friday, February 4, 2022
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

link: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_xYoEFuuDRFCT_OseYbTCEO

Meeting Notes

Members Present: Milo Reed, Sarah Baylinson, Charlotte Lehan, Lisa Sears, Sarah Silbernagel, Shawn Steinmetz, Kuri Gill, Jamie French, and Koren Tippett
Members Absent: Bev Powers
Guests: Tiffany Green

Meeting brought to order at 1:04 p.m.

1. Commission Business

- a. Welcome and Introductions – all members present introduced themselves.
- b. Agenda Approval (ACTION ITEM)
 - i. Mr. Steinmetz moved to approve the meeting agenda. Ms. Lehan seconded.
 - ii. Agenda approved unanimously.
- c. Approval of October 14, 2021 Minutes (ACTION ITEM)
 - i. Ms. Lehan moved to approve and Mr. Steinmetz seconded.
 - ii. Minutes approved unanimously.

2. Public Comment

- a. Gill welcomed Tiffany Green of X Advancement.
- b. Green supports a client who is interested in helping restore historical gravesites, so she is attending to learn more about the process.

3. OPRD & Staff Update

- a. Heritage Update
 - i. Heritage Division is back to pre-Covid and layoff staffing levels. Work assignments may change as we realign program efforts in the agency.

- ii. Grant programs paused during Covid have resumed (e.g., Preserving Oregon and Diamond-in-the-Rough). All grants are now open along with Oregon Main Street Revitalization.
- b. Land Acknowledgement Update
 - i. OPRD is working with the Legislative Commission on Indian Services (LCIS) for guidance on the value and use of land acknowledgement.
 - ii. There are various factors to consider for when and how to use land acknowledgement so that it remains meaningful to all and is not just a requirement.
 - iii. Oregon Heritage has traditionally invited participation from an area's recognized tribes when we hold large gatherings. We will continue to do so when feasible.
- c. Oregon Heritage Conference
 - i. This year's April conference will be virtual to eliminate many of the current barriers (mandated or personal) of concern due to Covid and individual safety priorities.
 - ii. Gill will be in touch with commissioners regarding attendance and details.
 - iii. Next regular meeting - May 23, 2022 combined with the grant approval meeting.

4. Commission Positions & Roles

- a. Recognition of outgoing commissioners
 - i. Gill recognized and thanked outgoing Vice Chair (and former Chair), Bev Powers of Medford, for her service and contributions.
 - ii. Milo Reed, Chair, and Sarah Silbernagel have agreed to serve a second term. Reappointments are approved and confirmation letters will be mailed to them.
- b. Appointment of Vice Chair
 - i. Lehan motioned to nominate Silbernagel as new Vice Chair. Steinmetz seconded. Lehan motioned to closed the nominations. Sears seconded.
 - ii. Silbernagel was elected unanimously to serve as the next Vice Chair.
 - iii. Gill will follow up with details.

5. Project Updates

- a. Cemetery Stories
 - i. Gill presented the themes up through June: February – Black History Month; March - Women's History Month; April – Volunteer Appreciation Week; May – Labor, Disaster Preparedness, Memorial Day and Historic Preservation Month; and June – Pride Month and Juneteeth.
 - ii. Lehan described two of her current projects that include putting markers on unmarked graves.
 - 1) One involves obtaining one large stone for a plot containing six family members (William Short family).
 - 2) Another (Baker Family 1700's) is challenging as it requires nationwide research. She noted the importance of a higher level of verification necessary when working with unmarked graves.
 - iii. Sears is interested in a Heritage Bulletin story for April for Volunteer Appreciation month regarding how to start a preservation group.
 - iii. Reed continues to work on biographies.
- b. Remote Sensing Project
 - i. Steinmetz is working on a document about remote sensing pros and cons.
 - ii. He is continuing research and hopes to complete this year.
- c. Invasive Species Project
 - i. Silbernagel is preparing an article for the Heritage Bulletin. The commission discussed the content and offered suggestions and questions for further thought.
 - 1) Offer general guidance instead of too specific

- 2) Differentiate between terms non-native, heritage plants, invasive species and noxious weeds.
- ii. This topic might deserve its own bulletin for in-depth discussion of variables.
- d. Heritage Bulletin Updates
 - i. Please advise if old links don't work. Silbernagel will review #8
 - ii. Lehan discussed separate cleaning guides for marble, granite, brass and zinc. She noted zinc gets badly stained by iron deposits in above-ground irrigation.
- e. Historic Cemeteries Grant
 - i. Gill asked for two volunteers who would review and score applications, attend the online meeting, and make recommendations.
 - ii. Silbernagel described her experience and expressed that she enjoyed learning about what is going on with historic cemeteries.
 - iii. Meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2022 from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. The length of the meeting depends on the number of applications, testimony, etc. Historically, there are usually about 30 applications. Please let Ms. Gill know if you are interested.
 - iv. Gill recommends reviewing position papers and bulletins before the meeting.

6. Report from Marker repair projects

- a. Preservation Northwest projects
 - i. Bernadette Niederer and Dave Pinyerd shared Preservation Northwest historic gravestone resetting, leveling and repair projects, providing a photographic journey for the commissioners, illustrating their recent works.
 - ii. They received five OHCH grants in 2021, so they have been busy restoring! Projects include Logtown Cemetery in Ruch; Lafayette Masonic Cemetery; Corvallis IOOF Cemetery; Dallas Cemetery; and Riverside Cemetery in Albany.

7. Items for Future Meetings

- a. No comments or suggestions at this time.
- b. Gill sends the agenda in advance, so let her know if you think of something later.

8. Reports: Commissioner Action and Issues

- a. Reed was tapped to help the State Library with a project for the digital hub. He also has the Oregon Heritage Excellence Awards to review.
- b. Lehan expressed some concern for the recent tone of the inspection process that comes out from OMCB. It comes across as hostile rather than helpful to volunteers who are trying to do the best they can to take care of cemeteries with what they've got. Kuri will reach out to her contacts with suggestions they reach out more nicely and respectfully.
- c. Steinmetz has a project on a reservation requiring he find an open spot for a burial. He also had a few calls about boarding school undocumented burials. None are in Oregon, but in neighboring states; however, this is an interesting issue.
- d. Silbernagel is working on the Heritage Bulletin and the invasive species document. She volunteered to help Steinmetz with GPR.
- e. Sears is working on the Heritage Bulletin and is interested in developing a coast trail, particularly in the Astoria area.

9. Commission Planning Calendar

- a. The May 23, 2022 meeting will combine Grants and the regular meeting
- b. July 21, 2022 – discussed meeting in person, Ms. Lehan offered her location.
- c. October 2022 – possible meeting and training with other commissions and committees.
- d. Gill thanked the commissioners for being patient with Workday. It is not yet set up for commissioners to train. She will advise when the training is available.

The meeting adjourned at 3:34p.m.