

Great Falls – Cascade County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission
Minutes from the November 8, 2023 meeting, held in the Gibson Room at the Civic Center

Members Present: Steve Taylor, Channing Hartelius, Ellen Sievert, Chris Christiaens, Ken Sievert, Suzanne Waring, Ken Robison, Rich Ecke, Carol Bronson

Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Samantha Long, Brock Cherry

Ex-Officio Members Present: Rae Grulkowski

The meeting was called to order by Rich Ecke at 12:00 PM

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes – October 11, 2023

- Ken Robison moved to approve the minutes as written. Ellen Sievert seconded, and the motion carried.

2. Brock Cherry: Introduction and Upcoming Growth Policy Update

- Sam introduced the new Great Falls Planning and Community Development Director, Brock Cherry. Brock expressed his appreciation for our local Preservation program and outlined his plans for the department, including the ongoing Development Review Audit and the upcoming Growth Policy Update.

3. HPO Report

- Sam has completed her semi-annual report to the State Historic Preservation Office, which follows up on her annual grant award.
- The Preservation Office broke our record for social media outreach, with a single post reaching 45,000 people on Facebook. The post was about the fall of the Big Stack.
- The Union Bethel Church submitted an application for repair funds from the National Park Service's Historic Preservation Fund with support from Kate Hampton at SHPO, Ken Sievert, Ken Robison, Kathy Reed, and Sam.
- Sam attended the MT Main Street Conference, which was held in Great Falls this year. The event advocates for thriving downtowns, and embraces the role that historic buildings have to play in them.
- The work on the Civic Center is projected to be finished by the time the downtown Christmas Tree goes up.

4. St. Peter's Mission – Potential Grant

- Sam introduced the need for interpretation at the St. Peter's Mission site and outlined the opportunity presented by the Foundation for Montana History's grant cycle. The Commission directed staff to proceed with the application and appointed a committee composed of Channing Hartelius, Frank Laliberty, Ken Robison, and Chris Christiaens to direct the effort.
- Ken Robison moved to request funds from the Foundation for Montana History to design and install interpretive signs at St. Peter's Mission. Chris Christiaens seconded, and the motion carried.

5. Christmas Ornament Update

- Sam reported that the ornament has been ordered and will be available by Christmas Stroll at the latest.

6. December Meeting Plans

- The Commission directed Sam to plan a holiday social in lieu of a regular December meeting. Proposed dates were December 7 or 13, and the Missouri Room was the first choice of venue.

7. Boston and Montana Barn Report

- Ken Sievert offered a few minor edits to the report as provided by Cushing Terrell:
 - It should be stated somewhere that the intent is to rehabilitate the building, and not restore it. This language provides more flexibility within the Secretary of the Interior's Standards with regards to material choices and repair methods.
 - While torch-down roofing is an option for a new roof, Ken said that the dangers of using open flame around a building like the Barn should be noted
 - Ken also suggested that in addition to the budgets provided, a combined and simplified budget sheet would be more digestible for grantors and fundraisers.
- Channing Hartelius moved to accept the report pending the changes that Ken Sievert suggested. Ken Robison seconded, and the motion carried.

8. Vinegar Jones Cabin Committee Report

- Ken Sievert reported that he had called the manufacturer of the new daubing that had been applied and asked for recommendations for treating the logs. While we would normally use linseed oil to maintain them, the manufacturer advised that oil is not compatible with the synthetic daubing. Ken said that he would research water-based coating options and would report back to the Commission.
- Chris reported that the roof was still not done and he has not been able to contact the contractor that had originally offered to donate the work. He is seeking a new contractor, and wants to have the work done this year.

9. Reports from Commissioners

- Ellen Sievert reported that The History Museum has received a large collection of records from the Ursuline Center.

10. Public Comment

- There was no public comment.

Rich Ecke adjourned the meeting at 1:11 PM.