

**Oregon Historical Marker Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Best Western, Enterprise, Oregon  
Monday, August 22, 2011**

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**Committee Participants:**

Clark Niewendorp  
George Forbes  
Richard Engeman

Robert Keeler  
David Bogan

**Absent:**

Eliza Canty-Jones

Wayne Sharp

Stan McDonald

**Staff Participants:**

Annie von Domitz

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**1) Call to order**

David Bogan called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

David thanked Bob for his service as chair over the past year. He also thanked the Travel Information Council for the field trip. David said that it is valuable to get a first hand view of the markers in the program. He stated that he has three main areas he would like the committee to focus on this year. He is interested in finding ways to make the marker program the "first stop" people think of when making a decision to create an interpretive sign. David also wants to prioritize the identification of other volunteer groups, like Salemtowne in multiple locations around the state to help with preservation efforts. And finally, he would like to create a plan for dealing with the replacement of old routed markers. David requested that the committee create a plan for markers as they begin to degrade and need to be updated or be replaced with more modern styles, while still preserving the old markers as historic structures.

**2) Approval of the June 7, 2011 Minutes**

Bob Keeler moved that the minutes from the June 7, 2011 meeting be approved. George Forbes seconded the motion. The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

**3) Council Report**

George Forbes reported that the council has formed a new sub-committee, Creative Strategies. The first meeting of the Creative Strategies sub-committee determined their main priority will be the updating of Travel Information Kiosks in the Rest Areas. The kiosks need to be revamped and modernized so that they can better serve the local communities.

George reported that a volunteer BBQ was held for the Salemtowne volunteers at Bush Park near the TIC office. It was a well attended event and many of the volunteers brought their families.

The Council will hold its next meeting in Grants Pass in September. George reported that the Council is interested in visiting the communities where the TIC managed rest areas are located.

**4) Restoration/ Replacement Projects**

**Champoeg Marker:** David reported that Eliza, Annie and he met with Bryan Nielsen, the manager for Champoeg State Park. They discussed the issues surrounding a text revision of the current Champoeg Historical Marker, which include: location, content and design. There are a couple

different questions that need to be addressed in regards to the marker content. Should the text be changed or just edited as is? Should the sign be moved to a different location?

The current text covers 4 or 5 different topics in general one sentence statements. David said that these facts identify reasons why the park was created, but doesn't clearly draw that connection for the reader. The text is also written in all caps, as is the tradition for these older markers, which makes it difficult to read. David said that after the discussion with Bryan, it feels like this is a good opportunity to create more accessible content that is easier to read with sentence case letters and paragraphs. Bryan Nielsen admitted at the end of the discussion that he has a fondness for the current text and would like to see it remain as close to the original text as possible.

TIC has the materials to create the sign boards and route the text. The log posts would be expensive to replace. Bryan quoted the cost as over \$1000 if we use the supplier State Parks has for the new pavilion near the marker site.

Bob suggested that the committee plan to meet at the park and invite interested parties to discuss the project along with Bryan Nielsen. George suggested that the committee contact the Friends of Champoeg for their input.

Richard Engeman asked if the marker should be moved to the entrance of the park, closer to the roadway as an enticement to get people to explore the park.

**Dayton:** David reported that two years ago he and Annie went to talk to the city manager for Dayton to discuss a new marker at the Dayton Blockhouse. The current signs are stuck on the side of the blockhouse building and contain some factual errors. The city is currently a participant in the Main Street Program and would like to include a new marker in their plans. They have some grant funds that are available to them that could help pay for a new marker. David will continue to follow up with the city manager on the status of their projects.

**Jedediah Smith:** Annie reported that she is working on an application for a grant for Oregon Historic Trails through the Oregon Community Fund. The Jedediah Smith Route is one of the 16 designated historic trails in Oregon and this marker could be eligible for replacement through that grant.

**Meacham:** The TIC sign crew recently brought back the Meacham marker to the Salemtowne workshop. The Salemtowne volunteers report that the sign is not salvageable, due to the deterioration of the wood. The committee will need to decide if the marker should be replaced, or allowed to disappear. The committee decided to table this discussion until the next meeting.

The committee discussed ways to preserve the old markers. Bob suggested that we contact the Oregon Museum Association to have museum officials and experts weigh in on the decision making. The committee could use the OMA to help figure out a solution to the dilemma of what to do with the old signs including: what should be saved, how many should be saved, and where they should be kept.

The committee agreed that at a minimum a photo documentary of the markers should be preserved to preserve the differences in content and styles. Bob thought from a curator's standpoint, one or two physical examples should be saved and the rest could be preserved through photographs.

#### **4) New Marker Projects**

**Southern Coast Regional Marker**- George reported that he traveled to Coos Bay with Annie to meet with the City Manager and the City Planner regarding a possible location for the newest regional marker. The city has offered to host the sign at the Coos Bay Visitor Center off Hwy 101. The site is in a highly visible location that would be easily accessible to motorists along Hwy 101. We are now waiting to hear back from Jessie Beers with the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, to see if they approve of the location.

**Layfayette/ Joel Perkins/ Abigail Scott Duniway** - Bob Keeler reported that the City of Layfayette has placed aside the idea of a marker about Joel Perkins, in favor of pursuing a marker about Abigail Scott Duniway. Bob and Annie met with Shari King and the City Manager, Preston Polasek to talk about locations and topics including Abigail Scott Duniway. The city would like to see a marker about Abigail Scott Duniway installed in time for the centennial celebration of the women's suffrage movement in 2012. The city would still like to pursue a marker about Joel Perkins at a later date. The committee discussed the pre-application and determined that the topic and location would be appropriate for a historical marker. The committee also discussed the potential for other markers around the state that could create a women's suffrage trail.

George Forbes made a motion to approve the pre-application for an Abigail Scott Duniway marker. Bob Keeler seconded the motion. The motion passed with no dissenting votes.

The committee suggested that Bob Keeler and Eliza Canty-Jones form the sub-committee for the text development of the Abigail Scott Duniway marker.

**Hollering Place**- George reported that he and Annie stopped by the new wayside where the City of Coos Bay would like to place the new marker talking about the Hollering Place. The pre-application was accepted at the last committee meeting. George reported that the wayside has a new parking area and plantings that have improved the site. The next step is for the sponsoring group to fill out the full application form. George and Eliza will be working with the group for the text development process. A tentative meeting has been set up for September 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **5) Old Business**

**Vitality Report**- Bob followed up on the discussion the committee had at the previous committee meeting regarding the Heritage Commission's Vitality Report. He said that many of the activities of the Historical Marker Committee already contribute to the goals the commission set forth in the report. He asked that the committee continue to review the goals in the report, on a regular basis, to assess how we can improve our support of those efforts.

One area Bob suggest we could improve upon was figuring out how we measure direct and indirect economic value of what the Historical Marker Committee does. How do we know what impact the program is having? How is the committee supporting economic development efforts of local communities? Does the committee need to do a better job of documenting and quantifying those activities? The committee suggested a few solutions. One was to using the audio tour hits as a measure. Another suggestion was to create a survey of past sponsors and partners. An example survey questions could be, "How has the community / organization leveraged the new marker to promote economic development activities (example: list in brochures, publications, websites?)"

The committee suggested that announcements of the regular quarterly committee meetings be distributed. The community meetings are usually well attended and the committee would like to extend invitations to other community or historical organizations to participate in all committee meetings.

Clark Niewendorp said that he would look into adding markers to the DOGAMI geology tourism map. The map shows points of interest for rock hounds.

Bob suggested that the committee be more proactive and create an annual report of activities to present to the Council and the new Heritage Task Force. He would like to see a working, living document that continues to evolve.

**Elections-** The committee nominated Richard Engeman to serve as the Vice Chair of the committee at the June 7, 2011 meeting. Richard confirmed that he would accept the nomination.

#### **6) Committee Member Reports/ New Business**

**Volunteer Report-** Annie reported for Wayne Sharp who was not in attendance. The Salem town volunteers currently have the Meacham and the Champoeg markers in storage, waiting for the committee to determine the next steps for those markers.

Wayne recently took three of the volunteers on a maintenance trip along the I-5 corridor in Southern Oregon. They repainted the Dead Indian Memorial Road and Canyon Creek markers. The volunteers also stopped by the Applegate marker near Yoncalla and said that it looked fine. David suggested that Annie or another member of the committee go out and look at the sign as well. The ditch behind the marker is beginning to wash out the posts and David is afraid that the marker will fall. Annie will stop by the marker on her way to Grants Pass next month. She asked David to request alternative location suggestions from the Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council (OHTAC) in case the marker needs to be moved. Annie will send the marker text to David in an email, so that he can pass it on to OHTAC.

**OHTAC- Oregon Trail restoration trip-** Annie told the committee that OHTAC is planning a work group/ field trip next August near La Grande to help with a restoration effort on a section of the Oregon Trail. The committee would like to explore the possibility of combining the August 2012 committee meeting to coordinate with that gathering.

#### **7) 2011/2012 Meeting Schedule**

*Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month, unless otherwise specified.*

November 2011- Champoeg State Park (Date TBA, based on availability)

February 7, 2012- Portland, DOGAMI

June 5, 2012- TBA

August 2012- possibly La Grande with OHTAC

#### **8) Adjournment**

David called for the meeting to adjourn at 11:55am. George Forbes made a motion to adjourn. Bob Keeler seconded the motion. The motion passed with no dissenting votes.