



Travel Information Council
1500 Liberty St. SE, Suite 150
Salem, OR 97302

MINUTES
Historical Marker Committee
Tuesday, November 4, 2025
Hybrid Meeting

Members Participating: Chair Kelly Cannon-Miller (virtual), Vice-Chair Katie Bush(virtual); Kim Gorman (virtual); Dave Hedberg (virtual); Sarah Jalving (virtual); Robert Olguin; (virtual); Bob Garcia (virtual).

Excused: Nancy DeSouza; Amy Platt

TIC Staff Participating: Beth Dehn, Jessica Carbone (virtual)

Call to Order/Introductions: The meeting was called to order by Cannon-Miller at 1:04 p.m.

Public Comment: None

Approval of the Minutes: *Jalving made a motion to accept the August 5, 2025 minutes as presented. Hedberg seconded. 6-0 Vote. Garcia-yes; Cannon-Miller- yes; Jalving– yes; Hedberg-yes; Gorman-yes. Bush – yes.*

Informational: Dehn reviewed the program criteria in the context of current projects. The committee discussed place-based interpretation and the breakdown of markers among the five criteria. The group expects a trend to move away from focusing on individuals and towards markers that encompass groups of people and events as they relate to place.

Cannon-Miller shared two markers that look like official state beaver boards, but whose ownership has recently come into question: 1) the Cascade Lakes Highway sign outside of Bend, and 2) the Jean Baptiste Charbonneau marker near Danner. The committee considered establishing criteria for how the program would meet a future request when unknown ownership is presented to the committee, whether that would be transferring ownership, marketing the sign, or maintaining it. The committee discussed sharing Salemtowne’s tips for maintaining wooden signs but questioned if that would erode the program’s authority. Jalving suggested a stopgap could be making that information available upon request so the program can track who is doing this work and create partnerships. While not immediately applicable, this issue will likely arise again, and the committee agreed to circle back to this discussion. In the short term, Dehn will investigate ownership of the Charbonneau marker.

Current Marker Projects:

- A. **Peter Skene Ogden at Ogden Wayside:** Platt absent. Next steps are refining text and identifying potential images.
- B. **First Coastal Expeditions/Ona Beach:** Dehn thanked Bush and Jalving for their help thinking through the proposed Ona Beach replacement topic. Dehn reached back to CTSI

to ask if Ona Beach was a location of native trade and if the 1832 story is appropriate to tell there. She has not yet received a response. Bush noted that if the proposed replacement topic isn't working, another potential story could be that Beaver Marsh is the last true freshwater marsh on the Oregon Coast. The committee discussed if environmental/ecological history meets the program's criteria and if an indigenous perspective could be added. Hedberg noted that this could be a story of landscapes over time, particularly if the marsh is a remnant of something larger. Hedberg volunteered to research coastal marshes if needed. In recognition that the replacement project may take longer to complete, the committee discussed removing the existing marker and holding the space. Garcia noted this has occurred in the past. Dehn will confirm the removal and replacement with the Ona Beach State Park manager and CTSI.

[Olguin joined the meeting at 1:38 p.m.]

Jalving motioned to remove the First Coastal Expeditions marker due to deterioration, contingent that the site remains available for a replacement. Bush seconded. 6-0 vote. Olguin abstained due to his late arrival.

- C. **Sandy River Bridge/Columbia River Highway:** The committee reviewed the existing draft and discussed additional details suggested at the August meeting. The group agreed that the history of Sandy Road and the diverse coalition of workers who built the highway were preferred additions. Jalving and Bush strongly supported discussion of the workers as that is less prominent in other public interpretation along the highway. In general, the committee felt space could be made in the current draft by tightening up verbiage about Samuel Hill and Samuel Lancaster. Dehn will circle back with Platt for her expertise on the topic.
- D. **Boone's Landing:** Dehn reported that she had a conversation with Briece Edwards, the THPO at Grand Ronde. He shared that CTGR is having internal conversations about how to support interpretive text writing. They need to do some capacity building within the department to train someone on the nuance of big ideas in a few words. Dehn sent him the Boone's Landing draft as well as other potential future projects in the valley. With a draft of this marker complete and funding from the City of Wilsonville committed, the committee discussed how to proceed. Hedberg noted that if the sign is talking about native people, it can't be done without the input of native people. He stated it is best to move at the speed of trust. The alternative is replacing the sign with what was there before. The committee brainstormed ways to support Grand Ronde in capacity building, such as leveraging funds to help CTGR train someone and where to find interpretive training, which includes the National Association for Interpretation and AASLH. Olguin suggested there may be an opportunity to leverage other agencies or groups because this issue may apply more broadly.
- E. **Salem Began Here:** Dehn reported that the City of Salem reached out to Mack McFarland, Arts Administrator at the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and he was open to the idea of using imagery approved by the tribes to share an idea of what Chemeketa looked like pre-Mission era. McFarland also conveyed the importance of including contemporary tribal practice in that imagery. The City of Salem will continue that conversation.
- F. **Aurora:** Dehn reported that this marker sits on city property. The city connected her with a volunteer on their historic review board. The volunteer will have conversations with local shop owners and community members about replacing the existing signage with a routed or modern marker. Dehn asked for any volunteers who would like to do research. Bush volunteered. Dehn will continue to work with community contacts.

Text Review:

James Nesmith: The committee viewed images of the signage at the Nesmith gravesite and then reviewed Historical Marker meeting minutes from 1993 that documented Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians' opposition to the Nesmith marker as well as additional drafts considered for the marker in 1993. After discussing the merits of removing the marker versus updating the content, the committee generally leaned toward providing a fuller picture of Nesmith that broadens his story in that location. Hedberg and Bush noted that removing the marker leaves the same laudatory concepts in the surrounding space. Cannon-Miller remarked that if the marker is removed, it leaves the accolades and not the history. Jalving questioned what other replacement topics might exist. Hedberg said the Holmes history occurred in that area but is represented on the Shipley marker. Dehn considered how rewriting Nesmith's history changes outreach to the Polk County Historical Society. Gorman volunteered to do Nesmith research in the archives. Hedberg volunteered to help with some fact verification. The Committee will continue to explore the replacement.

Annual Training: The committee completed the annual discrimination and harassment free workplace training and had an opportunity to ask questions.

Committee Member Reports/ New Business

- A. **Council Report:** Carbone reported that the Transportation Funding Package passed but is waiting to be signed by the Governor. Once signed, TIC will receive an additional 3 million in annual funding for the rest area program. This funding is for basic operations and does not provide funding for needed capital improvements. Things remain stable in the Sign and Heritage Programs, including work on updating information kiosks. Director Lynde completed his first year at the agency.
- B. **New Business:** None

Event and Meeting Schedule

November 11, 2025: Oregon Nisei Veterans Marker Dedication

February 3, 2026

May 5, 2025: OHS?

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

Next Meeting: There is a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 3, 2026, in Salem at 1:00 p.m.