

Whitman County Historical Society Board Meeting
5-21-2025; 7:00pm; Pullman Depot, Pullman WA

Board members present: Jeff Pietila, Jon Anderson, Janet Barstow, Denise Mahnkey, Linda Hackbarth, Krista Boyd, Carol Larsen, Wendy Blake, Val Gregory

Guests Present: John-Mark Mahnkey, Max Kirk, Annette Pettenger, Debbie Sherman, Brandon Burch

Jeff Pietila is acting as Chair for this meeting as Mark Clinton is unable to attend.

Janet Barstow moved, Linda Hackbarth seconded, and the board approved the consent agenda.

Janet Barstow reported that the May 3rd fundraising event for the Roy Chatters Newspaper & Printing Museum was very successful. With the funds from the event and additional community donations, the roof repairs are now fully funded. She thanked the board for their support and attendance. Work will proceed as soon as weather permits. The contractor is waiting for a two week window with favorable conditions.

The Pullman Depot Heritage Center reports that the only available contractor for the restoration work on the rolling stock must start work soon. This is an acceleration to the original planned funding timeline, and some grants are still pending. Dan Thayer, the contractor, is planning to move out of the area, and the steering committee would like to be able to sign the contract this week. For the contract to proceed, the PDHC committee is requesting permission to apply for a line of credit as a safety net to ensure contract payments can be made on time in the unlikely event that grants and donations do not arrive soon enough to cover ongoing work payments. (At a previous working meeting, other funding options were considered, but did not get support.) Without this safety net there is no known path forward on restoration, and the cars would likely have to be sold. Approximately \$90,000 is already collected, which is enough to start the project. Grants pending include one from TMobile for \$50,000 and one from USDA for approximately \$99,000. The total project is estimated at about \$220,000. There are already plans for a focused donation campaign and promising leads on potential larger donations. In the event the line of credit is needed, the PDHC committee will be able to make repayment of this credit its top priority.

Linda Hackbarth moved and Janet Barstow seconded that Whitman County Historical Society allow the Pullman Depot Heritage Center to secure a line of credit in case no other funds are available to meet cash flow requirements of the rolling stock restoration project.

Jon Anderson moved, Carol Larsen seconded and the board approved that the motion be amended with the following addition: To ensure payment of the line of credit, the Pullman Depot Heritage Center commits to applying a portion of Heritage Grant reimbursement funds to cover any unfunded costs.

The board then approved the motion as amended.

Ken Casavant of the PDHC committee has already done research with local banks to determine which offer a good rate, and Jon will work with PDHC committee members to make final account arrangements. Val will arrange for the contract with Dan Thayer to be signed so that work can start promptly, and will establish a formal agreement with the PDHC committee regarding repayment procedures should the line of credit be used.

Val Gregory reports that WCHS Archive artifacts stored at Colfax Mercantile will need to be moved out before the end of July. Also, the current lease with Gladish for the space used by WCHS will end in September, and another location should be found as soon as possible. Krista Boyd believes she can arrange for temporary storage of items currently in Colfax Mercantile. It seems likely that leased space in Colfax will be more affordable than in Pullman. Val will work with Alex Otero and other committee members to discover available options regarding a new home for the archives for further discussion at the June meeting.

Val reported that our insurance premiums have become significantly more expensive, but has had no luck finding a better carrier. Suggestions are welcome, should anyone have knowledge of likely alternatives.

Janet reported that she would like to remain on the board, but end her service as Secretary. She nominated Wendy Blake as a replacement. There were no other nominees or volunteers.

Linda Hackbarth moved, Denise Mahnkey seconded and the board approved that the duties of Secretary be transferred from Janet Barstow to Wendy Blake.

The board thanked Janet for her service as Secretary.

Linda Hackbarth moved, Denise Mahnkey seconded and the board approved that the meeting be adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Blake

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 18th at 7:00pm WCHS Archive (Gladish Center)