

Humanities Montana  
Board Executive Committee Meeting  
August 6, 2025

Present: Esther Beth Sullivan (chair), Jeanette Fregulia (vice chair and Grants), Lynda Grande (Finance), Mary Hernandez (Governance), Jill Baker (ED)

Meeting Convened at 10:01 am

Beth circulated a document, "Operational Priorities," which is being drafted by Jill. This document will be circulated to standing committees, and reviewed further by the Executive committee on September 10. This document will hopefully form the basis for priorities across the remainder of 2025 and into 2026.

Executive Director Updates

- Center for the Book program activities this year will include 2 presentations focusing on the 2025 chosen books; the first will be in Wolf Point with Chris Latray; the other in Belgrade with Janet Fox on September 20. Both events will be in-person and recorded.
- Jill has been meeting with stakeholders and other organizations to explore opportunities for HM around the 250 Commission activities; HM will be submitting grant applications to develop a focused speakers' program, with presentations related to the 250<sup>th</sup> history.
- Jill is working with advisors from FSHC and local providers to assist with communications in general and press releases more specifically.

Finance and Audit Committee:

- Jill reported that HM has approximately 450K in the bank, including the portion of reimbursements that were finally approved by NEH for 2025.
- Lynda and Jill will be working to get procedures back on track for monthly bank statement and credit card review.
- Jill is talking with accountants and bookkeepers to provide a few hours a month of contracted work for HM's financial operations.
- Lynda and Jill will be meeting to develop the 2026 budget, to be reviewed at the August 27 Finance committee meeting.

Governance Committee:

Mary reported that the Governance committee will be interviewing all board members across the next couple of weeks to identify board interests in:

- Leadership roles for 2026 (chair, vice chair, committee chairs)

- Consideration of board members who might rotate off (or not);
- Consideration of board members whose terms may be renewed;
- Interest in working on standing committees;
- Interest in assisting with 3 new work groups: fundraising, communications, program development.

#### Grants Committee:

Beth recommended that the standing Grants Committee be placed on pause for 2026. She will bring an official resolution to the next Executive meeting for consideration.

#### Board Meeting Updates:

For the September 26-27 full board meeting, plans for the agenda will be circulated via email prior to the next Executive Committee meeting (Sept 10). Executive members should contact Beth and Jill with ideas and items that should be on the full board agenda.

- The September meeting will be held in Missoula on the 26-27<sup>th</sup>;
- hotel rooms have been reserved at the Wren Friday night, the 26<sup>th</sup>;
- dinner on the 26<sup>th</sup> will be covered by HM;
- sessions will be held Friday afternoon and Saturday morning.

#### Looking ahead at board meetings for 2026:

- Beth recommends holding the Winter 2026 meeting (the weekend after President's holiday in February) via Zoom due to travel and weather constraints. She will bring a resolution to the next Executive meeting to be considered, and if approved, advanced to the full board.
- The Spring and Fall 2026 meeting locations are still to be determined. Mary suggested holding those meetings in locations where we might have significant donor bases; the committee concurred; Beth and Jill will follow-up and have recommendations for the Sept 10 Executive meeting. Beth also requested that the date of the Fall 2026 meeting not conflict with the Montana Historical Society conference.

The committee went into executive session at 10:30am for consideration of the ED annual review.