

Humanities MONTANA

AGENDA

Board of Directors Meeting
Helena, Montana
May 31, 2025

OUR MISSION: Humanities Montana serves multicultural communities through stories and conversation. We offer experiences that nurture imagination and ideas by speaking to Montanans' diverse history, literature, and philosophy.

Board of Directors: Glory Blue Earth, Jeremy Carl, Ray Ekness, Jeanette Fregulia (vice chair), Lynda Grande, Mary Hernandez, Lathie Poole, Arian Randall, Karen Reiff, Esther Beth Sullivan (chair), Clark Whitehorn, Tim Wilson

Staff: Jill Baker, Executive Director

IN PREPARATION: Please plan to view and/or read the following prior to the meeting:

1. "What Nonprofits Can Learn from Coca Cola," Melinda Gates TED Talk,
https://www.ted.com/talks/melinda_gates_what_nonprofits_can_learn_from_coca_cola
2. [the humanities are for everyone.pdf](#)

SATURDAY, MAY 31st, 2025 – Carol College: O'Connell Hall, Room 101

10:30 Welcome, Call to Order, and Initial Business – Esther Beth Sullivan

- Invitation for Public Comment
- Approval of Agenda

Consent Agenda:

- Board Resignation: Carol Bradley, p. 3
- Board Minutes: Feb 21-22, pp. 4-9
- Executive Committee Minutes: Apr 4, Apr 9, May 14, pp.10-13
- Finance Committee Minutes: Apr 30, May 7, pp 14-23
- Governance Committee Minutes: Apr 30, pp 24-25
- Board Q&A Minutes: Apr 3, May 1, pp 26-27
- Executive Director's Report, pp 28-40

Action item: Approve Consent Agenda

10:45 Board Chair and Executive Director Opening Comments– Beth Sullivan and Jill Baker

11:00 Finance and Audit Committee – Lynda Grande

- **Action Item:** Review and Approve FY24 Audit
- **Action Item:** Review and Approve April 28, 2025 Financial Reports
- **Action Item:** Update First Interstate Bank Account Signers
- Discussion: FY25 Budget Revisions

11:30 Discussion: What we want or need to know? – Mary Hernandez

- Working session focused on the questions we have as board members to carry our work forward for the council

12:30 Lunch and Executive Session

1:30 Taking questions forward – Esther Beth Sullivan

- Working session to delve into prioritized questions from the morning's session

2:15 Finance and Audit Committee – Lynda Grande

- **Action Items: Review and Approve FY25 Budget Revisions**

2:45 Announcements and Final Comments

3:00 Adjournment

2025 Board Meeting Schedule

- Fall Meeting: September 26-27, 2025 (last weekend in September), Missoula

From: [Carol Bradley](#)
To: [Esther Beth Sullivan](#); [Baker, Jillian](#)
Subject: Humanities regrets
Date: Wednesday, May 7, 2025 4:20:45 PM

Dear Beth and Jill,

I lasted through today's audit meeting (!) and I'm afraid that is going to be my swan song with Humanities Montana.

I have so enjoyed these last five and a half years on the board — especially getting to know the staff and my fellow board members; such a dynamic group — but I'm finding it necessary to step back from volunteer duties so I can focus on my own work.

I assume the May meeting will be focused on future efforts, and that being the case, I will bow out now. Please accept my resignation effectively immediately, but know that I will always hold this organization close to my heart and wish you the best as you navigate this tumultuous time.

Best,

Carol

Board of Directors Meeting
Bozeman, Montana
February 21-22, 2025

Board of Directors: Glory Blue Earth, Carol Bradley, Jeanette Fregulia (virtual, Vice Chair), Lynda Grande, Mary Hernandez, Lathie Poole, Karen Reiff (virtual), Esther Beth Sullivan (Chair), Clark Whitehorn

Excused: David Cates, Jennifer Corning, Tim Wilson, Arian Randall, Jeremy Carl, Ray Ekness

Staff: Jill Baker, Executive Director; Bailey Clarke, Development and Communications Associate; Jon Clarenbach, Fiscal Operations Director; Megan Hill Sundy, Grants and Evaluation Director; John Knight, Programs Director

FRIDAY, February 21st, 2025

A tour of MSU's American Indian Hall was provided by Walter Flemming, past board chair and recipient of the Governor's Humanities Award. After the tour, attendees met for a working session to discuss FY25 strategic priorities for the organization.

Additionally, staff reviewed the Humanities Montana Communications Toolkit with attendees.

A group dinner was held at the Tanglewood with speaker Philip Page and his wife Deb joining staff and board.

SATURDAY, February 22, 2025

Beth Sullivan, Board Chair, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 8:47 am. A quorum was present.

Beth shared an invitation for public comment. John Knight, Programs Director, introduced Philip Page who spoke about his experience as a speaker with Humanities Montana and performed one of his original songs inspired by Charlie Russell. The board thanked him for attending and sharing his experience.

Beth called for a motion to approve the agenda. Mary made the motion, and Lynda seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Beth then called for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mary made the motion, and Lynda seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Opening remarks from Beth Sullivan included an overview of the previous day's working session.

Mission Moment: Democracy Project: John Knight [SP2]

John shared the video that he and HM's Program Manager and Democracy Project coordinator, Jenny Bevill, developed to promote the Democracy Project. This is the video that was shared during their well-attended presentation at the National Humanities Conference in November 2024. He also celebrated with the board that HM was a recipient of the national Schwartz Prize at the conference.

John Knight left the meeting after his presentation.

Finance and Audit Committee — Lynda Grande [SP1/2/3/4]

Finance Chair, Lynda Grande, asked Jon Clarenbach to provide a report regarding the October 31, 2024, and December 31, 2024, Financial Reports. Jon shared that the FY24 has been closed out, about 2/3rds through the audit. Revenue of almost \$1.1M, a nearly 17% increase. As a result, there has been a noticeable growth in programs. The October 31st, 2024, Balance sheet shows \$201,000 in cash in savings, or 2-3 months of Cash on Hand. Additionally, there remains a significant amount of carry forward NEH funds to spend in FY25, more than originally projected. Jon then presented the December 31st, 2024, financial statements and answered questions. **Beth called for a motion to approve the October 31st, 2024, and the December 31st, 2024, financial statements. Lynda made the motion, Glory seconded, motion carried unanimously.**

Jill presented her recommendations for budgeting the additional carry forward NEH funds in FY25. She recommends increasing funding for programs including re-grants, Montana Conversations, and Big Sky Reads. Beth mentioned that this recommendation is in line with prior years when this body has prioritized carryover to go to programs and grants. **Beth call for motion to approve the FY25 Budget Revisions, Lynda moved, Mary second, motion carries unanimously.**

Lynda Grande and Jodi Todd, former staff accountant at HM, identified updates to the Financial Policies and Procedures manual last spring before Jodi's resignation. Based on their recommendations, Jon made changes to the manual which also include compliance with the updated CFR 200 grant guidelines and reflect current practices including weekly check writing and NEH grant drawdowns to improve cash flow. Additionally, the manual now includes a goal of working towards at least 3-6 months of unrestricted reserve funds to prepare for any potential gaps in funding. Jill also recommended having a board member added as a check signer in addition to staff.

Jon discussed that the main change was to operating reserve, 1 month of cash on hand is not best practice, ideally 3-6 months of cash on hand consisting of unrestricted funds for general operating. NEH funds cannot be used for cash savings. **Beth call for motion to approve the updates to the Financial Policies and Procedures Manual. Lynda moved, Mary second, motion carries unanimously.**

Grants Committee — Jeanette Fregulia [SP1]

Jill discussed the changing circumstances in operations resulting from the federal funding freeze on Jan 27th that was then rescinded on Jan 29th. The series of events delayed sending review materials to the committee until Wednesday afternoon in preparation for Thursday's committee

meeting. Additionally, she reassured the committee that all language provided in subaward guidelines and contracts states that subawards are dependent on the availability of NEH funding.

Regarding the subaward budget, Jill explained that HM has additional carry over funds from the past fiscal year to support programming and the Finance Committee has recommended an increase to the subaward budget for FY25. This increase will not impact the recommended funding for applications submitted but will allow HM to increase the number of available mini grants this year.

Megan Hill Sundy presented the following overview:

December 2024 Grant Application & Review Summary:

- Total number of applications reviewed by board members = 20
- Average number of evaluations (scores and comments) completed by board members for each application = 10
- Sum of funds requested from all applications = \$130,658
- Recommended available funding for Community Project grants = \$34,000
- Recommended available funding for Public Humanities Fellowships = \$16,000

Public Humanities Fellowships

Megan shared an overview of engaging experts to fellowship grant applications. This was Humanities Montana's second opportunity to involve external subject experts in the evaluation process and the first-time experts were involved in review of fellowship applications. Experts provided scores and comments for each application which were shared with the grants committee and referenced during discussion of each application. Humanities Montana recruited, trained, and involved the following expert reviewers in evaluation of the 2025 Public Humanities Fellowship applications:

- Mary Murphy, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of history at MSU Areas of expertise include U.S. women's history, history of the American West, history and culture of food.
- Micah Chang, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History at MSU Areas of expertise include the history of the American West, agricultural history, public history, and religious history.
- Crystal Alegria, Executive Director of The Extreme History Project Areas of expertise include community history, women's history, western social history, the history of place, archaeology education, participatory action research, and public archaeology.

Megan shared that fellowships are annual. The period of performance will be April 1st-Sept 30th. Added the public programming aspect to engage communities. Revised format gives us more confidence that we are increasing public aspect and carrying out HM mission.

HM received 8 applications total; 4 fellowships are being recommended by the Grants Committee including:

- Unequal and Unruly: Working Class Women Create Meaning in Montana 1910-1960
- The Lives of James P Beckwourth & the Disappearance of the Black West
- A Cheyenne Review: Producing Historical Articles Related to the Reservation Area
- Mapping Indigenous Montana

Community Project Grants

Megan reported that HM received 12 applications total. No projects scored less than 80%.

Megan walked through each recommendation from the Grants Committee:

- Centering Indigenous Knowledge webinar series
- Japanese Festival in Western Montana
 - Dillon, MT. Second year of the festival. First year had over 600 attendees
- River Arts & Books 2025 Speaker Series
 - New org in Roscoe, created a bookstore & a nonprofit for community programming
- Academic WorldQuest 2025: Honoring Indigenous Cultures in Montana and Around the World
- The Montana Tapestry: People & Places from 1776 to Today

Megan shared that it was a very competitive group of proposals and that the grants that don't get funded can reapply as long as their project timeline aligns with the award timeline

Total subaward recommendation: \$50,658

Public Humanities Fellowships: \$16,000

Community Project Grants \$34,658

Beth called for a motion to approve the Grants Committee's recommendations for Public Humanities Fellowships & Community Project Grants. Carol moved, Glory second, motion carries. Clark Whitehorn recused himself out of conflict of interest with authors.

The board took a short break. Jon Clarenbach and Megan Hill Sundy left the meeting.

Governance Committee — Mary Hernandez [SP4]

Mary shared that the Finance and Audit Committee recommended the revisions to their committee's responsibilities to the by-laws last fall. The Governance Committee has approved the changes and recommends them to the full board for final approval. **Beth called for motion to approve the changes to the by-laws, Clark moved, Lynda second, motion carries unanimously.**

Jill handed out the Annual Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Documents for board members to review and sign.

Mary asked Jill to review the proposed 2025 Board Standing Committee Calendar. As meetings are scheduled, she will fill in the dates. Jill recommended two changes to the committee calendar this year.

- First, Jill recommends that the executive committee meet on a regular basis. This will help address the recommendation from the ED evaluation to stay in regular communication with the board between meetings and provide an opportunity for increased coordination and alignment with committee work throughout the year.
- Jill's second recommendation is to hold a virtual regular board meeting in December each year to review the end of year financials and make budget adjustments if needed. Five months between the Fall and Winter board meetings creates a gap in communication and has resulted in calling special meetings in December for the past

two years.

The committee agreed to consider the December meeting recommendation, but no action was taken at this time.

Mary asked the board to review the 2025 Board Matrix to update your experience, skills and interests. The committee will use the updated matrix and responses to determine organizational needs to assist with recruitment for board openings in 2026.

Board Executive Session:

Jill and Bailey excused themselves. The board discussed the Executive Director annual review process for 2025. Staff were invited to return after the executive session ended.

Executive Director Q & A – Jill Baker [SP1/2/3/4]

Jill reported that she will attend Humanities on the Hill March 4-6, 2025, in Washinton DC to lobby for the Federal State Partnership line item in the NEH budget which supports humanities councils including Humanities Montana. While HM cannot use any NEH funds for lobbying, unrestricted private funds may be used. Part of our Federation dues are used for lobbying at the federal level on our behalf. It was discussed that finance should include budget for next year to have a board member join.

Language included in the last newsletter encouraged supporters to call their representatives and share their stories about HM's impact. Jill expressed to board members a need for them to reach out to connections they may have in offices, call, or write a letter to our representatives in support of HM

Reviewed Communications Toolkit. Includes development language to assist board members with advocacy on HM's behalf, grant and program examples, and statewide impact data

Closing Comments – Beth Sullivan

Beth has been reviewing the NEH founding documents: the act that created the NEH & the NEA. "The purpose of this act resides in the fact that the arts & the humanities belong to all people of the United States. Not just the sciences, a great democracy is focused on arts and culture. And not just arts and cultures, but that you make decisions wisely."

Beth call for motion to adjourn, Carol moved, Mary second, motion carries

Adjourned at 11:53am. BC and JB

2025 Board Meeting Schedule

- Spring Meeting: May 30-31, 2025 (weekend after Memorial Day) Bonanza Creek Ranch, Martinsdale
- Fall Meeting: September 26-27, 2025 (last weekend in September) Missoula

Humanities Montana – Across the Map – All 56 Counties!

Aspiration: Board will utilize HM metrics to better inform board-level decision-making and oversight

- HM staff will provide 'year-to-date' or 'at-a-glance' numbers at each board meeting:
 1. Cash on hand (number of days for full and minimal operation)
 2. Fundraising to date (unrestricted donations)
 3. % of board members who have donated (both cash and in-kind)
 4. Program overview, per major HM program:
 - # of events, # of persons served
 - # of communities served, % of rural communities, # of counties
 5. Grants overview, per grant program:
 - # of applications, # of awards, total award amount, annual funding rate
 - # of communities served, % of rural communities, # of counties
- HM staff will aspire to provide '3-year trends' with year-over-year comparisons for:
 1. yearly unrestricted donations
 2. Programs: # of events, # of persons served, # of counties
 3. Grants: Total \$\$ awarded, annual funding rate, # of counties
 4. % of total budget for: administration, direct program support, subawards

Aspiration: Board will assist directly with fundraising efforts utilizing HM's new "Communication Toolkit"

- HM staff have a development plan that includes direct appeals, listening sessions, and board outreach.
 - Board members are asked to connect with individuals in their city/region who have donated to HM in the past.
 - Each board member has a list of contacts; HM staff will work with board members to provide contact information and strategies for outreach.
 - To assist in these efforts, the Communication Toolkit provides 'elevator pitches,' 'conversation suggestions,' and 'talking points.'

Aspiration: Board members will serve as HM's most ardent ambassadors and advocates

- With impact numbers provided by HM
 - Board members are encouraged to contact Montana's congressional delegation in person, by phone, and/or in writing to advocate for authorization of NEH funding.
 - Board members are encouraged to contact state-wide leaders in person, by phone, and/or in writing to advocate for support of Humanities Montana.
- With better calendaring of events and advance notice
 - Board members are encouraged to attend Humanities Montana events.
 - Board members are encouraged to spread the word about Humanities Montana events in their communities.

Humanities Montana
Board Executive Committee Meeting
April 4, 2025

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

Meeting Convened at 11:00am. A quorum was present.

Beth asked Jill to provide any updates on the current crisis.

Jill said staff began implementing HM's contingency plan on April 3, and that NEH funded programming has been paused. The privately funded Democracy Project will continue at least through the end of the program year. She hasn't received any additional information from the NEH since receiving the grant termination letter at 10:24 pm on April 2. She and the staff continue in their efforts to communicate with program partners regarding cessations of all NEH funded programs and project expenditures.

Financial concerns:

- HM has ~\$170K cash on hand
- Roughly \$30K will need to cover speaker expenses that haven't yet been reimbursed.
- HM submitted ~\$94K for reimbursement from NEH, for expenses through April 2. There's no promise that HM will receive that reimbursement.
- Basic operations (personnel, space, internet) currently run ~\$60K per month.

Jill has heard from the Federation that they are working on legal appeals regarding how the notices were transmitted, but any legal processes would take a long time. Jill has also reached out to our attorney, and a retired attorney has reached out to her. Jill will be talking with advisors (including David Dietrich), regarding attorney recommendations.

Jill and the staff continue to focus on communication efforts with the press, donors, and program and project partners.

May board meeting:

Discussion of what to do for the May board meeting covered options: online meeting; one-day, mid-day meeting in a central location with no overnight; 'retreat' at the Martinsdale location with an overnight. Lynda said the Martinsdale location could be used for a single, mid-day meeting without overnight. The group will revisit this discussion at the April 9 meeting, but the consensus seemed to be: in-person, mid-day meeting, possibly at Martinsdale or Helena.

Pivot and Fundraising:

Discussion focused on: the unprecedented nature of this administrative action terminating council funding; need for the organization to pivot in terms of operation and programs; and fundraising efforts.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm. EBS

Humanities Montana
Board Executive Committee Meeting, via Zoom
April 9, 2025

Present: Jeannette Fregulia (vice chair and Grants), Lynda Grande (Finance), Mary Hernandez (Governance), Jill Baker (ED)

Excused: Esther Beth Sullivan (chair)

Vice Chair Jeanette Fregulia called the meeting to order at 10 am. A quorum was present.

NEH Updates: Jill provided the following updates:

- **Financial Position:** HM has \$170,136 Cash on Hand as of April 7, 2025. Monthly payroll is currently \$56,870. Other liabilities include \$22,524 in Vacation and Sick payable as of 4/1/25. Other expenses owed ~ \$35,000, including \$21,000 owed to HM's auditors.
- **Communications:** A press release regarding the funding cut was sent out on April 3rd. Jill has been providing interviews, and stories were run over the weekend and continue to run this week. Bailey is tracking coverage across the state. An Op-Ed was drafted over the weekend and is being sent out today to major and rural newspapers across that state outlining the impact of the NEH cuts to Humanities Montana.
- **Legal Strategies:** Jill has been in conversation with Tom Stonecipher, a retired attorney from Bozeman. He volunteered to help draft a letter of appeal to the NEH at no cost and has recommended that HM seek pro-bono legal counsel for the appeal. Jill will reach out to HM's current legal counsel for recommendations and asked the EC for their referrals as well. The Federation of State Humanities Councils is also exploring legal strategies on behalf of councils.
- **Fundraising:** An emergency fundraising appeal letter will go out as soon as possible. Deb Gill, CEO of Alliance Philanthropy in Bozeman, has offered limited services on a pro-bono basis during our funding crisis. Staff have been assisting with researching private foundations that align with HM's mission and programming. HM will need to update its development/fundraising plan to be more comprehensive and include activities to grow and retain its list of donors.

Spring Board Meeting and Committee Preparations:

- **Meeting Location:** Due to the current financial position, HM will need to keep meeting costs to a minimum. A virtual option was discussed, but it was decided that it was best to meet in person at a central location so that board members could drive over and back

the same day. Martinsdale and Helena were presented as options. Jill will follow up with contacts at the Bonanza Creek Ranch/Grande Ranch to see if they can accommodate our group on a pro-bono basis. Jeanette also offered to reach out to Carroll College to reserve a room at no cost to HM.

- **Grants Committee:** Cancelled due to NEH funding cut.
- **Governance Committee:** Review By-laws, Board Matrix/Nominations
- **Finance Committee:** Consider 3 budgets: Hiatus Budget, Downsized Programs, Program Development/Growth.

Meeting was adjourned at 11 am. JB

Humanities Montana
Board Executive Committee Meeting
May 14, 2025

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

Meeting Convened at 10:00am

Agenda approved with motion by Mary Hernandez, seconded by Lynda Grande.

Board Member updates: Carol Bradley submitted her resignation from the board as of May 7. That leaves 14 current board members.

Staffing updates: The separation date for Jon Clarenbach was moved up to May 6; other staff are focused on archiving, documenting processes, hand-offs to Jill and Jenny, and outreach and fundraising (through June 2).

Status and funding updates: Jill is getting further clarification and stipulations that attach to the Mellon Foundation funding. She'll report out on that as soon as final expectations are issued through the Federation of State Humanities Councils. Fundraising since early April has realized 123K, including 100K from Susan O'Connor and 23K from other individual donors. Jill is working with at least three foundations for further support of Democracy Project and other programs.

Board meeting agenda for May: notes included on the draft agenda:

- Separate Finance committee action items – to present the audit and March 31st Financial Reports at the top of the meeting, and to vote on the revised budget at the end of the meeting
- Include 2 work sessions focused on 'What we want/need to know' questions.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50am. EBS

Finance Audit Committee Meeting

April 30, 2025, via Zoom

Committee Members: Lynda Grande, Committee Chair; Beth Sullivan, Board Chair, Carol Bradley, David Cates, Karen Reiff, Tim Wilson

Staff: Jill Baker, Executive Director

Committee Chair Lynda Grande called the meeting to order at 10 am. A quorum was present.

Financial Statements, April 28, 2025: The Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Reports were presented to the committee, highlighting the current cash on hand. On April 28th, HM received an unrestricted gift of \$100,000 from Susan O'Connor. Ms. O'Connor is a trustee of the Engelhard Foundation, which has funded the Democracy Project since its inception at Humanities Montana. This brings the checking and savings balance to \$252,943.65. The Grants Receivable line item totaling \$202,197.22 was the balance of the NEH grant in eGMS before it was terminated and does not include the recently approved funding passed by Congress through a Continuing Resolution on March 14th. Jill also noted that the endowment funds are not available to cash out. With Ms. O'Connor's gift, HM is in a better cash position than it was a month ago. The Profit and Loss Report shows that HM's expenses have been drastically reduced since April 2, 2025, with payroll being the largest remaining expense. Lynda called the question. David Cates made a motion to approve the April 28, 2025 Financial Statements. Tim Wilson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

FY24 Audit Update: Jill shared with the committee that the auditor reached out to her in mid- April, after HM received its termination letter from the NEH, to discuss how HM plans to address a "Going Concern" in the audit due to the recent federal funding cut. The auditor informed her that to avoid their recommendation to dissolve, HM needed to demonstrate that the organization would still be in existence in twelve months and provide a list of actions taken to address the termination of the grant. As a result, Jill and Jon have developed two twelve-month budget scenarios for the finance committee to consider and approve to address the "Going Concern" in the audit. Once a revised budget is approved by the committee, it will be shared with the auditor so that they can complete their report.

Operational Cost Reductions:

Program Cancellations: Due to the termination of the NEH GOS grant, HM paused all federally funded programming effective April 3, 2025, including Montana Conversations and Speakers in the Schools, as well as new applications for subawards including Community Project Grants, Film/Video grants, Mini-grants and Public Humanities Fellowships until funding is restored.

Staff Layoffs: Unfortunately, further downsizing of the organization is unavoidable due to the termination of the NEH GOS grant. HM is no longer able to sustain the NEH funded positions of Fiscal Operations Director, Programs Director, Grants and Evaluation Director, and Development and Communications Associate. Layoffs will be effective June 2, 2025, to offer staff time to wrap up and archive their work. The positions of Executive Director and Program Manager, who is responsible for running the Democracy Project program, will remain. Jill proposed a Cost Reduction Plan, including staff layoffs, to board chair Beth Sullivan on April 21, 2025 which was approved. Staff were given notice on April 23, 2025.

FY25 Contingency Budgets:

Currently, the most feasible plan for moving forward without NEH funding is to continue with the privately funded Democracy Project program. The Engelhard Foundation is committed to continuing the program once the organization is financially stable. In addition to Ms. O'Connor's generous gift, on April 29, 2025, HM received notification that the Mellon Foundation approved a general operating grant to the Federation of State Humanities Councils to re-distribute \$200,000 to each humanities council with a matching grant opportunity of up to \$50,000. These gifts stabilize the organization financially and allow HM to avoid hiatus or dissolution. Unfortunately, it is not enough to reverse staff layoffs and fully run programs again. HM remains \$500,000 short of its FY25 projected revenue.

The 12 month "Democracy Project" budget was presented to the committee for review and approval as a place to start to finish out FY25. Jill answered questions about the work that she and Jenny would be responsible for moving forward. Lynda Grande requested that \$15,000 be added to the budget for grantmaking, specifically Mini-Grants and Big Sky Reads rural book club stipends through the end of FY25. David Cates made the motion, Karen seconded, the motion carried unanimously. Lynda then called the question to approve the "Democracy Project" budget as amended. David Cates made the motion, Tim Wilson seconded. The motion passed with Carol Bradley abstaining.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 am. JB

Humanities Montana

Balance Sheet

As of April 30, 2025

	Apr 30, 25
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1020 · Checking-FIB	100,557.54
1021 · FIB Savings	152,386.11
Total Checking/Savings	252,943.65
Other Current Assets	
1310 · Grants Receivable	202,197.22
1650 · Endowment Funds-MCF	96,822.97
Total Other Current Assets	299,020.19
Total Current Assets	551,963.84
Fixed Assets	
1620 · Accumulated Amortization	-12,634.00
1625 · Website	36,477.00
1600 · Furniture and Equipment	7,863.88
1610 · Accumulated Depreciation	-5,168.88
Total Fixed Assets	26,538.00
TOTAL ASSETS	578,501.84
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2100 · Accounts Payable	24,206.76
Total Accounts Payable	24,206.76
Credit Cards	
2375 · MC - Jennifer Bevill - 2410	287.29
2370 · MC - Jillian Baker - 3687	1,869.71
2365 · MC - John Knight - 5910	17.10
Total Credit Cards	2,174.10
Other Current Liabilities	
2120 · Payroll Liabilities	7,626.99
2142 · Health Insurance Payable	-8,181.99
2155 · Vacation/Sick Payable	14,507.71
2400 · Deferred Revenue	202,197.22
Total Other Current Liabilities	216,149.93
Total Current Liabilities	242,530.79
Total Liabilities	242,530.79
Equity	
3010 · Unrestricted Net Assets	228,343.15
3020 · Perm. Restricted Net Assets	58,605.48
3040 · Temp. Restricted Net Assets	43,612.00
Net Income	5,410.42
Total Equity	335,971.05
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	578,501.84

Humanities Montana

Profit & Loss

April 2025

	Apr 25
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
4015 · Co-Pay Income	150.00
4730 · Donations-Unrestricted	114,484.58
Total Income	114,634.58
Gross Profit	114,634.58
Expense	
50000 · Salary and Benefits	
5010 · Payroll Expenses	40,749.84
5020 · Payroll Taxes	3,634.96
5021 · Work Comp Premiums	209.56
5022 · Health Insurance Premiums	8,364.10
5025 · Retirement Plan Expense	4,007.49
Total 50000 · Salary and Benefits	56,965.95
60000 · General and Administrative Exp	
5055 · Employee Insurance Admin Fees	10.00
5033 · Travel-Other	
5031 · Travel-Staff	515.49
5033 · Travel-Other - Other	5,547.06
Total 5033 · Travel-Other	6,062.55
5034 · Meals/Food	17.10
5225 · Website Expense	1,865.94
5219 · Marketing	1,949.06
5180 · Dues and Subscriptions	888.94
5170 · Insurance	916.00
5150 · Professional Services	
5220 · Audit Expense	21,400.00
5150 · Professional Services - Other	675.00
Total 5150 · Professional Services	22,075.00
5144 · Database Expense	277.76
5096 · Bank and Credit Card Fees	424.82
5060 · Supplies	29.00
Total 60000 · General and Administrative Exp	34,516.17
5160 · Honoraria Expense	350.00
6010 · Subaward Expense	3,100.00
Total Expense	94,932.12
Net Ordinary Income	19,702.46
Net Income	19,702.46

April 21, 2025

To: Esther Beth Sullivan, Board Chair

From: Jill Baker, Executive Director

Re: Cost Reductions due to Termination of National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) General Operating Support (GOS) grant.

Rationale:

With the loss of over 90% of the revenue budgeted for FY25, and \$166,433 in unrestricted Cash on Hand (Checking and Savings) as of April 21, 2025, Humanities Montana is forced to implement immediate cost reductions in order to continue to mission of the organization until NEH funding for state humanities councils are restored, or private fundraising makes up the difference.

Operational Cost Reductions:

Program Cancellations

Due to the termination of the NEH GOS grant, HM paused all federally funded programming effective April 3, 2025, including Montana Conversations and Speakers in the Schools, as well as new applications for subawards including Community Project Grants, Film/Video grants, Mini-grants and Public Humanities Fellowships until federal funding is restored.

Staff Layoffs

Unfortunately, further downsizing of the organization is unavoidable due to the termination of the NEH GOS grant. HM is no longer able to sustain the NEH funded positions of Fiscal Operations Director, Programs Director, Grants and Evaluation Director, and Development and Communications Associate. Layoffs will be effective June 2, 2025 to offer staff time to wrap up and archive their work. The positions of Executive Director and Program Manager, who is responsible for running the Democracy Project program, will remain.

Currently, the most feasible plan for moving forward without the NEH GOS grant is to continue with the privately funded Democracy Project program. The Engelhard Foundation is committed to continuing the program once the organization is stabilized. Fundraising efforts are underway to support general operating costs for the remainder of FY25 and to provide time for HM to thoughtfully consider a change in its business model and public humanities activities.

Potential Estimated Grant Income

Private donations: \$20,000 (Emergency fundraising appeal April-May)

Mellon Foundation (FSHC Proposal): \$200,000 (June or July)

Engelhard Foundation (DP): \$160,000 for 2 years (July)

Llewellyn Foundation (DP): \$30,000 (July)

*The FY26 NEH General Operating Support Grant application is due May 1, 2025. HM is currently completing an application and will submit it by the deadline. If approved, the funding period is November 1, 2025-October 31, 2026.

Democracy Project 12 Month Budget

	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	Annual Total (May-April)
Cash at beginning of period	162,984	258,691	184,938	345,377	433,508	413,487	392,729	372,881	344,997	328,208	286,457	271,411	243,086	
Income														
Co-pay Income	150													-
Endowment Income			1,250		-	1,250	-		1,250			1,250		5,000
Interest Income	250	250	347	648	813	775	736	699	647	615	537	509	456	7,032
Federal Grant Income														-
Misc Grant Income											5,000			5,000
Lewellyn Foundation				30,000										30,000
Mellon Foundation		200,000												200,000
Engelhard Foundation		160,000												160,000
Unrestricted Donations	120,000	8,000	5,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	4,000	5,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	30,000
Total Income	120,400	368,250	6,597	31,648	1,813	3,025	1,736	1,699	5,897	5,615	6,537	2,759	1,456	437,032
Payroll	56,966	56,420	34,617	21,992	20,092	20,092	20,092	20,092	20,092	20,092	20,092	20,092	20,092	293,855
Bank and Credit Card Fees	465	272	170	34	34	34	34	34	136	170	34	34	34	1,020
Copies/Printing										600				600
Database Expense	278	278	3,456	278	278	278	278	278	278	278	278	278	278	6,514
Dues and Subscriptions	889	500	500	168	135	135	135	135	135	135	135	1,635	135	3,883
Endowment Expense			250			250				250			250	1,000
Facility/Room Rental/Meetings														-
Federation Dues			5,100											5,100
Insurance	926	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	410	10	10	10	520
Marketing	1,949	750												750
Meals/Food	17	1,050	100	100	100	1,050	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	3,100
Network Expense														-
Postage										146				146
Professional Development								2,000						2,000
Prof Services (Audit, Legal, Consulting)	22,075											7,000		7,000
Rent & Admin														-
Supplies	29	19	19		250					250				538
Travel-Staff	6,062	250	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	5,750
Website Expense	1,865	750	435	435	435	435	435	435	435	435	435	435	435	5,535
Total General & Admin Expenses	34,555	3,879	10,540	1,525	1,742	2,692	1,492	3,492	1,594	3,274	1,492	9,992	1,742	43,456
Award Expense								6,000		24,000				30,000
Honoraria	350													-
Regrants	3,100													-
Total Expenses	94,971	60,299	45,157	23,517	21,834	22,784	21,584	29,584	21,686	47,366	21,584	30,084	21,834	367,311
Net Income	25,429	307,951	(38,561)	8,131	(20,021)	(19,759)	(19,847)	(27,885)	(15,789)	(41,750)	(15,047)	(27,325)	(20,378)	69,721
Cash flows from operating activities														-
Grants Receivable	53,251	(360,000)	200,000	80,000			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(80,000)
Endowment Funds			(1,000)			(1,000)		-	(1,000)			(1,000)		(4,000)
Accounts Payable	20,200	(21,400)					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(21,400)
Credit Cards Payable	(2,103)	(304)					-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(304)
Payroll Liabilities	(1,070)						-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net cash from operating activities	95,707	(73,753)	160,439	88,131	(20,021)	(20,759)	(19,847)	(27,885)	(16,789)	(41,750)	(15,047)	(28,325)	(20,378)	(35,983)
Net increase in cash	95,707	(73,753)	160,439	88,131	(20,021)	(20,759)	(19,847)	(27,885)	(16,789)	(41,750)	(15,047)	(28,325)	(20,378)	(35,983)
Cash at end of period	258,691	184,938	345,377	433,508	413,487	392,729	372,881	344,997	328,208	286,457	271,411	243,086	222,708	

Hiatus Budget

	Nov-Mar	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	FY 25 Total	November	December	January	February	March	April	May 25 to April 26
Cash at beginning of period	201,687	162,984	258,691	184,938	166,897	159,332	153,941	147,289		141,874	136,200	132,529	130,717	126,771	121,069	
Income																
Co-pay Income	4,875	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,025	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Endowment Income	2,254		-	1,250		-	1,250	-	4,754		1,250			1,250		5,000
Interest Income	1,290	250	250	347	313	299	289	276	3,313	266	255	248	245	238	227	3,253
Federal Grant Income	444,333								444,333							-
Misc Grant Income	5,500								5,500				5,000			5,000
Unrestricted Donations	19,514	120,000	8,000	5,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	156,514	1,000	4,000	5,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	30,000
Total Income	477,766	120,400	8,250	6,597	1,313	1,299	2,539	1,276	619,439	1,266	5,505	5,248	6,245	2,488	1,227	43,253
Expenses																
Payroll & Benefits	280,779	56,966	56,420	22,326	8,053	6,153	6,153	6,153	443,001	6,153	6,153	6,153	6,153	6,153	6,153	142,171
Bank and Credit Card Fees	641	465	272	170	34	30	30	30	1,672	30	120	150	30	30	30	956
Copies/Printing	1,150								1,150		600					600
Database Expense	1,719	278	278	278	278	278	278	278	3,665	278	278	278	278	278	278	3,336
Dues and Subscriptions	2,958	889	500	500	168	135	135	135	5,420	135	135	135	1,635	135	885	4,633
Endowment Expense	508			250			250		1,008		250			250		1,000
Facility/Room Rental/Meetings	505								505							-
Federation Dues	12,119								12,119							-
Insurance	576	926	10	10	10	10	10	10	1,562	10	410	10	10	10	10	520
Marketing	11,511	1,949	750						14,210							750
Meals/Food	3,335	17	1,050	50	50	50	1,050	50	5,652	50	50	50	50	50	50	2,600
Network Expense	5,454								5,454							-
Postage	1,014								1,014		146					146
Professional Development	8,378								8,378							-
Prof Services (Audit, Legal, Consulting)	1,900	22,075							23,975				2,000			2,000
Rent & Admin	7,114								7,114							-
Supplies	1,210	29	19	19					1,277							38
Travel-Staff, Board and Speakers	38,770	6,062	250		250		250		45,582	250		250		250		1,500
Website Expense	7,564	1,865	750	35	35	35	35	35	10,354	35	35	35	35	35	35	1,135
Total General & Admin Expenses	106,426	34,555	3,879	1,312	825	538	2,038	538	150,111	788	2,024	908	4,038	1,038	1,288	19,214
Award Expense	9,350								9,350							-
Honoraria	40,441	350							40,791							-
Regrants	55,062	3,100							58,162							-
Total Expenses	492,058	94,971	60,299	23,638	8,878	6,691	8,191	6,691	701,415	6,941	8,177	7,061	10,191	7,191	7,441	161,385
Net Income	(14,292)	25,429	(52,049)	(17,041)	(7,565)	(5,392)	(5,652)	(5,414)	(81,976)	(5,674)	(2,671)	(1,812)	(3,945)	(4,703)	(6,213)	(118,132)
Cash flows from operating activities																
Grants Receivable	(158,232)	53,251						-	(104,981)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prepaid Insurance/Expenses	12,312								12,312							-
Endowment Funds	2,700			(1,000)			(1,000)		700	-	(1,000)			(1,000)		(4,000)
Accounts Payable	(73,238)	20,200	(21,400)					-	(74,438)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(21,400)
Credit Cards Payable	(5,407)	(2,103)	(304)					-	(7,814)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(304)
Payroll Liabilities	3,438	(1,070)						-	2,368	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Health Insurance Liabilities	(8,181)								(8,181)							-
Deferred Revenue	202,197								202,197							-
Net cash from operating activities	(38,703)	95,707	(73,753)	(18,041)	(7,565)	(5,392)	(6,652)	(5,414)	(59,813)	(5,674)	(3,671)	(1,812)	(3,945)	(5,703)	(6,213)	(143,836)
Net increase in cash	(38,703)	95,707	(73,753)	(18,041)	(7,565)	(5,392)	(6,652)	(5,414)	(59,813)	(5,674)	(3,671)	(1,812)	(3,945)	(5,703)	(6,213)	(143,836)
Cash at end of period	162,984	258,691	184,938	166,897	159,332	153,941	147,289	141,874		136,200	132,529	130,717	126,771	121,069	114,855	

Finance Audit Committee Meeting

May 7, 2025, via Zoom

Committee Members: Lynda Grande, Committee Chair; Beth Sullivan, Board Chair, Carol Bradley, David Cates, Tim Wilson, Excused: Karen Reiff

Staff: Jill Baker, Executive Director

Guest: Keegan Witt, Carver, Florek & James CPA's

Committee Chair Lynda Grande called the meeting to order at 10 am. A quorum was present.

FY24 Audit Report:

Lynda welcomed Keegan and asked him to provide an overview of the FY24 Audit Report to the committee. This is the first year that Carver, Florek & James CPAs have audited financials for Humanities Montana. Keegan shared that the audit process went well, and that Humanities Montana is in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States. He reviewed page 29 of the report with the committee which provides a summary of the auditors' results. Overall, the results are quite positive. However, Humanities Montana has been identified as a high-risk auditee next year due to the late filing of last year's audit report as a federal grantee. It is unclear why this happened or who was responsible for this oversight, so it isn't listed as a finding. Keegan expressed that he wasn't concerned about this for Humanities Montana because there is only one federal grant program (NEH) that is audited. As a result, the next federally required single audit will review 40% of the financials, rather than 20%. But this will not significantly impact the cost of the audit for HM and would likely be required anyway due to the termination of the NEH grant and resulting gap in federal funding.

Keegan reviewed the financial statements for FY23, and FY24. He noted HM's high reliance on federal funding to support operations. He then discussed the "Going Concern" notation. Due to the termination of HM's General Operation Support grant from the NEH on April 2, HM was asked to demonstrate that the nonprofit would still be in existence in twelve months and provide a list of actions taken to address the termination of the grant. Jill provided a list of actions taken which is included in the report, and the finance committee approved a revised budget that centers around the privately funded Democracy Project program. These actions adequately addressed the "Going Concern" and avoided a recommendation from the auditor to dissolve the organization.

In FY25, it is unlikely that HM will reach the \$1M federal funding threshold that requires an annual single audit. As a result, Keegan advised that HM should consider whether there are any other funders who require an annual audit and, if not, consider a review instead which is nearly half the cost of a single audit.

Lynda and Jill thanked Keegan for all of his work on our audit and will be in touch once the audit is approved by the full board so that the federal filing is completed in a timely manner.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 am. JB

Humanities Montana

Governance Committee Minutes

May 7th, 2025, via Zoom

Committee: Beth Sullivan (Board Chair), Jen Corning, Mary Hernandez (Committee Chair), Clark Whitehorn

Excused: Jeremy Carl

Staff: Jill Baker, Executive Director

Mary Hernandez, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. A quorum was present.

Contingency Plan Overview and Organizational Updates:

Program Cancellations: Due to the termination of the NEH GOS grant, HM paused all federally funded programming effective April 3, 2025, including Montana Conversations and Speakers in the Schools, as well as new applications for subawards including Community Project Grants, Film/Video grants, Mini-grants and Public Humanities Fellowships until funding is restored.

Staff Layoffs: Unfortunately, further downsizing of the organization is unavoidable due to the termination of the NEH GOS grant. HM is no longer able to sustain the NEH funded positions of Fiscal Operations Director, Programs Director, Grants and Evaluation Director, and Development and Communications Associate. Layoffs will be effective June 2, 2025, to offer staff time to wrap up and archive their work. The positions of Executive Director and Program Manager, who is responsible for running the Democracy Project program, will remain. Jill proposed a Cost Reduction Plan, including staff layoffs, to board chair Beth Sullivan on April 21, 2025 which was approved. Staff were given notice on April 23, 2025.

Currently, the most feasible plan for moving forward without NEH funding is to continue with the privately funded Democracy Project program. The Engelhard Foundation is committed to continuing the program once the organization is financially stable. In addition to Ms. O'Connor's generous gift, on April 29, 2025, HM received notification that the Mellon Foundation approved a general operating grant to the Federation of State Humanities Councils to re-distribute \$200,000 to each humanities council with a matching grant opportunity of up to \$50,000. These gifts stabilize the organization financially and allow HM to avoid hiatus or dissolution. Unfortunately, it

is not enough to reverse staff layoffs and fully run programs again. HM remains \$500,000 short of its FY25 projected revenue.

HM By-laws Review

The committee briefly discussed the current by-laws and determined that no changes were necessary at this time.

Next Steps:

The Governance Committee will review the current board matrix to determine if any additional skills are needed as the organization considers a pivot to private fundraising. They will reach out to current board members over the next few months to determine any board openings and potential nominees.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:34 pm. JB

Humanities Montana
Informal Board Q&A
April 3, 2025

Re: Federal termination of Humanities Montana operating grant

Present: Esther Beth Sullivan (chair), Jeannette Fregulia (vice chair), Carol Bradley, David Cates, Jennifer Corning, Ray Ekness, Lynda Grande, Mary Hernandez, Adrian Randall, Karen Reiff, Clark Whitehorn, Jill Baker (executive director)

The meeting was convened online at 4:00pm.

Beth asked Jill to provide updates and information following the notice of funding termination from the NEH, and to answer questions from board members. The following is a summary.

Jill said she received the notice of funding termination on April 2 at 10:24pm, via email. With confirmation from other executive directors, all other humanities councils have received the same notice.

Jill has implemented the contingency plan, in light of NEH funding termination, moving to minimal operations only. The situation is dire.

Jill and the staff have been working tirelessly to communicate with speakers, schools, and grantees in order to cancel upcoming projects and presentations.

Jill and the staff have developed press releases and have been in contact with news organizations to inform the public of the funding termination and the consequences for our council. Jill is developing an op-ed and other outreach.

Communication has gone out to our email list to ask for support: asking supporters to contact our congressional delegation; and asking for donations.

Jill forecasts that with cash on hand, HM can continue basic operations for 2-3 months. Right now there is more work than the staff can handle; at some point, without a return to regular funding, furloughs would have to be implemented.

With such unprecedented action at the national level, Jill stressed that she is heartened to be receiving lots of calls and email from people in Montana supporting HM. She also stressed how committed the staff is to HM's mission and continued operation.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35pm.

Humanities Montana
Informal Board Q&A
May 1, 2025

Re: Staff Layoffs following NEH defunding

Present: Esther Beth Sullivan (chair), David Cates, Ray Ekness, Lynda Grande, Karen Reiff, Clark Whitehorn, Jill Baker (executive director)

The discussion was convened via Zoom at 4:00pm.

Beth provided an overview of actions and considerations to date following the termination of the NEH grant:

- Jill and her staff worked through several scenarios given remaining funding, with considerations for HM ongoing operations and care of staff; in all scenarios, staff layoffs were necessary. All staff, except Executive Director and Program Manager (Democracy Project), were given notice with separation date of June 2.
- The Finance Committee considered two options: 'hiatus' which included no new funding, and allowed for minimal operations/staffing and no programs to hold on in the event that NEH funding might be renewed; 'program development phase' which would be possible with Mellon Foundation funding to 'pivot' toward program development with current ED and program manager. The Finance Committee approved the 'program development phase' given Mellon Foundation funding.
- The Governance Committee met and determined no by-laws revisions were necessary at this time.

Jill provided an update regarding funding-raising:

- HM has received a significant donation from Susan O'Connor for 100k to support general operations.
- HM has received word that we will receive 200K from the Mellon Foundation through a gift to the Federation of State Humanities Councils; with the option for another 50K with matching dollars. Specifics are still being sorted out.
- Jill is in touch with other foundations to support HM programs, and feels confident we will receive more funding, particularly for the Democracy Project.

Discussion was general.

Adjourned at 4:45. EBS

Executive Directors Report, May 2025

As we prepare for our discussions and decision making in Helena next week, I'll reflect on what HM has both lost and accomplished since April 2, 2025; share my recommendations for downsizing programs in FY25; and propose a framework for planning and re-envisioning Humanities Montana's programming in preparation for our FY26 budget and September board meeting.

Since the termination of our NEH GOS grant on April 2, 2025, HM has:

- Paused all NEH funded programming and grantmaking activities, including cancellation of upcoming speakers bureau events (Montana Conversations and Speakers in the Schools) as well as any staff travel. Contracts and other immediate expenses were evaluated and cancelled as appropriate. The privately funded Democracy Project program continues to operate.
- On April 23rd, announced additional downsizing, including staff layoffs for four of six staff effective June 2, 2025. The Executive Director and Program Manager (responsible for Democracy Project) will remain on staff.
- Enacted emergency fundraising efforts, both with HM and on behalf of all state and jurisdictional humanities councils through the Federation of State Humanities Councils (FSHC), a nonprofit membership organization to which HM pays annual dues.
- Immediately issued press releases and an Op-Ed to [media outlets](#) throughout the state. News was also shared on HM's social media and through email communications. As a result, HM raised over \$120,000 through its emergency fundraising efforts in April 2025.
- Submitted an application to receive a \$200,000 general operating grant from the FSHC and Mellon Foundation. HM is also eligible for a matching grant of up to \$50,000.
- Met with Susan O'Connor, a trustee with the Engelhard Foundation, confirmed that they are committed to continuing support of the Democracy Project program, once HM has secured operating support.
- Filed a letter of appeal for the termination of the grant to the NEH, and secured pro-bono legal counsel through Upper Seven Law based in Helena. The FSHC also secured legal counsel on behalf of its membership. Advocacy efforts to Congress to reinstate funding for humanities councils also took place. A complaint on behalf of FSHC and Oregon Humanities Council was filed on May 15, 2025.
- On April 29th, HM Management submitted an application for funding to the NEH for FY26 General Operating Support.

Recommendations for downsizing programs at HM:

Please see following documents:

- FY25 Program Downsizing Proposal
- Executive Director and Program Manager Work plans
 - These revised plans outline the work that will take place through the end of FY25.

Organizational Goals for Remainder of FY25:

- Raise \$50k in unrestricted donations to meet the matching grant from the Mellon Foundation by December 31, 2026.
- Determine program and organizational needs, priorities, and opportunities to inform both the FY26 Budget and FY26 Development/Fundraising Plan.
- Based on identified priorities and opportunities:
 - Develop an updated Case of Support for Humanities Montana
 - Develop benchmarks to determine timing for organizational rebuilding and growth
- Identify and secure additional sources funding to support priority programs identified at May 31st board meeting through major donors and/or private foundations.

Proposed FY26 Planning Framework:

Planning Goals:

- Provide board and staff with decision-making tools as it navigates an uncertain period
- Align board and staff on immediate next steps and priorities
- Learn from HM's community of stakeholders about evolving needs across the state
- Identify opportunities for HM to fulfill its mission in Montana
- Prepare for a planning session at fall board meeting on September 26th-27th

June-Aug 2025 Proposed Working Groups:

- Finance Audit Committee
 - Identify Financial Scenarios for FY26 Budget
 - Best Case
 - Moderate Case
 - Worst Case
- Governance Committee
 - Identify Board Needs for 2026 Nominations
 - Update Board Matrix
 - 1:1 Conversations with board members to determine if any resignations
 - Slate of Officers and Committee Chairs
- Ad-hoc "Re-Envisioning" Committee (both board and stakeholders)
 - Review HM's focus groups report and determine next steps
 - Identify Potential Strategic Partnerships
- Ad-hoc Fundraising Committee (both board and stakeholders)
 - Focus on securing \$50k matching grant by December 31, 2025.

We have much work ahead of us moving forward. While I am deeply saddened by our loss of NEH funding and cuts to programs and staffing, I am also looking forward to considering the new possibilities for Humanities Montana.

Onward,

Jill Baker, Executive Director

Program Downsizing Recommendations

Continue **Pause** **Stop**

Program	Audiences served	Staff	Downsized Program Activities	Cost/Funding	Humanities Focus	Recommendation
Democracy Project	Teens, Librarians	Program Manager	Maintain established programming and activities Leverage DP Funding for HM outreach opportunities	Total Cost is \$120k per year -- Engelhard Foundation \$80-100k, Llewellyn Foundation \$20k (pending), and Individual donors (ie: Susan O'Connor unrestricted gift of \$100k)	Civic engagement	Continue with expected funding from Engelhard Foundation, continue to fundraise to diversify funding
Montana Center for the Book	Adults, Librarians, Montana Authors & Poets	Program Manager	- Great Reads from Great Places Book Award - National Book Festival at Library of Congress - Montana Poets Laureate - Montana Reads Montana Writes (MRMW) Speakers Bureau (<i>Conversations with Montana Authors</i>) 20 Big Sky Book Club Stipends (\$500 each)	Library of Congress grants pay for travel to NBF Heyneman Foundation (\$30k pending—Sept 2025) Allocate FSHC/Mellon Funding—or private funds (est. \$30k +) Private Donations (\$10K)	Literature, Literacy, Poetry	Continue with secured funding from FSHC/Mellon MRMW, MT Poets Laureate may be funded through FSHC/Mellon Big Sky Reads on pause until private funding is secured, likely Fall 2025

Humanities Montana
Program Downsizing Plan FY25, June 2-Oct 31, 2025

Program	Audiences served	Staff	Downsized Program Activities	Cost/Funding	Humanities Focus	Recommendation
Speaker's Bureaus: Speakers in the Schools Montana Conversations	Montana Students, Adults	Program Manager, Executive Director	Speakers in the Schools • Montana 250th Commission: Civics Speakers • Indian Education for All Montana Conversations • Montana 250th Commission: Civics Speakers Consider The Study as alternative programming. See Program Development Opportunities on next page.	Estimated Cost \$30k+, Consider Virtual to save travel costs if necessary	Civics, Indigenous Cultural Education, Lifelong Learning	Consider allocating FSHC/Mellon Funding, MT Arts Council (Coal Tax \$) Explore Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation funding, and other private foundation and/or individual gifts to sustain Speakers in the Schools programming
Grantmaking	Adults, Cultural Organizations	Executive Director	Mini Grants (\$2000 each) Public Humanities Fellowships (\$4000 each) Community Project Grants Film/Video Grants	\$24,000= 1 per month 4 @\$4,000 in Dec 2024= \$16,000 total <i>*If NEH funding is restored, HM may consider restarting Community Project Grants and/or Film/Video Grants</i>	Lifelong Learning	Secure private support to continue mini grants and/or fellowships <i>*FHSC/Mellon Funds cannot be used for grantmaking</i>

Program Development Opportunities

Recommend Explore Interest/Funding Options

Program	Audiences served	Staff	Program Activities	Cost/Funding	Humanities Focus	Recommendation
The Study	Adults	Executive Director, Program Manager	Home The Study	Offered at no cost to state humanities councils through Humanities North Dakota	Lifelong Learning	I highly recommend that HM become a partner, especially as Speakers Bureau programming has been paused.
Clemente Course in the Humanities	Veterans	Executive Director, Higher Education Partners, Humanities Scholars	Veterans Initiative	Clemente has secured funding from the Mellon Foundation to assist sites with programming the first 2-3 years. In conversation with Aaron Rosen, Executive Director, to determine annual costs to HM and long-term sustainability of program.	Education	This program could be implemented in partnership with Great Falls College MSU, or Helena College UM to better serve veterans who wish to continue their education. Will require additional grant funding or could be funded through NEH funds if restored.
Museums on Main Street	Rural	NEW-- Contract Employee	Homepage Museum on Main Street	Est. up \$60k per year, depending on shipping costs and transportation costs to move exhibits	Lifelong Learning	Rural Museums are interested in participating. Exploring funding through the Smithsonian and other private funders.

Administrative Tasks, 25% of focus or 10 hours per week

Action	Needs	Time Commitment	Budget	Outcome
Bookkeeping	QuickBooks	5-8 hours per week-- monthly journal entries, monthly payroll, accounts payable, tax/audit prep- annually Regular communication with Finance/Audit Committee Chair for monthly review of reconciliations and bank and credit card statements	Executive Director Salary QuickBooks subscriptions	HM complies with all industry laws and regulations Bills are paid in a timely manner Reports are submitted in a timely manner Checks are deposited in a timely manner Monthly Payroll completed by last day of the month Financial audit completed, as necessary
Board Committee Meetings, at least 3 times per year or as needed	Email Microsoft 365 Zoom	2 hours prep for each meeting; 1.5 hours of minutes each meeting	Executive Director Salary Zoom subscription Microsoft 365 subscription	HM Governance and Fiduciary responsibilities are met
Regular Board Meetings (3 times per year)	Email Zoom Microsoft 365	40 hours prep time 4 hours wrap up 2 hours write minutes	Executive Director Salary Travel Expenses	HM Governance and Fiduciary responsibilities are met
Email/Phone calls/Mail	Phone line/ Voicemail Mailbox	As needed, 1-2 hours per day.	Executive Director Salary Phone and Internet Access, PO Box Fee	Calls and emails are returned within 24-48 hours, Mon-Fri.

Humanities Montana
Executive Director Work plan FY25, June 2-Oct 31, 2025

Professional Development		Ongoing	Executive Director Salary Conference/Webinar Fees Travel Costs	Stay current on industry standards
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Program Support and Development, 25% of focus, or 10 hours per week

Action	Materials Needed	Time Commitment	Budget	Outcome
Weekly check-in meetings with Program Manager, additional supervisory support	Zoom, Phones	2-5 hours per week	Executive Director Salary Program Manager Salary Zoom subscription	Statewide, high quality Public Humanities programming. High performing staff.
Program Research		2-5 hours per week	Executive Director Salary Program Manager Salary	
Program Planning, Implementation, and Outreach		TBD	Executive Director Salary Program Manager Salary	

Fund Development, 25% of focus, or 10 hours per week

Action	Needs	Time Commitment	Budget	Outcome
Annual Appeal Letters, November and April		40 hours per letter	Executive Director Salary, Digital Spark Creative, Donor Database, Materials, Printing, Postage	Raise general operating funds
Online Giving	Annual online Giving Days, Monthly donors, Peer to Peer Fundraising	Mar-Apr, Oct- Nov 4 hours per week during each campaign	Executive Director Salary Online Giving Platform (e.g. Stripe)	Engage new donors, increase social media presence, fundraise

Humanities Montana
Executive Director Work plan FY25, June 2-Oct 31, 2025

House Parties/ Pint Nights		2-3 per year 8+ hours planning per event Travel time to events	Executive Director Salary Travel Expenses Donor Database Invitations Food/Beverages	Build email lists, community visibility, increase # new donors
Major Donor Engagement		5 hours per week, emails, phone calls, coffee or lunch meetings	Executive Director Salary Travel Expenses	Identify potential new board members, increase gift amounts
Grant writing	Annual Report Audit/990/Financials Program workplans Program budgets	Est. at 40 hours per grant proposal, as needed	Executive Director Salary Program Manager Salary	Raise Money to support programs

Marketing/Communications, 12.5% of focus or 5 hours per week

Action	Materials Needed	Time Commitment	Budget	Outcome
Annual Report	Website, Canva	20 hours annually	Executive Director Salary	Donor Engagement, Fundraising
Website Maintenance	Kinsta/Wordpress	Annual updates 1-2 hours	Executive Director Salary, Hourly contract with Digital Spark Creative, Annual Fees for website maintenance	Supporter and Donor Engagement, Program outreach
Social Media Presence	Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn	2-3 hours per week	Executive Director Salary, Hourly Contract with Digital Spark Creative, Canvas subscription	Supporter and Donor Engagement, Program outreach
Monthly Email newsletter	Collect Email addresses, write stories, collect photos	8 hours per month	Executive Director Salary, Mailchimp subscription, Canvas subscription	Supporter and Donor Engagement, Program Outreach

Humanities Montana

Executive Director Work plan FY25, June 2-Oct 31, 2025

Stakeholder Relationships, 12.5% of focus or 5 hours per week

Action	Materials Needed	Time Commitment	Budget	Outcome
Attend Weekly FSHC Meetings	Zoom	2 hours week	Executive Director Salary Zoom subscription	
Regular Communications with Montana Stakeholders (ie: MT State Library, MT Arts Council, MT Historical Society, MT Library Association, MT Assoc. of Museums, Governor's Office, MT Congressional Delegation, etc.)	Zoom	3 hours per week	Executive Director Salary Zoom subscription Travel Expenses	

Humanities Montana
Employee Work Plan - FY 2024-2025

Name: Jenny Bevill
Title: Programs Manager
Date: May 13, 2025

Goals. What are your goals for the upcoming fiscal year? How do they connect to Humanities Montana's mission of strategic goals?

The purpose of this work plan is to realign Programs at Humanities Montana with the Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan of the organization. This plan will focus on efforts to streamline and build upon programs such as Montana Conversations, Speakers in the Schools, The Democracy Project, Hometown Humanities, and the Montana Center for the Book; while researching new program development opportunities.

As we move forward with reduced staff and evolving funding landscape the goals below are updated in collaboration with Executive Director.

Goal #1: Manage The Democracy Project, as is, without disruption.

- Timeline: 2025-26
- Summer Priority Tasks:
 - Debrief with 2025 sites
 - Collate data from teen debriefs
 - With Executive Director, evaluate applications for 2025-26 sites
 - Hold informational zooms or calls as needed with applicants
 - Process paperwork, onboard new sites, update orientation materials in google drive forms and folders.
 - Facilitate orientation zooms
 - Facilitate migration of Democracy Project to Foundant
 - Support Executive Director in development efforts
 - Support Executive Director in communications efforts including website updates, newsletter, and social media
- Strategies:
 - Support Executive Director to leverage the Schwartz Prize win to fundraise
 - Utilize the film to tell the Democracy Project story to funders, potential site librarians

- Gather and utilize stories of participating teens and librarians through the website, newsletter, and social media. Be responsive to evolving priorities with these platforms.
- Continue to do statewide outreach virtually via webinar and informational zooms in collaboration with the Montana State Library
- Foster soft launch sites to be ready to join the Democracy Project full program within 2 years
- Share the Democracy Project at state and national conferences if virtual options are offered

Goal #2: Build out the Montana Center for the Book into a responsive program that meets the needs of Montana constituents

- Timeline: Ongoing through 2025
- Summer Priority Tasks:
 - Work with Executive Director to determine degree to which programs can continue: Poet Laureate, Big Sky Reads, Montana Reads/Montana Writes, other focused speaker bureaus. Facilitate and manage these programs as directed.
 - Plan and manage Great Reads author awards and local programming between Aug 4-Sept 30 for youth and adult authors
 - Attend Library of Congress Center for the Book zooms and facilitate participation in National Book Festival.
- Strategies:
 - Create a fair process for selecting the Great Reads authors alongside Humanities Montana staff and the Montana State Library
 - Work with Western IL Centers for the Book to create virtual panel discussions for the Great Reads authors
 - Partner with the Montana State Library to offer virtual events and webinars
 - Support Great Reads authors local programming
 - Produce webinars and other offerings to help librarians build teen audiences utilizing existing partnerships
 - Work with Executive Director to draft a work plan for the Montana Center for the Book. Contracts with the Library of Congress to be resigned with the Library of Congress in Spring of 2025. Align the Montana Center for the Book with the Humanities Montana mission. Refer to various Center for the Book logic models to develop a work plan for the Montana Center for the Book.

- Depending on funding:
 - Manage the Poet Laureate Program
 - Manage the Big Sky Reads book club stipends
 - Manage the Library of Congress Great Reads program and associated local programming events as well as the National Book Festival coordination
 - Participate in the National Book Festival by shipping books and materials and coordinating with the Library of Congress to staff our table
 - Work with Executive Director to explore the possibility of focused speaker bureaus:
 - Civics scholars to support both the Democracy Project and the 250th Anniversary Celebrations
 - Montana Reads/Montana Writes speaker bureau of Montana authors and poets and storytellers
 - Indigenous speakers
 - Together with Executive Director, administer the above programs on the Foundant platform
- Notes:
 1. Continue to meet with Western II and other Center for the Book affiliates to discuss how to rebuild the Montana Center for the Book.

Goal #3: Continue to build educational supports to meet needs and enrich interactions in the Democracy Project and the Montana Center for the Book programs

- Timeline: ongoing through 2025
- Summer Priority Tasks:
 - Continue to update and create resources for the Democracy project toolkits including collaborating with partners and recording content for asynchronous engagement.
 - Maintain connection with speakers and constituent sites through website, social media and shared opportunities.
- Strategies:
 - As capacity allows and according to priorities set by the Executive Director:
 - Continue to enhance and develop Democracy Project toolkits: Montana State Constitution, Civics Education, Media Literacy, Suicide Prevention, in response to stated needs of librarians utilizing existing partnerships such as the Montana State Library and Civics Under the Big Sky
 - Connect and support cohorts of librarians and teens: virtually, via existing networks like the state library

Federations and at the annual Montana Library Association Conference

- Provide professional development opportunities for librarians
 - Offer webinars, trainings, and cohort zooms
 - Create evergreen BSR book club discussion prompts to deepen conversations around themes
 - Engage the Big Sky Reads books clubs on the Facebook page
- Provide learning opportunities for teens
 - Provide quality, non-partisan civic education resources
- Work with Executive Director to explore possibilities for collaborating with North Dakota Humanities on The Study, a virtual speaker program.
- Utilize this and other ways to maintain connection with HM speakers

Goal #4: Manage both Montana Center for the Book and Democracy Project in the Foundant platform, if program and grant software continues to be available

- Timeline: Spring 2025 – ongoing
- Summer Priority Tasks:
 - Training in use of Foundant platform
 - Under guidance of Executive Director, migrate Democracy Project to Foundant
 - Manage all aspects of MCFB and DP programs through Foundant
- Strategies:
- If Foundant software is available:
 - Accelerate training to become proficient at navigating Foundant platform
 - Refine and streamline management of Big Sky Reads program
 - Consider whether to migrate Democracy Project to Foundant over the summer.