

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