

APPROVED

Washington County Historical Society Community Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 27, 2024 - 10 a.m.

Daughters of Utah Pioneers Museum Meeting Room

Board members present: George Cannon, Ian Crowe, Richard Kohler, Teresa Orton, Maureen Parks, and Loren Webb

Board members absent: Brad Bennett, Chad Bennion and Jesse Stocking.

Others present included: Linda Shogren, Sharon and Ron Snow and Nancy Carleton.

President Ian Crowe welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Loren Webb reported that Cheryle Grinter with the John Whitmer Historical Society in Independence, Mo., had planned to hold a conference in St. George in 2020. Because of Covid, the conference location was re-scheduled to 2024.

Grinter initially contacted Peggy Smith with St. George City to see if anyone within the city might offer downtown walking tours. Peggy referred the JWHS to WCHS Board member Teresa Orton. Teresa, in turn, referred the JWHS to WCHS Board member Loren Webb who coordinates St. George Downtown Historic District walking tours.

Grinter wanted to see if the St. George Opera House, the Brigham Young Winter Home and the LDS Tabernacle would be available for tours. It was learned that the St. George Opera House, owned by the City of St. George would not be available for tours.

Because the Brigham Young Winter Home and the LDS Tabernacle are owned by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,

arrangements for scheduling tours would need to go through the Church's Southwest Utah Historic Sites Mission. But Loren said Teresa had been told by Historic Sites Mission President Thomas Nead that the WCHS could have its own tour guides in the Brigham Young Winter Home as long as there is also an LDS missionary to accompany what would be two groups from the JWHS.

Loren learned he had to register with the St. George Historic Sites Mission website and he also learned that the last tour available on Friday, Sept. 13, 2024 when the JWHS was planning to be in town was at 5:30 p.m., so Loren requested a 5:15 p.m. tour and a 5:30 p.m. tour at the Brigham Young Winter Home, which request was granted by Sister Tikalsky of the Historic Sites Mission on Tuesday, March 26, 2024.

The WCHS also offered one other option to have the two-hour tours, covering the Ancestor Square Block and the Green Gate Village Block run from 6 to 8 p.m., with the proviso that tours of the Brigham Young Winter Home would be from the outside and on the north side of the fenced property.

Assisting Loren would be WCHS Board member Richard Kohler. Each tour leader would lead up to 15 persons for an overall total of 30 persons. Both tours would begin and end at the southern end of George's Corner Restaurant, 2 North Main in Ancestor Square shopping center.

Loren requested the board approve the WCHS-led tours for the JWHS. With the board's approval, Grinter said the JWHS would be able to take advantage of the WCHS liability insurance and the JWHS would charge a fee for the 30 persons signing up for the two tours. Those fees would be donated to the WCHS.

The length of each block tour is about a half mile for an overall total walking distance of 1 mile or 1.5 miles by the time participants walk back to their parked vehicles in the Ancestor Square parking lot.

Because of the small number of WCHS members available, Loren said the WCHS does not have the capability of providing handicapped access on either walking tour. However, if someone wants to bring their own wheelchairs for disabled persons, they can do so.

Loren said he also provided the JWHS with a short list of available food outlets located in the downtown area if JWHS members want to go eat following the tours. Linda Shogren said the new 16-museum brochure lists handicapped locations throughout St. George and other cities within Washington County.

Motion was made by Richard Kohler and seconded by Ian Crowe to approve the Washington County Historical Society's sponsorship of the two downtown walking tours on Sept. 13 on behalf of the John Whitmer Historical Society. Motion was unanimously approved.

2. Motion was made by Teresa Orton and seconded by Ian Crowe to approve the Feb. 28, 2024 draft minutes, (following changes made by Loren based on a request by Board member George Cannon). Approval of the minutes was unanimously approved.

3. WCHS member Maureen Parks said the WCHS newsletter was finished, although she had not received the president's message yet and some of the board members had still not turned in their short biography for the newsletter. Maureen said everything was due by 3 p.m. today.

4. Linda Shogren reported Washington County Fair officials were slow to get back to Linda regarding her request that the WCHS have booth space for the April 11-20 County Fair. Linda said she was told the WCHS would be outside by tractors. She was concerned that the location would be too loud to have an effective booth.

Ian asked if the WCHS should cancel for this year.

If the booth is inside, Richard said he believed he could set up a small television set and a computer that can display images on a rotating basis. Dick said he could also hand out 8.5 X 11 inch sign-up sheets for volunteers to help on various WCHS activities.

Teresa said she felt if the booth was outside, it may not be something we would want to participate in this year. Teresa also said forms to sign up for the Daughters of Utah Pioneers would also be needed for the booth.

Sharon Snow suggested getting youths to dress up in pioneer style clothing and providing coloring books at the WCHS booth could appeal to younger people. Dick said he could also ask the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints if he could post an advertisement about the WCHS booth at the County Fair in a multi-stake singles bulletin for people over 46 years old.

Motion was made by Loren Webb, and seconded by Ian Crowe to have WCHS Board member Richard Kohler ask if the WCHS can advertise about the WCHS County Fair booth in an LDS multi-stake singles bulletin.

Motion was unanimously approved.

5. Ian Crowe and Richard Kohler met with St. George City official Marc Mortenson, who said the city has a long term walkable plan that includes reference to the Washington County Historical Society. Ian said city officials were interested in the Society's oral history program and wondered about setting up a booth downtown where people could participate in an impromptu oral history interview.

Teresa said Payton Lee, who was in charge of St. George Live notified Teresa that St. George Live has been cancelled for the summer of 2024.

Teresa said she learned Nancy Carleton has been active in St. George Live and she organized all of the volunteers. Nancy told Teresa the city approached Nancy to run the St. George Live program this year on a volunteer basis and Nancy turned it down. Teresa said a St. George Live

program coordinator needs to be paid because they have to line up all of the buses and the insurance. She said the city should be behind the St. George Live program.

Loren said the loss of St. George Live and relegating St. George's Heritage Week each January to a one-day root beer float in the Social Hall, is disappointing. On the positive side, Richard Kohler said Ralph Atkin has formed a Dixie Downs committee for September. He said former St. George City Council member Greg McArthur is on the committee and several historic events are planned for September.

Motion was made by Loren Webb and seconded by Ian Crowe to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 a.m. due to a WCHS Oral History Panel event coming up at 11 a.m. in the same building.

The next WCHS board meeting was not discussed or set during the 3-27-24 meeting.