



The Douglas Henry State Museum Commission (DHSMC) met at 10:00 a.m. CT on October 14, 2024, in the Bill Haslam Center conference Room with Chairman Bo Watson presiding.

### **Members Present**

Ambassador Victor Ashe  
Danielle Barnes  
Cathy Cate  
Chairlady Patsy Hazlewood  
Michael Keeney (phone)  
The Honorable Steve McDaniel  
Scott Price  
Phillip Renfroe  
Lottie Ryans  
Barbara Brown Street  
Laura Travis (phone)  
Chairman Bo Watson  
Derita Coleman Williams

### **Ex Officio**

Anna Durham Windrow, Tennessee Historical Society Chair  
Ashley Howell, TSM Executive Director

### **No Members Absent**

### **Participating Guest**

Assistant Attorney General Rachel Appelt

### **Participating TSM Staff**

Sabrina Hooper, Deputy Director  
Sharon Dennis, DHSMC Liaison

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Bo Watson called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m., proceeded with roll call, detected a quorum present, and presided over the following business.

### **Welcome and Introduction**

Chairman Watson welcomed members, new member Derita Coleman Williams, staff, and guests.

### **Mission Statements**

In an ongoing effort to level set, Chairman Watson began by reading the Mission Statements of the Tennessee State Museum and the Douglas Henry State Museum Commission.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Watson identified the July 12, 2024, Quarterly meeting minutes draft emailed in advance of this meeting, also included in the meeting booklets, and entertained a motion to adopt the meeting minutes as written. Ambassador Ashe moved to adopt; Chairlady Hazlewood seconded. Upon calling for further discussion and seeing none, the Chair called for those in favor of adoption of the July 12, 2024, Quarterly meeting minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously with no abstention.

## **Budget Report**

Chairman Watson recognized Deputy Director Sabrina Hooper.

June 30, 2024

- State Appropriations: 104% of total Operational dollars were expended; however, with Personnel funds underused, the total State appropriation is approximately 93%.

September 30, 2024

- State Appropriations: 17% of total State appropriated dollars were expended.
- Non-Governmental Earned Revenue: approximately \$930.
- Current Services Revenue: approximately \$50,226 from store sales, event rental, and other small items like imaging. \$20,750 less unearned revenue from Events that have not yet occurred.
- Inter-Departmental Revenue: approximately \$5,000. \$410,000 is a pass-through expense designated for the TN Holocaust Commission.

In response to a question from the Chair in the July Quarterly meeting regarding \$2500 for base, Budgeted for Non-Governmental Revenue and Current Services Revenue, Deputy Hooper did a year-over-year review to obtain a four-year average:

Non-Governmental Revenue (Donations) averaged \$23,600

Current Services Revenue (Gift Shop, Event Rentals) averaged \$295,900

We will continue to monitor to observe trends.

HR: There were three resignations last Quarter.

## **Executive Director's Report**

### Capital Grants

- The Tennessee General Assembly has appropriated an additional \$5 million to the State Museum, "for the sole purpose of providing grants to museums with a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or affiliated with a governmental entity, for capital maintenance and improvements."
- 157 applications from 67 counties were received with over 10 million in requests.
- 83 museums in 46 counties received grants totaling \$4,060,929. A list of grantees was shared with Commissioners.
- The full 5 million has not been awarded for the purpose of carving out funds to allow museums in East Tennessee to assess damages and greatest needs from Hurricane Helene. TSM has connected with FEMA and is part of the State economic and cultural recovery group.
- Part of the proceeds from this year's *A Tennessee Waltz* is dedicated to support TSM efforts to help museums statewide.

- Almost 50% of the funding went to museums with operating budgets of less than \$100,000, with about 75% to museums with operating budgets under 1 million dollars.
- To assist in the application process, TSM conducted a webinar for museums across the State. In addition, TSM offers office hours, virtual office hours, and [TSMgrants@tn.gov](mailto:TSMgrants@tn.gov) whereby museums may reach out with questions as well as museum site visits. The application process has been streamlined this year requiring four supplemental documents consisting of a project budget, a w-9, a 501(c)(3) form, and three years of completed financials.

A letter from Unicoi County Historical Society, a grant recipient of a new roof last year was read. In closing, “I can say with 100% certainty that the funds we received in this grant saved our museum. Of course, the building could have been repaired and replaced, but the precious history inside would have been lost forever. So, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for this grant funding last year, and if you ever need someone to speak to the efforts of this funding, give me a call and I’ll sing the praise from the rooftop.”

Chairman Watson cited this as a perfect example of where a process that was well supported by the Legislative members can now see direct evidence of how effective it’s been and how it’s been utilized. The Chair further stated the objective is to distribute these grants across the State and incorporate every county as the museum’s mission is to serve all 95 counties.

#### Visitation

- To date, 32,000 visitors this fiscal year, from July 1 through September 30, 2024.

#### Education

- This fiscal year the Museum served approximately 8,000 with tours at the Tennessee State Capitol and engaged with approximately 8,000 students, teachers, and other participants statewide with 57 counties served through K-12 initiatives which includes the Traveling Trunks program.
- In the last couple of months, TN Writers Stories; *Author Talks at the State Museum* is driving attendance. The upcoming Southern Festival of Books will include Museum Author Talks for the second year.
- The Education team has formed a Teacher’s Advisory Council charged with engaging teachers throughout the State.

#### Renovation of Legislative Plaza

- Legislative Plaza renovation is underway and will include relocation of the TSM Military Branch Museum (MBM) from the War Memorial Building, and a new Capitol Visitor Center Exhibit Space and Gift Shop. Museum management is working with the Department of General Services (STREAM), EOA Architecture and Gallagher & Associates
- Design development of the new exhibition space is complete
- The deadline for completion is prior to the January 2027 inauguration.

#### Collection Storage Facility Update

- Construction is on-time and scheduled for completion this December
- Crozier Fine Arts is on site mapping out placement of artifacts.
- Mechanical conditioning will begin in January
- The move from Polk will begin in February.

### **Audit Committee (AFC) Report**

Chairman Watson announced the AFC met earlier this day, reviewed the AFC responsibilities, the previous Audit findings, the Audit Report that will be provided to the Government Operations Committee as part of the 2025 Sunset Review later this day, and adopted the Audit Report to bring before the full Commission.

Chair Watson read the following from a letter from the Chairman of the Tennessee State Museum Foundation, formerly Chairman of this Commission which outlines the Support Group's compliance with all MOU w/Guidelines requisites, particularly those contemplated in: Section IV. REQUIREMENTS - - 2.

*Ensure that no more than 15% of the total non-designated revenue or funds raised by the Support Group are utilized for Support Group expenses, costs, wages, administration, and other solicitation/fundraising expenditures. The Support Group shall provide support to the Museum, defined as direct financial contributions or in-kind support as approved by the Director equal to 100% of designated funds and a minimum of 85% of the non-designated revenue or funds raised by the Support Group. The Support Group's compliance with this requirement shall be determined on an annual basis.*

The Chair noted this is an important development between the organizations that demonstrates the Foundation's support for the mission of the State Museum, verified by Director Howell.

Following discussion, Chairman Watson moved to adopt the Audit Report proposed by the Audit Committee; seconded by Ambassador Ashe. Upon calling for further discussion and seeing none, the Chair called for those in favor of adoption of the Audit Report. The motion carried unanimously with no abstention.

### **Collections/Acquisitions Committee (CAC) Report**

#### **Proposed Deaccessions**

CAC Chairman Victor Ashe reported he personally approved the proposed deaccessions consisting of 120 Native American objects to be transferred to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; registration numbers: 83.114.1-65, 87.61, 81.206.87 and 81.206.186, and called for discussion.

Following discussion, Chairman Ashe called for a motion for the full commission to adopt the proposed deaccessions transfer which was emailed to members in advance of this meeting and is also included in this day's meeting booklets; seconded by Chairlady Hazlewood. Chair Watson called for those in favor of adoption of the proposed deaccessions consisting of 120 Native American objects to be transferred to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; registration numbers: 83.114.1-65, 87.61, 81.206.87 and 81.206.186. The motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

#### **Artifact /Acquisitions Report**

Director Howell began by noting in preparation for the move, staff is continuing to reduce the number of acquisitions.

#### **Red Grooms Fox Trot Carousel Discussion**

Ambassador Ashe briefed members on the Carousel and recognized Director Howell to deliver an update. Director Howell began with a brief history of how the TSM accepted this artifact in 2004 while under the governance of the Tennessee Arts Commission prior to the establishment of the DHSMC in 2009. In 2019, the DHSMC established a Carousel Committee chaired by Ms. Travis. Ms. Travis gave a history of the Committee's extensive research and assessments for

repairing, conserving, evaluation of operational restrictions and new housing design renderings. The Committee ensured the Carousel was repacked, palletized and strapped, properly stored, and catalogued piece-by-piece.

On October 12, 2020, Ms. Travis, announced the tabling of the Carousel project until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the budget reductions, and the immediate need to focus on the tornado damage to the collection storage facility and the safety of the artifacts. She unequivocally stood by the steps for initial evaluations taken and thanked the Commission for its support throughout the process. Chair Watson noted none of the money spent came from state funds, and the evaluations presented a clear understanding of the enormous costs involved in moving forward to restoring and resurrecting this artifact.

Director Howell advised she had received separate inquiries from interested parties since the July Quarterly meeting noting the Carousel is an artifact in the collection which needs DHSMC discussion before entertaining conversations with outside interested parties.

Chairman Watson addressed Director Howell's request for the DHSMC to consider her pursuing inquiries from private, non-governmental, entities that have expressed interest in acquiring the Carousel.

Discussion included:

- Sale; particularly if the interested entity is a for-profit company that will profit
- Deaccessioning
- Loan options
- What are the terms of the gift initially?
- Is there anything in writing that would prohibit either of the three options?
- What is the value of the artifact?
- What is the cost to make it operational?
- What is the cost to restore and showcase and not be operational?
- Does the Carousel have to be covered in a climate-controlled environment?
- Insurance and operational costs?
- Might there be a State property interested in the Carousel?
- To field added interest and pursue an alternative solution, should a notice to the public be posted saying TSM is seeking proposals for the Red Grooms Fox Trot Carousel?
- Is the Carousel a whimsical work of art rather than an object of significant historical importance?
- Should the Carousel Committee be revived?

Calling for further discussion and seeing none, the Chair called for a motion to give Director Howell permission to pursue an alternative solution for the Carousel that is outside previous DHSMC considerations and bring back to the Commission a proposal of the known options.

Mr. Price moved that the DHSMC authorize the Executive Director to proceed with exploring possible uses for the Carousel; seconded by Ambassador Ashe. Chair Watson called for those in favor of adoption of the motion. The motion carried unanimously with no abstention.

### **Media Coverage**

Director Howell cited a recent article, not in the Media Booklets, about the TSM; "Looking Again At Tennessee Furniture" featured in The Magazine of the Decorative Arts Trust, Summer 2024.

## Other Business

### Resolution to Honor Chairlady Patsy Hazlewood

Chairman Watson read the entire resolution from the DHSMC honoring Chairlady Patsy Hazlewood for her service to the Commission, the Legislature, and the State of Tennessee. Ambassador Ashe moved to formally adopt this resolution; seconded by Chairman Watson. The Chair called for those in favor to adopt the motion. The motion carried unanimously with no abstention.

## No Public Comment

## Announcements

Chairman Watson noted the regularly scheduled Quarterly meeting dates:

January 13, 2025, April 14, 2025, July 14, 2025, October 13, 2025

*The DHSMC meets the second Monday of the first Month of each Quarter. Dates are subject to change.*

2025 -- Collection move to new Storage Facility in February

2026 -- United States Semiquincentennial <https://america250.org/>

Tennessee Commission on the United States Semiquincentennial

<https://www.tn.gov/museum/information/tennessee-america-250.html>

2027 -- Move to new Military Museum and Capitol Visitor Center

## Adjournment

Seeing no other business for the good of the order, Chairman Watson adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

## Main Motions Summary

**Motion #1:** Ambassador Ashe moved to adopt the July 12, 2024 Quarterly meeting minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously with no abstention.

**Motion #2:** Chairman Watson moved to adopt the Audit Report. The motion carried unanimously with no abstention.

**Motion #3:** Ambassador Ashe moved to adopt the proposed deaccessions listed. The motion carried unanimously with no abstention.

**Motion #4:** Mr. Price moved that the DHSMC authorize the Executive Director to proceed with exploring possible uses for the Carousel. The motion carried unanimously with no abstention.

**Motion #5:** Ambassador Ashe moved to formally adopt the resolution honoring Chairlady Patsy Hazlewood. The motion carried unanimously with no abstention.

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Senator Bo Watson

Chairman Douglas Henry State Museum Commission