



IDAHO STATE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

Preserving the Past, Enriching the Future
June Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes APPRV
June 4, 2026 – Boise Idaho

ISHS: Janet Gallimore, Dax Chizum, Anthony Parry, Tricia Hoffman, Annette Polidori, Seth Wheeler, David Matte, Sarah Phillips, HannaLore Hein, Mark Breske, George Myers
Board of Trustees: Dr. Cheryl O'Brien, Mary Ann Arnold, Justin L. Vipperman, Rick Phillips, Don Pischner, Melinda Smyser
Invited Guests: Alison Davis, Attorney General's Office, Amanda Harper, DFM, Brooke Dupree, LSO, Joan Varsek, Governor's Office
***Noted times are estimated**

CALL TO ORDER

INTROUDCTIONS

ISHS Board of Trustees and staff introductions.

Melinda Smyser, District 3

Melinda Smyser expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve on the Board and said she was honored to be appointed.

A resident of Parma, she was raised on a farm and ranch near Middleton and noted that her agricultural roots continue to shape her perspective. Her professional career began in education and counseling, where she served students and communities for many years.

She later served multiple terms in the Idaho Senate before holding leadership positions as Director of the Idaho Department of Labor and Director of the Idaho Office of Drug Policy. She also co-owned Capital Cellars, a fine dining restaurant in downtown Boise that became known for fostering nonpartisan political dialogue and community engagement. The restaurant was managed by her daughter and operated successfully for many years before closing a few years ago.

As the parent of four children, she remains actively engaged in numerous projects and community initiatives.

She has also worked with Senator Risch and has been involved in several of his programs and efforts. She expressed her admiration for the work of the Idaho State Historical Society, noting that she has known Janet Gallimore for some time and considers the organization's accomplishments to be phenomenal. She concluded by thanking the Board and sharing her enthusiasm to get to know her fellow trustees and contributing to the Society's mission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Action Item: Approve the December 11, 2025, April 9, 2026 and April 16, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

MOTION 3.0: Rick Phillips, Board of Trustees moved, and Justin Vipperman, seconded. To approve the ISHS Board of Trustees meeting minutes of:

- **Dec. 11, 2025**
- **April 9, 2026**
- **April 16, 2026**

Motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Review Third Quarter FY26 Expenditures
Review Third Quarter FY26 Earned Income

Dax Chizum presented the third-quarter financial report for the fiscal year ending March 31, noting that expenditures and remaining balances are generally on track with expectations. Overall, approximately 25% of the fiscal year remained, with personnel and operating expenditures tracking appropriately across most divisions.

The Administration and Maintenance Fund reported approximately 18% remaining in personnel costs and 10% remaining in operating expenses. Capital outlay expenditures exceeded budgeted amounts due to infrastructure and facility-related projects, including work associated with the Idaho Botanical Garden, with funds transferred from operating budgets as permitted.

Community Enhancement Grants (\$25,000 annually) and the Sister Alfreda Award (\$5,000) had not yet been distributed and will be awarded in the fourth quarter. Dedicated revenue generated through building leases and communications tower agreements continues to support maintenance operations, historic site preservation, and facility staff.

Museum operations, the Idaho State Museum, the Old Idaho Penitentiary, and Historic Sites continue to be supported through admissions, gift shop sales, rentals, events, and other dedicated revenue sources. Most operating funds remained within expected ranges, with approximately 30% of operating budgets remaining in several program areas.

Federal grant funds continue to serve primarily as holding accounts for grant opportunities and ongoing grant administration. Historic Preservation grant activities remained active, including work associated with the National Park Service matching grant program and Certified Local Government grants. Staff noted that several programs carried higher-than-normal balances due to vacancies, delayed expenditures, grant timing, and planned year-end spending.

Overall, staff reported that expenditure is progressing as expected and that routine year-end fund adjustments will ensure budgets remain balanced and all fiscal obligations are met.

Dax Chizum reported: ISHS is working with the Office of Species Energy on combining coordination with OSMEC (Office of Species, Minerals, and Energy Coordination - newly created Idaho state agency formed by the 2026 legislative session, effective July 1, 2026. It consolidates three existing offices into a single, coordinated entity to streamline permitting, policy, and interagency coordination for energy, mineral, and species-related projects.

- Working on a permanent records and data management system. Historically, records were paper-based and transferred to the archives, but future records will be captured digitally through software. The Historical Society is evaluating a model where it maintains the contract and software while the partnering agency provides technical expertise and staffing support.
- Use of the Assay Office - quitclaim deed notes no monetizing the building so cannot rent but noted ongoing coordination on use for SHPO staff with a \$94,000 in-kind and general and dedicated fund expenditure for upkeep of building and grounds to assist in support of federal grant matching requirements.

Revenue updates showed third-quarter performance generally ahead of last year in several areas. Museum admissions and at the Old Idaho Penitentiary are tracking higher than the previous year. Archives fees remain variable depending on research and reproduction requests.

Gift shop merchandise sales and facility rentals are also up compared to last year. Rental income includes communications tower leases, building leases, and partner agreements, with some consolidation of leases by a transportation-related company using multiple sites across the state.

Some facility revenues are declining or ending due to tenant changes, including the loss of a Bureau of Reclamation-related lease and vacated properties such as the Guards House, both of which are currently being marketed.

License plate revenue continues to generate approximately \$20,000 annually for dedicated grant programs, with about 1,800 plates currently in circulation. Staff noted the program is subject to legislative thresholds but remains stable for now, with funds directed specifically to authorized grant initiatives.

Question came up on the Assay Office and its future. Dax Chizum and Janet Gallimore explained that the Assay Office's designation as a National Historic Landmark limits the Idaho State Historical Society's ability to monetize or lease the site. The building currently fulfills its public purpose through tours, educational programming, public access, and preservation activities. Maintaining a public-facing presence helps satisfy the conditions associated with the property's transfer and historic designation. If current staff are relocated in the future, the Society will need to identify alternative ways to provide public access and educational use of the site, as leasing the property is not permitted under the agreement.

ACTION ITEMS

Action Item: Approve ISHS FY2027 Fee Policy and Fee Changes.

Dax Chizum and Janet Gallimore presented the FY2028 Fee Policy and Fee Changes.

- ISHS is authorized by Idaho Code to charge fees for admissions, educational programs, records services, rentals, retail sales, and other specialized services.
- Fee categories include basic services, special services, administrative services, enterprise and retail services, communications tower leases, and State Records Center services.
- Enterprise activities, including facility rentals and retail operations, are intended to recover costs and generate revenue at market rates.
- Staff reported that approximately 37 state agencies utilize the State Records Center for records storage and retrieval services.
- Most proposed fee changes involve minor language updates and routine adjustments to educational program fees to better align with costs.
- Noted: the importance of leasing vacant properties and increasing revenue-generating activities to offset ongoing budget reductions while avoiding impacts to staffing.
- Rental fee adjustment was proposed for museum classroom spaces, increasing the flat rental rate from \$450 to \$500 to reflect additional wear and tear associated with after-hours event use.

MOTION 6.0: Justin Vipperman, Board of Trustees moved, and Rick Phillips, seconded. To approve the ISHS FY 2027 Fee Policy and Fee Changes. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and clarification on the reciprocal membership program pursued. It was noted:

- Program remains active across participating institutions, providing members with free admission benefits at approximately 16 partner sites, including ISHS museums and other state and regional institutions.
- While direct attendance impact appears limited, the program supports cross-promotion and partnership building between organizations.
- Participating sites exchange membership materials and rack cards to encourage awareness and shared visitation.
- Staff noted the program is valued more for collaboration and outreach than measurable attendance increases, with efforts underway to strengthen partnerships further.

Action Item: Approve ISHS FY2028 Budget principles that will provide direction to planning and budget resource allocation.

Staff is beginning development of the FY28 budget for submission to the Governor's Office and presentation to the Board in August. The budget process also informs the agency's annual work plan and supports long-term strategic planning. Staff is requesting Board approval of guiding budget principles to direct planning through the summer.

- Core priorities include essential mission-based services such as education, outreach, and daily operations aligned with state directives.

- Major priorities include completion of the stewardship facility, Old Penitentiary exhibits, American Legacy projects, and facility moves and transitions.
- Deferred maintenance and infrastructure projects will continue in partnership with the Division of Public Works, with emphasis on safety and public access.
- Employee compensation is not broadly changing, though targeted equity adjustments may be considered if financially feasible.
- Revenue strategies will focus on incremental increases to admissions, program fees, and existing services rather than major expansion.
- Contract obligations, escalations, and membership-related revenue will continue to be monitored and evaluated.
- Day-to-day operations will be optimized for efficiency while maintaining service levels and supporting key priorities within available resources.

MOTION 7.0: Rick Phillips, Board of Trustees moved, and Justin Vipperman, seconded. To approve the ISHS FY 2028 Budget principles. Motion passed unanimously.

Action Item: Approve the June 2026 amended ISHS Board of Trustees Governance Policy Management Guide

Janet Gallimore presented revisions to the Policy Management Guide for Board review.

- Updates include removing outdated language and aligning procedures with current practice.
- A key change clarifies Board officer elections to align with Idaho statute, which requires election of officers every two years.
- The revision would allow flexibility to re-elect the chair and vice chair, rather than requiring automatic rotation. This adjustment is intended to ensure continuity.
- The decision is at the discretion of the Board.

MOTION 8.0: Mary Ann Arnold, Board of Trustees moved, and Justin Vipperman, seconded. To approve the June 2026 amended ISHS Board of Trustees Governance Policy Management Guide. Motion passed unanimously.

Action Item: Approve Nelson-Smith Farm and Ernest George Bates Family Farm for Century Status

Patricia Hoffman presented the two applications for Century Farm status.

- Applications were reviewed by her and Idaho State Archives staff.
- Applications fulfill the requirement for Century Status.

MOTION 9.0: Mary Ann Arnold, Board of Trustees moved, and Don Pischner, second. To approve

- The Nelson-Smith Farm
- George Bates Family Farm

for Century status. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

SPECIAL AGENCY REPORTS

Agency update

Janet Gallimore reported on the agency's ongoing coordination and planning related to OSMEC and consolidation of agencies, interagency programs, agreements, and noted work has been underway since April to define roles and responsibilities.

- Draft memorandum of understanding is being developed, including a crosswalk of statutory authorities between agencies and clarification of program, financial, and operational responsibilities.

- Discussions include stewardship of archaeological and historic collections, records management, and continued protection of permanent collections housed at ISHS facilities.
- Operational planning is underway for use of the Assay office and related facility access, database coordination, and potential staff co-location scenarios.
- Staff are reviewing archaeological program responsibilities, including compliance, permitting, and section 106 review processes under federal law.
- Key statutory responsibilities under review include preservation easements, grave protection and human remains protocols (NAGPRA), and archaeological excavation permitting authority.
- Workflow alignment is being coordinated with SHPO to ensure statutory compliance while clarifying which duties remain agency-led versus board-directed.
- The archaeological survey and repository system across Idaho universities remains a major statewide responsibility involving federal, state, and tribal coordination.
- Additional responsibilities discussed include geographic naming authority, historic highway markers, and related advisory processes governed by Idaho code.
- These changes are still in draft and review stages, with legal and administrative vetting ongoing.
- Overall, the goal is to clarify authority, improve coordination, and maintain continuity of preservation, compliance, and public service functions.

Idaho Historic Highway Marker Program

The Idaho Highway Historic Markers program, established in 1956 as a statewide “museum without walls.”

- Approximately 270 markers across Idaho and have recently undergone redesign and modernization while retaining its original design elements.
- Updates include expanded historical content beyond Oregon Trail and Lewis and Clark to include industry, innovation, women’s history, military history, and other underrepresented topics.
- Over 50 content specialists statewide have contributed to revised marker content, including scholars, tribal representatives, and subject-matter experts.
- QR codes have been added to markers to connect visitors with nearby community information and amenities.
- Installation is underway, with Districts 1 and 2 completed, Districts 3 and 4 in progress, and Districts 5 and 6 planned for next spring.
- Tribal consultation and participation continue, though engagement varies by region due to other ongoing tribal priorities and projects.
- There is strong public interest and positive feedback on expanded storytelling and inclusivity in marker content.
- Future opportunities include potential public celebrations or rollouts as additional districts are completed.

National Register of Historic Places nominations are currently moving forward across the state.

- Properties include Carousel Tree Farm (Kootenai County), State Bank (Canyon County), Lazar High School Gym and Auditorium, Evergreen Grange Hall (Lemhi County), Shoshone County Courthouse, Caldwell Municipal Rose Garden, Bovill Historic Commercial District, and the University of Idaho campus.
- The University of Idaho nomination represents a large, campus-wide historic designation effort.

Kelly Curtis

- Update was provided on the 2020 property and endowment relationship with John Marsh and Kelly Curtis (recently passed away)
- Discussions with John Marsh are ongoing, with no immediate action required at this time.
- The board will be updated as planning continues, potentially at the August meeting or sooner if needed.
- Public donations have been directed to ISHS in connection with the relationship, and future steps will be determined as more information becomes available.

A250

Hannalore hein reported:

- Idaho America 250-related programming and events, now approximately 30 days from major celebrations.
- Initiative is grounded in the 250th anniversary of the declaration of independence and related historical milestones beginning in 1776.
- Programming is guided by three pillars: celebrate, honor, and recognize American history and civic ideals.
- A multi-agency task force is coordinating statewide and national participation, including arts, media, transportation, libraries, parks, and federal partners.

National and State activities

- America 250 initiatives include national programming such as:
- Student essay and civics competitions with thousands of submissions nationwide
- Oral history projects collecting hundreds of interviews across states
- Traveling exhibits, innovation showcases, and small business competitions
- National "time capsule" project featuring items from all states and territories
- A "block party" concept is being used to connect local celebrations into a coordinated national event.
- Idaho has contributed items and programming to multiple national initiatives, including oral histories and commemorative submissions.

Local and Idaho participation

- Idaho agencies and partners are actively involved in planning events, exhibits, and public engagement activities.
- A statewide "Freedom Truck" mobile museum exhibit will be in Idaho starting this weekend.
- The state historical society is supporting local events tied to national programming, including public celebrations and educational outreach.
- A major Idaho event is planned at Shoshone falls on July 8, featuring a reading of the Declaration of Independence, performances, and community participation.

Oral history initiative

- Idaho's oral history program has expanded significantly, with nearly 800 recorded or processed interviews in the past year. Over 60 organizations have participated, with strong engagement from educators and community partners.
- A public-facing digital recording tool allows individuals to submit short personal history recordings statewide.

Fund Development and Old Idaho Penitentiary Reimagine Public Campaign

Wine, Eats, and Artifacts – September 17th

BREAK-LUNCH

LEADERSHIP REPORT OUT

Idaho State Archives and Record Center

- Stewardship Facility/Archives Expansion, Work in progress. Broke ground September 19th. Completion in December (Weather Delays)
- Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) Archival Support, ISA staff completed 1347 since February
- In May, Government Records staff worked with the Secretary of State Office to accession in 48 boxes of permanent election records.
- Collections Outreach: Collections Archivist Erin Stoddart researched and provided photographs of Governor Kempthorne for the state ceremony at the Idaho State Capitol

Idaho State Museum

Education:

On-Site K-12 Students Served:YTD: 6,596
On-Site Homeschool attendees Served:YTD: 1,099
Statewide Student Reach via Traveling Trunks:YTD: 3,467

Business Operations: Interviews underway for Venue and Rental Coordinator position

Exhibitions: Fourscore and Seven Years Before: Idaho's Connection to the Founding Fathers
United We Celebrate: Traditions the Bring America Together
Idaho Shakespeare Festival: 50 Year Anniversary (community partnership)
Silver Linings (GEM student-created exhibit) opening on June 6

Collections: RFP for the Collections Move is open! Closes on July 8.
Miss Nara (tier one permanent collections item) was conserved by master conservator Masaru Aoki

Old Idaho Penitentiary - Historic Site Updates

Franklin – Restoration for Hatch House & Doney House underway | Relic Hall Window Treatment Bid - \$10,200 | 1,790 Artifacts photographed Open Tue-Sat. 11 am – 2:30 pm | 3 part-time staff members hired.

Stricker –Bon & Clara House restoration project underway | New Tour Video implementation.
Pierce – Open daily with J. Howard Bradbury Memorial Loggin Museum.

Old Pen Reimagining:

Phase 1 Production Design/Fabrication, Media Development, and figure fabrication underway
Fundraising – Silent Phase – Public Phase in September

Site Access & Safety Projects - Shirt Factory and Admin Building Exhibition Infrastructure May 11 – November 10 (completion date)

Internal Events:

Twilight Tours | June 5 & June 26
13 Stories Filming Sessions | June – August
Paranormal Investigations | July 11, August 29
Captivating Conversation | July 17
Old Pen Scavenger Hunt | July 18
Red Cross Blood Drive | July 21
32 Cells Art Show | August 15

Rentals:

Private Photography | June 2 & June 10
Wedding | June 6, September 5
Meriwether Cider "10 in the Pen" event | June 13
Cabin Writing Workshop | June 17-18

Marketing & Communications

Early stages of ISHS messaging refresher: "History Lives Here"

Ongoing America250 in Idaho Work

Promotion of Move250 and designated events.
Partnership in Idaho's 4th of July Parade
Partnership with Idaho Lottery

2026 Internal Focus

Continue ISHS website refinement and ADA compliance

Refresh ISHS general marketing assets: Rack cards, stock photos, outreach materials
Continue streamlining Comm Dev processes

Development and Membership

Wine, Eats, & Artifacts

Thurs. Sept. 17, Tickets are available online, Looking for "History Experiences" for silent and live auction
WEA26.AFROGS.ORG

Membership Update

Avg. to date: FY26 826 / FY25 848 / FY24 806/ FY23 782

Working with Membership & Volunteer Coordinator on a new strategy to grow our membership program

Volunteer Update: Past 12 months, just under 400 volunteers contributed 6,839 hours valued at \$237,928.00

OIP Campaign Update: Rallying local supporters, Public campaign plan approved by FIH board on May 13

Three Grants we're waiting on Laura Moore Cunningham (August), NEH (July, IMLS (August)

Mellon Foundation – Letter of Intent submitted for \$250k

Human Resources

NEW: 2026 State of Idaho Supervisor Training

Coaching in the Moment, Planning – Setting SMART Goals, Understanding Idaho's Statewide Rating Scale
Performance Appraisals, Writing Effective Performance Appraisal Comments, Delivering the Appraisal
Conversation

DHR Crucial Conversations for Mastering Dialogue Refresher (June 23)

Crucial Conversations for Mastering Dialogue gives people the skills to step into disagreement – rather than
over or around it – and turn disagreement into dialogue for improved relationships and results.

DHR Crucial Conversations for Accountability Refresher (July 28)

Crucial Conversations for Accountability teaches a process for managing performance, strengthening trust
and reliability, and eliminating inconsistency. It provides skills for holding peers accountable – regardless of
position or authority

Maintenance & Operations

DPW 27620Horse/Dairy Barn, conversion to Maintenance shop.

DPW 27621 BOR Building, paint exterior, repair stone, replace roof and gutters.

DPW 27622 Old Penitentiary JC Earl and Shirt Factory, public restroom renovations.

DPW 27623 Idaho History Center, update second floor vaults to LED light fixtures.

DPW 27624 Idaho State Museum, Pioneer Village, porch stabilization and exterior paint on Logan and
Adelmann houses.

DPW 27625 Old Penitentiary, Shirt Factory Laundry, ADA access ramp.

DPW 27626 Old Penitentiary, Admin Building, ADA access to Auditorium and Gift Shop.

** Continuing efforts on fifteen additional DPW and Deferred Maintenance projects that are currently underway or
are already funded and pending.

Budget & Finance

Final FY 2027 budget appropriation \$11,037,300

Final FY 2027 budget makes FY 2026 plus additional 1% rescission permanent in FY 2027 and reverts one
position that had been vacant over 6 months

FY 2028 budget guidance due from DFM mid-June

Operations

Warden's House and BOR buildings currently being marketed for lease

Ongoing contracting updates for operational and professional services

Ongoing partnership with ITS for-lifecycle replacement of desktop and laptop computers

State Historian Managing Task Force Meetings; liaising with National and Federal Partners Oral History Initiative (ISHS) Move250 (IDPR, ISHS, Commerce, ITD) America’s Potluck, July 5, 2026 Sharing the Spirit of America Declaration Reading, July 8, 2026 My America: From Ground Zero to Common Ground • Summer Oral History Intern, Anna Helt, scheduled start June 1st
BOARD REPORTS Trustees share updates from their districts, including efforts to connect with local museums, oral history projects, and community events. Working on recruitment for District 2, five names have been submitted as potential candidates to consider. Board of Trustees signed the SHPO letter to each of the SHPO staff expressing their appreciation for their work and
ESTO PERPETUA WALK THROUGH
BREAK
2026 ESTO PERPETUA-Idaho State Museum
<i>MOTION 10.0: Mary Ann Arnold, Board of Trustees moved, and Justin Vipperman, seconded. To adjourn the June 4th, 2026 ISHS Board of Trustees meeting. Motion passed unanimously.</i>