

MINUTES

CAPITOL PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

September 25, 2019
Room 152-S—Statehouse

Members Present

Jennie Chinn, Chairperson
Senator Elaine Bowers
Representative J. R. Claeys (substituting for Representative Fred Patton)
Representative Valdenia Winn
Frank Burnam
Melinda Gaul
Tim Graham
Harrison Hems
Will Lawrence
Sharon Wenger

Members Absent

Peter Jasso
Jeremy Stohs

Staff Present

Whitney Howard, Kansas Legislative Research Department
John Hess, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Chris Waggoner, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Jason Thompson, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Debbie Bartuccio, Committee Assistant

Conferees

Senator Anthony Hensley
Mary Madden, Division Director of Museum and Education, State Historical Society
Bridgette Jobe, Director of Tourism, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism
Senator Randall Hardy

Others Attending

See [Attached List](#).

All Day Session

Welcome

Chairperson Chinn called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and welcomed all attendees. She requested Capitol Preservation Committee (Committee) members introduce themselves and recognized Chris Waggoner, Office of Revisor of Statutes, to review the composition and responsibilities of the Committee ([Attachment 1](#)) ([Attachment 2](#)).

Mr. Waggoner stated the Committee was established by the Legislature in 2010 and the creation of the Committee, the composition of its membership, and charge of the Committee can be found at KSA 2018 Supp. 75-2269. He noted the Committee is required to meet at least once annually, but no more than four times per year. He stated the Committee has a wide range of responsibilities relating to the preservation and beautification of the State Capitol, Capitol grounds, and the Capitol Visitor Center, including approving all proposals for renovation of all areas of the State Capitol, the Capitol Visitor Center, and the grounds surrounding the State Capitol; preserving the proper decor of such areas; assuring any art or artistic displays are historically accurate and have historic significance; determining the location and types of temporary displays and revolving displays in the State Capitol, including the Visitor Center; and overseeing the reconfiguration or redecoration of committee rooms within the Statehouse.

Mr. Waggoner stated the Division of Legislative Administrative Services (LAS) is responsible for the implementation of the Committee's recommendations; any permanent display or monument to be placed on the Capitol grounds must be approved by the Committee and authorized by passage of a bill by the Legislature; Committee members may engage in or encourage fundraising activities specifically related to the outlined statutory responsibilities, but no Committee member may hold a direct or indirect fiduciary interest in any contracts related to the Committee's responsibilities; and the Committee is required to submit a report to the Governor and Legislature detailing its activities and recommendations.

There were no questions from the Committee concerning the responsibilities outlined in the statute.

Discussion and Approval of Forms to Request Changes at the Capitol

Chairperson Chinn reviewed a form that was developed for use by the public to request approval to place artwork or an exhibit either on a long-term basis or permanently in the Capitol, including the Visitor Center and grounds. She explained there are currently a number of forms being used, which the public has found to be confusing. The proposed form combines the previous forms into one document that simplifies the process ([Attachment 3](#) and [Attachment 4](#)).

Will Lawrence asked if the form would be available online and Chairperson Chinn answered affirmatively, indicating the document is available on the State Historical Society website.

Frank Burnam suggested a question be included on the form concerning how the artwork would be displayed. He also inquired about the State's liability concerning damage to or loss of the artwork. Chairperson Chinn responded she communicates directly with the requestor about the artwork itself, but a question could be added to the form concerning the method of

display for the artwork or exhibit. The form indicates the State of Kansas will not carry specialized insurance to cover the value of the work, including any models, drawings, or other type of facsimile.

A suggestion was made to revise the form to reflect how long the artwork or exhibit would be on loan to the State of Kansas.

Concerning a question about how minor Capitol renovation requests are handled by the Committee, Chairperson Chinn responded a subcommittee composed of Mr. Burnam, Melinda Gaul, and herself was formed to make quick decisions on simple requests, such as moving the location of a picture in a room. She stated significant projects are brought before the full Committee.

Mr. Burnam moved, seconded by Senator Bowers, to approve the proposed simplified version of the Request for Approval to Place Artwork or Exhibits in the Capitol, with Chairperson Chinn to make any revisions to the form she believed necessary resulting from the Committee's discussion. The motion passed.

Proposed Symbols Exhibit in Visitor Center

Chairperson Chinn recognized Mary Madden, Division Director of Museum and Education, State Historical Society, who provided an overview of a proposed state symbols exhibit in the Visitor Center. Chairperson Chinn indicated it has been a bipartisan project, with Governors Colyer and Kelly having expressed support for the project ([Attachment 5](#)).

Ms. Madden reviewed a document listing the official state symbols, noting official state symbols have the seal of approval from the Legislature and the Governor. She said the proposed site for the exhibit would be the small room outside of the Office of Revisor of Statutes. She noted a chainsaw artist carved a chair from the famous cottonwood tree that stood on the Statehouse grounds for more than a century. This chair would be included in the new exhibit. There was discussion concerning the weight and brittleness of the *Tylosaurus* fossil. Ms. Madden responded there are plans to display the fossil in a case.

Chairperson Chinn indicated the State Historical Society is asking the Committee for permission to do the project, but no additional funds are being requested to complete the project.

Senator Bowers moved, seconded by Mr. Lawrence, to approve the State Historical Society's project to exhibit state symbols in the proposed location in the Capitol building. The motion passed.

Request to Place Statue of Amelia Earhart on Capitol Grounds

Chairperson Chinn referred Committee members to a request from John Forsythe, an artist, to commission a statue of Amelia Earhart to be placed permanently on the Capitol grounds. She indicated she talked with Mr. Forsythe and explained how long and difficult the process can be to raise funds and receive approval for such a project. Mr. Forsythe has continued to express an interest in completing the statue ([Attachment 6](#)).

Chairperson Chinn said the Committee should determine its interest in pursuing this project, and, if so, the project would need approval by the Legislature. She said it was her understanding consideration is being given in Washington, D.C., to erect a statue of Amelia Earhart. Tim Graham noted the statue of President Eisenhower on the Capitol grounds is a replica of the statue in Washington, D.C. He suggested this project should be postponed until such time as a statue of Amelia Earhart is placed in Washington, D.C., and a replica of that statue could be placed on the State Capitol grounds.

There was discussion concerning potential costs involved with the artwork and installation of the statue.

Ms. Gaul asked Chairperson Chinn where the statue would be placed. Chairperson Chinn responded she would need to review the master plan for the grounds to determine possible locations. Mr. Burnam agreed it would be important to follow the master plan and suggested the architect be contacted for input concerning statue location if the project is approved.

Mr. Graham moved, seconded by Representative Claeys, for the Committee to not move forward with the Amelia Earhart statue project at this time, but to consider the project in the future. The motion passed.

Capitol Restoration Plaque

Chairperson Chinn recognized Senator Hensley, who proposed replacing the current plaque commemorating the Capitol restoration project with a larger plaque listing additional names of key persons involved in the restoration project. He showed the Committee a picture of the current plaque ([Attachment 7](#)).

Senator Hensley noted the proposed plaque would include the names of Governors Graves, Sebelius, Parkinson, and Brownback; as well as the former Director of LAS, Jeff Russell; state architects William Groth and Barry Greis; architect Vance Kelley with TreanorHL; and Jim Rinner with J.E. Dunn Construction. He commented it is common to find similar plaques in schools. He said the proposed plaque is more inclusive and would give credit to the involved parties. He showed the proposed plaque, which was constructed by Star Signs in Lawrence, Kansas.

Representative Claeys noted former Senate President Dick Bond might be a name that is missing from the new plaque. Senator Hensley responded he chose not to include any legislative leaders and he had talked with Senator Bond about his proposal. He said the plaque cost \$995 and was privately funded by J.E. Dunn Construction and TreanorHL, and included the installation expense.

Mr. Burnam asked Senator Hensley where he envisioned the installation of the plaque. Senator Hensley responded he would leave the location up to the Committee, as well as what to do with the current plaque.

Representative Claeys asked if there are any other plaques on display in the Capitol concerning the restoration project. Mr. Burnam responded he was not aware of any plaques of this nature and his preference would be to replace the current plaque with the new plaque.

Senator Bowers asked if the Committee had approved the current plaque and whether there were other items from the dedication that might be displayed with the plaque. Chairperson Chinn responded with background history about the current plaque. She indicated in December 2013, Bob Murray, Special Assistant to Governor Brownback, came before the Committee and discussed the idea of a plaque for the dedication. There was no discussion about the wording for the plaque at that time and no action was taken. Chairperson Chinn indicated there are a few items in the Visitor Center from the dedication.

Mr. Graham asked if the Committee had jurisdiction over the current plaque, and if it is replaced with the proposed plaque, could the current plaque be given to the Brownback family.

Senator Bowers responded another option might be to keep the current plaque with items in the collection at the State Historical Society. Chairperson Chinn agreed this would be an option.

Mr. Lawrence moved, seconded by Senator Bowers, to approve the installation of the new plaque proposed by Senator Hensley with installation at the location of the current plaque. The current plaque would be offered to the Brownback family, or if the family prefers, it would become part of the collection of the State Historical Society. The motion passed.

Mr. Burnam asked who would be responsible for installing the plaque. Senator Hensley responded the plaque maker would install the plaque.

Law Enforcement Memorial and Fallen Firefighters Memorial Project Updates

Chairperson Chinn provided an update on the Law Enforcement Memorial. She indicated the money for the project has been raised and a contract has been signed. She requested Mr. Burnam provide a progress report. He said the project got off to a great start; however, the quarry from where the stone is coming experienced an equipment problem, which has delayed the project. The stone is now on its way and will arrive in the next week, at which point the project will resume and is expected to be completed Fall 2019.

Chairperson Chinn next discussed the Fallen Firefighters Memorial project. She indicated the proposed design for the memorial is out of scale in comparison to the Law Enforcement Memorial and the rest of the Capitol grounds. Mr. Burnam stated he has discussed the issue of scale with the State Fire Marshal and provided him with the potential costs for a base for the memorial. Mr. Burnam stated the State Fire Marshal had indicated the project committee would be reassembled and reconvene. He noted a local architect is donating time to assist the Topeka Fire Department in reviewing the scope, scale, and budget for the project.

Senator Bowers suggested the Committee review the master plan of the Capitol grounds at the next Committee meeting.

Overmyer Murals Restoration Project Update

Chairperson Chinn provided an update on the Overmyer murals restoration project. She stated she wrote to Senator Wagle, Chairperson of the Legislative Coordinating Council (LCC), to explain the potential \$10,000 cost of the restoration project. She stated she continues to receive comments from visitors about the paint flecking off of the murals.

Mr. Burnam stated an engineer looked at the Overmyer murals to determine whether there was an issue with areas behind the wall. He noted the murals are peeling off because they were painted onto the walls and the same issue has not occurred with Statehouse paintings that were not painted on the wall.

Harrison Hems indicated the project is on a list of items for consideration by the LCC, potentially at its meeting in October 2019. Chairperson Chinn stated she, Mr. Burnam, and Tom Day, Director of LAS, would be willing to appear before the LCC to discuss this project.

Capitol Visitor Center Signage Project Update

Chairperson Chinn said visitors often complain about the difficulty in finding the front entrance of the Capitol. She noted the address of the Capitol building is the south entrance, so it is often confusing to those individuals using navigation systems when the entrance to the building is on the north side.

Mr. Burnam said possible options could include directional information for those with smart phones and sidewalk pavers. He also noted there may be a few places in which additional vertical signage would be helpful, but nothing has been decided at this point.

Chairperson Chinn indicated directional information is included on the Capitol website, but it appears people have not been viewing the website prior to their arrival.

Ms. Gaul suggested signage could be placed on 10th Street directing visitors to the entrance and parking on the 8th Street side. Mr. Burnam noted a coordinated effort could be made with the City of Topeka to provide directional information signage in the area.

Mr. Hems suggested free-standing kiosks be placed in the four corners of the Capitol grounds. Mr. Burnam noted information exists at each of these corners, but people tend to walk right by the information as they look toward the Statehouse.

Representative Claeys suggested working with the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) to provide the destination guide signs on I-70 that would specify the Visitor Center is located on 8th Street.

Discussion on Brochure Racks in Capitol Visitor Center

Chairperson Chinn recognized Bridgette Jobe, Director of Tourism, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, to address the topic of brochures to be available in the Capitol Visitor Center. Chairperson Chinn explained it is important to provide information to visitors while maintaining the professional appearance of the Visitor Center and to not impede the flow of traffic in the building.

Ms. Jobe said the goal is to effectively promote all of Kansas. When people visit the Capitol, they are also interested in information on other areas of Kansas. After much consideration, she suggested the *Official Kansas Travel Guide*, which is a comprehensive piece covering the entire state, as well as a map of Kansas provided by KDOT, be the two documents provided at the Visitor Center.

Ms. Jobe noted there are other small brochures from various Kansas communities that could be available upon request at the Visitor Center. These brochures could be stored in drawers and pulled out as needed to address specific questions from visitors.

There was discussion concerning the possibility and the challenges with trying to standardize the size of informational brochures received from Kansas communities for distribution to visitors. It was noted an option could be to provide some racks that would contain community brochures.

Mr. Hems suggested consideration be given to placing the *Official Kansas State Travel Guide* in the Governor's office, as well as outside of the House and Senate Chambers. He also suggested a small sign be placed at the information desk of the Visitor Center that would state additional brochures are available upon request.

Senator Bowers inquired if the brochures are available online. Chairperson Chinn indicated some are available online and the state travel website www.travelks.com contains a vast amount of information for travelers to review. In addition, she recognized the importance of the face-to-face interactions with visitors and Visitor Center staff to address questions about Kansas.

Chairperson Chinn moved, seconded by Mr. Lawrence, to utilize the Official Kansas State Travel Guide and the KDOT map of Kansas as the two primary documents made available to visitors at the Capitol. In addition, these two documents will be available in the Governor's office and outside of the House and Senate Chambers. Signage will be placed at the Visitor Center information desk stating additional brochures are available upon request. Efforts will be made to alert travelers about the digital information available on the website, www.travelks.com. The motion passed.

Ad Astra Plaza Project Update

Chairperson Chinn recognized Senator Hardy, who provided an update on the *Ad Astra* Plaza project. Since his last appearance before the Committee in December 2017, he has built a network to assist with the fundraising for this project. He now has several sources who have committed to raising the estimated \$215,000 needed to complete the project. The plan is to have the money raised in the next four to six months with a project start date in Spring 2020 and completion by the 2020 Election Day ([Attachment 8](#) and [Attachment 9](#)).

Senator Hardy reviewed some of the project's background history. The initial project started in 1988 with a goal of completion in 1990. This did not occur and the statue was elevated on top of the dome of the Statehouse in 2002. During that time, fundraising was ongoing. Ideally, when the project was first commissioned, there should have been a fundraising aspect and an artistic aspect. In this case, these were combined and the artist was given the charge to complete the fundraising required for the project. This became an extreme burden and the artist was never paid for the sculpture on top of the Statehouse. The artist is now 94 years old and his son is hoping he will live to see the completion of the *Ad Astra* Plaza project, including payment for the smaller version of the original statue.

Chairperson Chinn expressed her appreciation to Senator Hardy for his willingness to take a leadership role on this project.

Mr. Graham asked if any thought had been given to using the casting mold to make copies to be sold. Senator Hardy said he would keep the suggestion in mind.

Senator Bowers moved, seconded by Mr. Lawrence, the record reflect that the Committee supports the completion of the Ad Astra Plaza project on Capitol grounds to honor the State's commitment to the project and artist. The motion passed.

Mr. Burnam said he assumed the fundraising would include the cost of the installation and there would be no state moneys required from the Department of Administration for the installation. Senator Hardy answered affirmatively and stated a local treasurer and a bank account in Topeka were established to receive and disperse funds.

Sharon Wenger inquired if the artist would receive compensation for the *Ad Astra* statue on the plaza. Senator Hardy responded the artist would be paid \$102,000 for the statue.

Other Business

Representative Winn stated the idea for a 1st Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry regiment mural should be revisited by the Committee. Chairperson Chinn said a bill for the mural project would need to be approved by the Legislature because the original legislation did not authorize creation of the mural, only the creation of a report.

Representative Winn moved, seconded by Mr. Graham, to explore legislative approval for a 1st Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry mural in the Capitol building during the 2020 Legislative Session. The motion passed.

Discussion of Annual Report to the 2020 Legislature

Chairperson Chinn requested Whitney Howard, Kansas Legislative Research Department, review recommendation items to be included in the Report of the Capitol Preservation Committee to the 2020 Legislature. Ms. Howard summarized the recommendations provided by the Committee as follows:

- The Committee approves the Request for Approval to Place Artwork or Exhibits in the Capitol form, with two revisions. These revisions include how the artwork would be displayed and for how long the artwork would be on loan;
- The Committee recommends the State Historical Society display the state symbols exhibit outside the Office of Revisor of Statutes in the Capitol building;
- The Committee did not recommend approval of the Amelia Earhart statue project at this time, but will reserve the idea for future consideration;
- The Committee recommends the updated restoration plaque be installed on the wall of the first floor of the rotunda. The Committee recommends the offering of the previous plaque to the Brownback family first, but it would otherwise become part of the collection at the State Historical Society;

- The Committee recommends the Committee review the master plan of the Capitol grounds at the next Committee meeting;
- The Committee recommends the State Historical Society and the Department of Administration have follow-up discussions concerning the Fallen Firefighters Memorial;
- The Committee recommends the Director of LAS, the Chairperson of the Capitol Preservation Committee, and the Department of Administration follow up with the LCC concerning the Overmyer mural restoration project;
- The Committee directs the Chairperson of the Capitol Preservation Committee to discuss possible destination guide signage for the Capitol Visitor Center with KDOT for placement on the interstate to reflect the easiest way for visitors to get to the Capitol building;
- The Committee recommends the Department of Administration continue to explore options for signage to the entrance to the Capitol building, including directional pavers on the Capitol grounds;
- The Committee recommends the *Official Kansas State Travel Guide* and the state map be the main forms of information to be provided to tourists at the Visitor Center and recommends those items be distributed around the Capitol building, including outside the House and Senate Chambers and in the Governor's office;
- The Committee recommends the Visitor Center keep other community brochures and information available at the desk to be distributed upon request and recommends the State Historical Society place signage related to additional brochures and information at the Visitor Center information desk;
- The Committee recommends the State Historical Society provide information at the Visitor Center information desk to direct visitors to www.travelks.com;
- The Committee supports the completion of the *Ad Astra* Plaza project on Capitol grounds to honor the State's commitment to the project and artist; and
- The Committee recommends exploration of legislative approval for a 1st Kansas (Colored) Volunteer Infantry mural in the Capitol building during the 2020 Legislative Session.

Mr. Graham, seconded by Mr. Hems, moved the recommendations be included in the Annual Report to the 2020 Legislature. The motion passed.

Adjourn

Chairperson Chinn adjourned the meeting at 12:22 p.m.

Prepared by Debbie Bartuccio

Edited by Whitney Howard and John Hess

Approved by the Committee on:

November 26, 2019

(Date)