



## BENTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes Friday November 17, 2023

Members Attending: HCAC Chair: Chris **Westfall**, Oregon Judicial Department, Trial Court Administrator; Scott **McClure**, representing the Historic Resources Commission; Bob **Richardson**, OSU, Senior Land Use Planner; Christel **Birdwell**, Cultural Arts and Community Engagement Supervisor, City of Corvallis; Christina **Rehklau**, Executive Director, Visit Corvallis; Inga **Williams**, Benton County Community Development Associate Planner; Commissioner Nancy **Wyse**, Liaison; Roz **Keeney**, Vice President PreservationWORKS

Advisory Staff Attending: Brenda **Downum**, Communications and Community Engagement , Downum Consulting; Paul **Wallsinger**, Facilities and Utilities Manager

- I. Chair **Westfall** called the meeting to order at 1000. Minutes from the May 19, 2023 and October 20, 2023 meeting will be moved to the next meeting due to lack of quorum.
- II. Citizen comments - none submitted.
- III. Welcome
- IV. **Westfall** asked for self-introductions. **Keeney** asked that the agenda and committee meeting invitation be sent out earlier than one day before the meeting.
- V. OSU Class Project  
**Westfall** recapped the OSU class project for those committee members who were not present at last month's meeting. He reported that Bob Richardson connected us with an OSU Interior Design class. The class has had a tour of the courthouse on October 8<sup>th</sup> and they will be finishing up in December. They will be dedicating the entire class project

this semester to this project. They are forming into 5 groups and each group will be focused on a different approach. The students have the results of the Matterport 3D Imaging which recorded all of the dimensions of the interior of the courthouse.

They will present to the committee in early December outside the normal meeting time. The meeting will hopefully occur at the courthouse. Westfall reiterated that some of the final work products will be included into the courthouse final report.

**Keeney** asked if the projects will be maintaining the historic feeling of the interior. Westfall responded that not all student projects will include that. Keeney stated that she thinks that it has to be taken into consideration because the interior is included in the national nomination. **Richardson** stated that he didn't think the ideas are in conflict. Westfall replied that the project recommendations will help inform the county commissioners and the illustrations will give them an idea of the kinds of activities that could occur.

**Keeney** asked about what happens to the artifacts in the courthouse if the building is reused. **Westfall** replied that he had pointed out a lot of them to the students during the tour.

**Westfall** will send out invitations to meet with the students the first week of December.

VI. Status update on public outreach development planning

**Westfall** reminded the committee that we have Brenda on contract and she is the lead point for developing outreach engagement and the final report. **Downum** has drafted a fact sheet. [This sheet was then handed out to all committee members.] The committee discussed the draft.

**Westfall** stated that the fact sheet is trying to give a brief story to the community. That we need to give the community some idea of the cost of the two ideas but we need to be careful we are not being casual about the cost. Reuse for govt./civic would be less in comparison to civic use. Must be aware that the community will ask how much these ideas will cost and we have no answer.

**Keeney** stated that she thought we had an option 3 which is a combination of the two options in the fact sheet. There should be an option 3 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> side. A committee member suggested changing "option" to "concept" or something similar. Other suggestions for improvement of the fact sheet were expressed.

**Richardson** discussed the Arts & Culture scenario and stated that the discussion about restaurants was represented. There are wide ranges of opportunities for people to be included in the courthouse space and they are included in the scenario. He stated that the culture piece was very food driven. Richardson will provide the 2-page summary from his subcommittee to Westfall as Westfall was unable to find it.

**Wallsinger** stated that this fact sheet is meant to peak people's interest and get them to access more information on the website where more detailed information is provided.

**Richardson** suggested taking away the Pros & Cons portion on the talking points and leaving that to the website. Also, remove such technical terms as "re-use".

The timeline of the outreach efforts was discussed next. Do we go out now or do we wait? **McClure** indicated that he was concerned about proceeding with the outreach during the holidays. Westfall stated that he was concerned about retaining members on the committee if they did not continue to move forward. Keeney agreed with Westfall and McClure. **Downum** committed to providing meaningful public engagement. As soon as we are comfortable with the talking points sheet it will be distributed throughout the county. It could potentially be out by the end of the month, through December. This would place physical public engagement in January. Considering having an open house at the courthouse and then conclude the outreach the end of January or early February. Then the committee moves into compiling and sorting.

Downum discussed various options for outreach and received some more comments on the statement.

VII. Status update on drafting final report

**Downum** will start drafting the final report while the public outreach is occurring. It will be a compilation of the minutes, post-it notes and various reports. There will be a whole segment about public engagement part added after that is concluded. She will bring it to the committee before she gets too far into it.

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 1134.