

AMERICA 250 – COLORADO 150
Mountains and Mesas Region – Power of Place
February 7, 2024; 4-5:30PM; Zoom (due to winter storm)

Meeting Minutes

This includes the agenda, notes from the meeting and answers to questions that were posed during the meeting.

Introductions

Chair: Ellen Roberts

Present:

Ellen Babers, Kathy Myrick, Mary Monroe, Tiffany Lee, Tom Compton, Briana Paxton, Robert McDaniel, Susan Jones, Kathryn Reynolds, Barbara Stagg, Paul DeBell, Bev Rich, Sidney Zink, Bill LeMaire, Florence “Foxye” Mason, Chandra Stubbs, Karren Little, Al Harper, Jeff Susor, Mette Flynt, Susan Dalton, Cory Pillen, Ann McCoy-Harold, Kat Brail, Mary Jo Coulehan, Caroline Kinser, Sheri Rochford Figgs, Ruth Lambert, DeAnne Gallegos, Abe Proffitt, Kate Hopson, Seth Furtney, Gay Kiene, Darcy Poletti, Amanda Kenzie, Katie Roach, Cheryl Miller, Christina Rinderle, Zebulon Miracle

4:15: Project Updates from the state perspective

Lead: Katie Roach

- Friendly reminder that all commission (and subcommittee) meetings are always open to the public and they would love to hear from us as well as members of the broader public.
- America 250 has zoomed in on experience, engage, and unite as central themes. CO commission has decided to align with some of those.
- State commission met in Nov. to identify statewide signature initiatives, which will exist along local initiatives.
- “Celebrate Colorado Together” including things like flyovers and air shows; fireworks; special events at the state fair, and CO Day celebrations
- Engage theme: Meaningful shared public experiences:
 - Passport program “Destination: Colorado” to encourage all to explore the state. Will strive to strike a balance between equitable access and encouraging folks to get out of their normal environments. Their question: How to balance this?
 - “We are Colorado” statewide storytelling initiative to create a portrait of CO at 150. Will also help identify important preservation sites, public art and education opportunities, etc.
 - “Welcome to Colorful Colorado” public arts push
 - “Commemoration Colorado Style” with things unique to our state such as 14er climbs.
 - “COauthoring the Stories of the US” to bring museums and cultural institutions together to share diverse histories
- Educate theme: “Commemorating our shared history:
 - Supporting Colorado’s Students to think about preparing students for the future
 - Scholarado: Generating New Knowledge” to support scholarship on CO’s history

- History where it happened roadside markers
- Unite theme: Supporting CO Communities
 - Sesquisemiquin for Everyone: Supporting communities in creating moments of unity for all.
- Polis has signed legislation requiring each state agency to 1) appoint a point person for the 250/150 commission and 2) pitch programming / interaction from their agency.
- Katie is forming a fundraising committee and has also submitted a funding application to the national organization.
- AM250-CO150.org website is now live though Katie and her team are still working through some bugs
- There is now branded merchandise and even a new Sesquicentennial plate
- Q: How do we help engage Indigenous communities? A: Two seats from Ute nations remain vacant. Commissioners and Governor Polis are trying to engage Southern and Ute Mountain Nations. There are also a series of outreach conversations which kicked off in December. They are in the process of accepting bids for Native facilitators. She hopes to have more to share on this front very soon as this is front and center as a concern for commissioners.
- Ellen Roberts: Please get questions for Katie and state organization to local core team (a250c150@animasmuseum.org) and they will raise them with state.

4:35: Communications Update

Lead: Bill LeMaire

- State is developing great communication tools and we are working to supplement communications by “regionalizing” them to be a bit more responsive to our own region
- First task to establish a website for our region, which is live at <https://animasmuseum.org/a250-c150/>
 - Goal to share information so we can learn more about the project and find ways to take part and collaborate
 - Would love feedback on website as it is a work in progress and the hope is that by the end of 2024 it is much more interactive
- Next plan is to publish a quarterly e-newsletter starting in March 2024
 - First issue (March) will highlight Hinsdale County as it celebrates its 150th anniversary
 - Second issue (May) will highlight Ouray County
- Produce informational print material as a “leave behind” for when we are interacting with groups
- Speaker aids and bureau to empower LOC members to spread the message
- Social media and media relations plans will be a bit farther down the road getting into Q4 24 and Q1 25
- Look out for more materials and the first newsletter coming on the way.
- Please send any questions, comments, or interests in helping on the communications plans to Bill LeMaire via the LOC email address

4:45: Update on North LOC

Lead: Zebulon Miracle

- Mesa County group is very motivated and they are fortunate to have a large network of active museums and historic societies.
- Local governments, tourism offices, and overall Mesa County Historical Society are all very excited to contribute so expect a lot of ideas coming from them!
- They have adapted the interest form and are now wading through the statewide initiatives that best connect to their region.
- Challenge to keep folks who are interested motivated as 2026 seems far away but in terms of organizing time it is right around the corner. Happy about the newsletter idea and anything else that we can do to keep folks engaged throughout the process.
- They now have a Northern LOC specific email address: mesacounty250150@gmail.com Please get in touch there with any ideas of folks/orgs who might want to collaborate or any ideas

4:50: Workshop to identify great programming and project ideas

Lead: Ellen Babers

- Ideas are coming in via the form and we marry them to the themes at the state and national level in order to help folks understand how to make sense of their plans in the broader context
- Walked through examples of submissions such as: Simultaneous 14er climb and Durango-Rico (Scotch Creek) Trail
- Ideas and update from DEEEP - Domínguez–Escalante Expedition Educational Program by Robert McDaniel
 - Until DEEEP's recent work the trail had not been traced on the ground. They have produced a map detailing every day of the expedition across CO.
 - This will result in educational materials for students, and all of their work is done with that in mind.
 - They have been able to refine the route with much greater specificity, with lots of corrections to the original work done in 1975 original research on the route.
- Photographing the Dominguez–Escalante trail component by Katherine Myrick
 - The expedition did not talk much about the stunning scenery they saw, and her photography works to capture that
 - She is now finishing a book on that project, and this is an example of how this project can build upon and amplify things that are already in the works.
- Cheryl Miller's idea (Described by Ellen B.) getting children in schools to do some of their own original research and to produce a book with that research.
- Barbara Stagg on the importance of including ancient history of the region
 - There is tons of vital information but we need to make it more accessible and widely-known
 - Montezuma County has the largest number of prehistoric archeological sites in North America
 - Her question: how can we tie this together beyond Montezuma County as the Ancestral Puebloans were throughout this area?
- Metta Flynt updated us on Hinsdale's 150th anniversary celebrations, which will start with a kickoff picnic on CO Day 8/1
 - Kate Hopson: The website is up <https://lakecity.com/150thevent> and the birthday is actually this Saturday 2/10!
- Q: Can we begin to share events such as the simultaneous climb? A: Let's hold off for now until the programming and dates are better firmed up.
- Foxie 2 ideas:

- How can we bring in more information on the development of CO's economy? For example, the book *Vacationland* covers the deliberate efforts to make CO a tourist hub. It would also be interesting to include development of the ski industry.
- Relatedly, there's a fascinating history on how I-70 came about in the state and the various debates and effects of that
- Have students read historical texts/speeches
- Karren: We need to really include the enormous impacts of mining on this region and the entire state
 - Ellen B: Yes there is a lot of interest in this as we have elevated the theme "Power of Place." This region's geography presents challenges but also, as with mining, opportunities.
 - Susan: Also wanted to highlight the centrality of mining to the development of mining to the current cities across the entire state
 - Ellen B: This is a huge opportunity to collaborate with other LOCs and the state as themes like mining are going to be
- Q: Is it appropriate to email additional ideas. Yes, definitely!

5:25: Wrap-up

Lead: Ellen Roberts

- This will be most effective if we collaborate and share experiences and expertise
- Please bring in others as well!
- You can sign up for the newsletter/emails on our website! <https://animasmuseum.org/a250-c150/>