

# **Idaho State Historical Society** **Trustee Roles and Responsibilities**

## **I. ABOUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY TRUSTEES**

A board of trustees governs the Idaho State Historical Society. The board is responsible for administering the powers and duties required to preserve and protect any historical record of the history and culture of Idaho. Idaho Code §§ 67-4123 and 67-4126.

### **Appointment and Term of Office**

The board of trustees consists of seven members. The Governor appoints the members of the board. Board members serve terms of six years, except where appointed for the unexpired portion of a term. No board member may serve more than two consecutive full terms. Idaho Code § 67-4124.

### **Qualifications of Members**

Members of the board are chosen solely on the basis of their qualifications with due regard to their knowledge, competence, experience, and interest in the fields related to the preservation of Idaho history. Geographic representation is considered in the selection process with one board member chosen from each of the judicial districts of the state. Idaho Code § 67-4124.

### **Conduct of Business**

The board must meet at least once each quarter. The board may meet at other times as necessary for the orderly conduct of its business. Four members of the board constitute a quorum and the action of a majority of the members present at a meeting constitutes the decision of the board. The statute requires at least 72 hours' notice of regular meetings. Officers are elected to serve terms lasting two years. Idaho Code § 67-4125.

### **Specific Powers and Duties**

The board of trustees encourages and promotes interest in the history of Idaho and the Historical Society. The board appoints a director of the Historical Society and advises him in the performance of his duties. The board formulates general policies affecting the agency.

The board has the authority to acquire and dispose of real or personal property, to hold title to that property, and to accept donations.

## **II. STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS**

Among other things, the board of trustees, acting through the Historical Society:

- ▶ Collects artifacts and information illustrative of Idaho history, culture, and society for purposes of preservation and display.
- ▶ Prints publications and reports.
- ▶ Encourages creation of county historical societies and museums.
- ▶ Facilitates the use of Idaho records for official reference and historical research.
- ▶ Accepts official books, records, documents, original papers, newspaper files, printed books, or portraits, not in current use, from various state, county, city, or other public entity or official.
- ▶ Requires that official books, records, documents, or original papers, not in current use, which are of definite historical importance, be deposited for preservation and provides methods whereby materials with no significance may be destroyed.
- ▶ Establishes rules, including rules for the protections of prehistoric ruins and relics and archaeological and vertebrate paleontological sites and deposits on any public lands in Idaho.
- ▶ Issues permits for excavation of prehistoric sites and ruins.
- ▶ Recommends to the governor the designation, establishment, and declaration of any historical or archaeological site, monument, or point of interest as an Idaho historic site.
- ▶ Provides signs or markers for Idaho state historic sites and approves markers, monuments, and signs to be used on or adjacent to any highway within the state.
- ▶ Identifies historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural sites, buildings, or districts, and coordinates activities of local historic preservation commissions.
- ▶ Serves as the geographic names board of the State of Idaho.

## **III. DUTIES OF TRUSTEES**

In order to function effectively and productively, the Historical Society needs the expertise, advice, and varied experiences of all of its trustees. Consistent meeting attendance and participation are paramount to these efforts. In the event that a trustee should miss more than two consecutive meetings of the board, the chair will confer with the trustee to decide what, if any, actions may be appropriate, up to and including a consideration of resignation.

### **Collective Duties**

1. Formulate and sustain the mission and vision of the agency.
2. Select, guide, and monitor the executive director. To a large extent, monitoring the performance of the executive director is synonymous with monitoring the performance of the organization.

3. Work with the executive director to develop long range plans and evaluate and revise them periodically. Focus on establishing goals rather than on the administrative means of accomplishing those goals.
4. Set policies that serve to guide the agency's operation. Empower staff to implement those policies.
5. Monitor the agency and its programs to assure that the goals and objectives are being achieved efficiently and effectively. Monitor use of the agency's resources.
6. Ensure that all legal and ethical responsibilities of the agency are being fulfilled.
7. Spend a majority of meeting time determining future actions, not monitoring the past. Take the time to review relevant materials, participate in discussion, and make educated decisions about all issues presented to the board.

### **Individual Duties**

1. Attend all board meetings and, if requested, serve as liaison to a work group or as otherwise assigned.
2. Know the historical organizations, supporters, and issues in your area.
3. Be visible at history-related events in your area, particularly those presented, funded, or sponsored by the Historical Society.
4. Know your individual legislators and be willing to contact them if necessary.
5. Carefully review and consider all agenda related materials well in advance of the board meeting date. Ask questions.
6. Keep abreast of local, state, and federal historic preservation issues.
7. Support and uphold board decisions.
8. Avoid involvement in the day-to-day management and personnel issues of the Society unless required by statute, rule, or policy.
9. Immediately disclose any actual or perceived conflict of interest and, where appropriate, withdraw from participation in any discussion or vote on the matter being discussed.
10. Maintain confidentiality of confidential documents and information.

## **IV. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND PERSONAL CONDUCT**

Maintaining a high standard of ethics, honesty, impartiality and conduct by Idaho State Historical Society Trustees is essential to ensure the proper performance of State business and to strengthen public faith and confidence in the integrity of the Idaho Historical Society.

### **Speaking for the Idaho Historical Society**

The executive director is authorized to speak and act for the Society without additional authorization. Trustees do not speak or act for the Society unless duly authorized.

A trustee may speak to individuals and groups regarding activities, issues and decisions of and by the Society for the purpose of public education. This is acceptable only if it does not conflict with interests of the Society, or interfere with official duties. To the extent possible, comments or remarks that are being formally presented to an identifiable

group should be vetted through the Society staff for accuracy and consistency with policy.

### **Gratuities**

Trustees must not solicit in their official capacity any gratuity or other benefit from any person under any circumstance. Trustees may not accept honorariums from Idaho citizens, associations, corporations, or governmental entities for appearances or services given in the course of their official duties.

### **Political Activities**

No Trustee may:

1. Use his/her official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with an election to or a nomination for office, or affecting the result thereof.
2. Directly or indirectly coerce, attempt to coerce, command or direct any state employee to pay, lend or contribute any part of his/her salary or compensation or anything else of value to any party, committee, organization, agency, or person for political purposes.

Trustees retain the right to:

1. Register and vote in any election.
2. Express their opinions as individuals privately and publicly on political subjects and candidates.
3. Display a political picture, sticker, badge or button.
4. Participate in the nonpartisan activities of a civic, community, social, labor, or professional organization, or of a similar organization.
5. Be members of a political party or other political organization and participate in its activities.
6. Attend a political convention, rally, fund-raising function or other political gathering.
7. Sign a financial contribution to a political party or organization.
8. Make a financial contribution to a political party or organization.
9. Take an active part, in support of a candidate, in an election.
10. Be politically active in connection with a question that is not specifically identified with a political party, such as a constitutional amendment, referendum, approval of a municipal ordinance or any other question or issue of a similar character.
11. Serve as an election judge or clerk, or in a similar position to perform nonpartisan duties as prescribed by state or local law.
12. Otherwise participate fully in public affairs, except as prohibited by law, in a manner that does not materially compromise the neutrality, efficiency, or integrity of his/her function as a Trustee.

13. Serve as an advocate within the state government and the community to encourage and promote interest in Idaho history and in the Idaho Historical Society.
14. Serve as an advisory body regarding state legislative issues affecting Idaho history.
15. Administer and perform any function or activity assigned to the Society by the Governor.

### **Trustee Correspondence**

State letterhead, word processing, copying, postal resources or other staff or office resources of the Society may be used ONLY with the approval of the executive director of the Society.

**POLICY STATEMENT ON TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLES,  
APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES THIS 27<sup>th</sup> DAY OF JANUARY, 2006.**

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**Tony Edmondson, Chairman**

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

1. State Historical Society Statute, Chapter 41, Title 67, Idaho Code.
2. Idaho Ethics in Government Act, Chapter 7, Title 59, Idaho Code.
3. Prohibitions Against Contracts, Chapter 2, Title 59, Idaho Code.
4. Bribery and Corrupt Influence Act, Chapter 13, Title 18, Idaho Code.

**KC/1.27.2006**