



Actions of the AASLH Council

The Council of the American Association for State and Local History met on January 15, 2021 using Zoom. AASLH Chair Norman Burns led the meeting, and Council took the following actions:

1. Reviewed the organization's summary financial report for July 1 through November 30, 2020. AASLH's Payroll Protection Plan loan of \$120,000 from the Small Business Administration was forgiven in October. Membership revenue has declined slightly due to the pandemic, but not as much as staff had feared. Other good news was the strong all-virtual 2020 Annual Meeting, which was budgeted to serve 800 participants, reached more than 2500. Two staff positions remained empty for much of the year but one was filled in August 2020 and the other in January 2021.
2. Discussed the feasibility study process for AASLH which a consultant started in January 2021 to determine the potential for a three-year endowment campaign.
3. Decided to make a contribution of pooled donations from members of Council to the Nashville, TN, Metro Historical Commission Foundation to help support structural assessments of and façade repairs to the historic buildings of downtown Nashville damaged in the December 25th bombing. AASLH has been headquartered in Nashville for nearly 60 years, in several different locations. From 1985 to 1993, AASLH was at 172 Second Ave N., a historic 19th century building that was completely destroyed in the bombing.
4. Heard a report from President & CEO John Dichtl about operations and programs. Dichtl highlighted two new staff members, Ashley Bouknight, Senior Manager for Professional Development, and Rebecca Mendez, Membership & Office Coordinator. Dichtl also emphasized advocacy efforts, such as recent statements released or endorsed by AASLH, and the growth of the History Leadership Institute, which now includes online courses beyond the core seminar.
5. Approved by consensus a new model for the annual meeting proposed by staff which includes an in-person, onsite conference in Little Rock, AR and an online conference two weeks later. The conferences will share a theme and some components and will be developed to serve overlapping but distinct audiences.
6. Approved by consensus the creation of the AASLH Public History Research Lab, a proposal by staff to organize and present ongoing and future research in a more cohesive way. Primary functions of the Lab will be to connect new research to AASLH programs and to produce tools and resources for members based on these research findings.
7. Approved draft of an updated *AASLH Employee Handbook* to move to Executive Committee for adoption when final round of changes are made.