

Minutes of the Annual Preservation Technology and Training Board Meeting  
 April 20-21, 2016  
 Ball State University

Attendees:

PTT Board Member	NCPTT Staff
Jim Garrison	Kevin Ammons
Lucy Lawliss	Tad Britt
Fred Limp	Kirk Cordell
Nancy Odegaard	Andrew Ferrell
Rob Pahl	Debbie Smith
Jack Pyburn	Mary Striegel
Jonathan Spodek	
Kat Valhos	
Norman Weiss	

**Welcome:**

Introduction of Mary Ann Heidemann, Director of the Historic Preservation Program at Ball State University. She offered introductory remarks about the history of Ball State University and the Preservation Program.

**Meeting Called to Order by Chairman, Jonathan Spodek:**

Jonathan Spodek welcomed group.

The meeting had a quorum and was certified as a legal meeting under the Federal Advisory Commission Act by Kirk Cordell, Designated Federal Officer for the Board.

Format of meeting: Conversation between the center staff and the advisory board.

**Election of new PTT Chair and Vice-Chair:**

Will meet in Natchitoches, Louisiana next year.

Jack Pyburn nominated Norman Weiss for Chair of the PTT Board. The nomination was seconded by Fred Limp. Weiss was unanimously elected. Norman Weiss rose from Vice Chair to the Chair position.

Lucy Lawliss was nominated by Kat Vlahos for the Vice Chair position. Rob Pahl seconded. Lawliss was unanimously elected.

**State of the Center Report by Kirk Cordell:**

The PTT Board report covers a period of 18 months. The last year and a half has been the busiest time ever in the last 14 years of the National Center.

The relationship between NCPTT and the Friends group is very successful, and our cooperative activities are steadily growing. All training is being run through the Friends Group which gives us flexibility. We have perfected our symposia over the years. Efforts at convening symposia began with the nationwide cemetery preservation summit (Nashville, 2009). We invite experts and convene people at small and medium sized meetings.

Mid-Century Modern Structures: Materials And Preservation Symposium held in April 2015. Event was self-supporting. We videotaped the presentations, transcribed and closed-caption videos. Transcription is now web-searchable, leading to information dissemination ballooning. The print publication captured the excellent presentations, and is available by print-on-demand, on Kindle devices and as an ePub. The partners for the symposium were Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, AIA St. Louis, World Monuments Fund, and Washington University

National Park Service Organizational changes:

Joy Beasley, appointed Deputy Associate Director, Park Programs and National Heritage Areas

Kirk Cordell, appointed Deputy Associate Director for Science, Technology, and Training

Current program Chief and the Federal Preservation Institute, have been moved over to Cordell's supervision. Some new positions will be created in Natchitoches. We will hire a curriculum specialist, who will develop training across all the cultural programs. We are standing up a new Web and Print Media group. All new staff will be paid by other NPS funding, not from NCPTT operating funds. Kirk currently goes to Washington, DC once a month. There are three senior science advisors in DC, who now report to Kirk: Ann Hitchcock works on disaster response; Dan Odess, Science advisor; Marcy Rockman, Climate Change.

We will create a new Deputy Director at a GS-14 level to help manage the Center. All of these organizational changes give NCPTT some budget relief and increases staff at the Center.

Stephanie Toothman very much supports the efforts of the NCPTT. The current budget proposes \$750,000 in budget increases for the grants program, the first budget increase proposed since the Center's founding. We could end up with a million dollars to put out the door for research and technology.

There will be administrative changes coming after the elections that may lead to uncertainty.

Kevin Ammons has a heavy workload in getting the positions described, classified, advertised, and filled. We hope that the positions will be filled by the end of summer. We want to continue the position that Ed FitzGerald held, and plan to fill the position through NSULA.

Publications

Louisiana GOSHEP funded publication –Resilient Heritage: Protecting historic buildings from natural disasters.

Archeology and Collections Program

We have been working with Death Valley NM, developing probability modeling through a CESU with the University of Illinois. (See board report).

NCPTT intern has been hosting Archeology Media Campaign.

20th anniversary symposium of PTT Grants in Archeology held at SAA.

Training

- Beginning Metal Detecting for Archeologists
- Desert Geomorphology for Archeologists
- Archeological Predictive Modeling for Archeologists
- Petrography for Archeologists

Architecture and Engineering Program

Held an “Engineering for Historic Timber Framing” workshop

HOPE Project: Youth service project for the African House at Melrose Plantation. For the first time, the NTHP program sponsored a HOPE project focused on a privately held property.

Materials Conservation

We have added a Freeze Thaw Chamber to conduct thermal stress testing. We are expanding with another laboratory on the NSULA campus.

Training: HOPE Crew at Chalmette National Cemetery. This project was a large successful project. All volunteer program.

Historic Landscapes

Inventory of the vegetation in the American Cemetery

University of Georgia videotaped interviews of leaders in historic landscapes.

Worked with Olmsted Center for Landscape Conservation: curriculum development for maintenance workers at National Park Service sites.

Symposia:

- Divine Disorder 2015 Conference
- Mid-Century Modern Structures Conference, 2015
- Research Retrospective at SAA
- Dance Halls, Juke Joints, and Honky Tonks Symposium

#### 2015 Grants Programs

Usually ask a board member to serve on review panels for the grants program.

Podcasts: still producing the only regular podcast program for historic preservation.

Videos that are very hands-on are the most popular videos that we have.

Very specific guidelines help the public.

#### FY 2015 Budget review

### **Climate Change Discussion**

In summary, the National Center may:

- Convene cross-disciplines for symposia on climate change;
- Build upon disaster response work;
- Undertake more international conversations;
- Focus on place-based responses;
- Prioritize coastal areas affected by climate change;
- Promote efforts to protect within the zone rather than relinquish artifacts;
- Energy modeling through grant funding or convening activities;
- Establish case studies/best practices for changing climate zones and landscape vegetation;
- Increase accessibility of archeological information about past climate change events;
- Learn from adaptation strategies of Indigenous people;

### Emerging Trends Discussion

In summary, the National Center may:

- Investigate emerging technologies such as Hyperspectral sensors (360 spectra combined with Lidar) to discover recent burials;
- Study and disseminate the latest trends in presentation of data including virtual reality, Microsoft holo-lens, and augmented reality for interpretation, for example;
- Investigate the use of unmanned aerial systems for preservation issues, as allowed by NPS policy;
- Address the issue of born digital data and the ability for this information to be archived;
- Create Best Practices documentation for a number of documentation methods, such as 3D documentation;
- Generate trusted assessments for new technologies including best case studies;
- Emphasize traditional buildings skills and crafts in addition to new technologies;
- Bring stakeholders and communities together;
- Continue to create Social media, podcasts, and preservation videos;
- Offer guidance to the consumers of the technology;
- Consider creating a technical brief series for preservation professionals; and
- Revamp and revive Preservapaedia;

### Field Relevance Discussion

NCPTT is taking the results of studies to move forward with treatments. May want to help push treatment beyond the studies.

In summary, the National Center may:

- Help explain how treatment decisions are made;
- Take on more projects that lead to treatments;
- Continue to emphasize hands-on activities and skills in workshops;
- Focus on reaching the maintenance staff;
- Help develop the career academies for NPS, but open it up to outside preservation professionals;
- Help the public understand how technology helps us make it a better place to live;
- Provide advice for end users on how to contract for preservation expertise;
- Increase value of the National Center within the National Park Service;
- Create a skills roster of people that can help us train, within the NPS and within our grants recipients; and
- Develop oral histories with the experts that are retiring.

## **Documentation Discussion**

Digital information for the documentation and research of historic properties is an area of rapid change. State historic Preservation Offices are grappling with digital information for compliance. There hasn't been a lot of direction from NPS on how to meet these requirements. Two main focuses for digital documentation are interpretive purposes and use as a cultural resource management tool.

In summary, the National Center may:

- Create funding opportunities for cultural resource professionals to experiment with technologies;
- Gather information and current best practices;
- Offer end users a decision tree to better understand the choices of digital documentation;
- Explain how digital documentation can translate back to HABS drawings;
- Serve as the main repository of information on digital documentation;
- Create best practice documents and regularly update them as the technology evolves; and
- Deal with the preservation of information issue.

## **Report: Working with Our Friends**

Mary Striegel, Kevin Ammons, and Andrew Ferrell presented the model NCPTT is using to create new symposia addressing key preservation issues. These symposia provide significant cost recovery and reduce pressure on NCPTT's operating budget. They would not be possible without the support of the Friends of NCPTT. In addition to the meeting, the symposia create a series of other products, including videos of each presentation and a publication in both hard copy and electronic format. Other areas of the Friends work include sponsoring workshops. NCPTT would like guidance on who should be on the Friends of NCPTT board.

## **The Need to Convene Discussion**

What are the topics that NCPTT should address?

In general the board was enthusiastic about the National Center's work on convening experts. They felt:

- The Center's convening role is the greatest and most productive tool it performs;
- Convening gives NCPTT the opportunity to expand on and move into other areas;
- It is the backbone of much of our work;
- The center needs more staff for effective development of symposia and experts meetings;
- Preservation should be better integrated into architecture schools and that NCPTT could serve as a center of information for students and resources for faculty;
- NCPTT should offer more courses for mid-career professionals in architecture, engineering, archeology, landscape architectures and allied fields;

- NCPTT should connect more to students and young professionals by connecting to student groups in professional organizations;
- Consider student awards;
- Touch on those cross-disciplinary topics that are unique to NCPTT's skill set;
- Create information that addresses public needs as well as professional needs.
- Some topics to consider include:
  - Climate change
  - Integrated and interdisciplinary preservation practice
  - Educators and preservation : How do you educate the educators
  - Digital data and archives
  - Fundamental of preservation (why, not just how)
  - Look to HOUZZ for a possible layout on our web site

Resolutions:

Whereas Norman Koonce, Frank Preusser and Suzanne Turner have served with distinction on the Board of Directors of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training,  
Whereas they have provided valuable counsel and advice to members of the staff of the center,  
Whereas they have served on review committees for proposal reviews,  
Whereas they have actively participated in board meetings and the decision-making process,  
Now therefore  
the board of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training gratefully acknowledges the distinguished service and contribution of Norman Koonce, Frank Preusser and Suzanne Turner and extends to them best wishes in their future activities.

Whereas the National Park Service has conducted a reorganization of the cultural resources directorate,  
Whereas this reorganization recognizes the dynamic and changing landscape of cultural resources and the significance of preservation technology and its future directions,  
Now therefore the Board of Directors of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training support the reorganization and commend the leadership of the National Park service for taking this important step

Whereas the Board of the National Center for preservation technology and training has reviewed the activities of the center's staff over the last 18 months,  
now therefore the board acknowledges with appreciation the efforts of the staff and commends them on their contribution

Whereas Jonathan Spodek has served with distinction as the Chairman of the Board of National Center for Preservation Technology and Training since 2014  
Whereas he stepped down as Chairman at the 2016 spring meeting in Muncie, Indiana  
Whereas he served as host for the meeting  
Whereas he has a long-term ongoing commitment to historic preservation activities in the Muncie area that have made a significant and positive impact to the community and its residents,  
Whereas the meeting was very successful and the venues very comfortable and the activities enlightening

Now therefore the board of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training acknowledges with the gratitude the many contributions of Jonathan Spodek to the Center and to Muncie and the national preservation community at large.

Whereas Ball State University was the host for the spring 2016 National Center for Preservation Technology and Training board meeting

Whereas the Department of Architecture and Planning and the Center for Historic Preservation at Ball State University have developed a nationally recognized program in preservation education

Whereas there were opportunities for the board members to meet university staff faculty and students involved in the historic preservation programs and to become familiar with their historic preservation activities

Whereas the board was very impressed with the student's skills and capabilities.

Now, therefore, the board of the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training recognizes the contribution of Ball State University to the national preservation community and commends its active involvement with the local community making historic preservation an important part of the economic revitalization.

Recommendations:

The PTT board members would like ideas of how they can better serve the National Center. Towards that end, The Board requests a one page simple list of things that the board can do in the next year for NCPTT.

Some examples that were discussed included:

- Help create Best Practices Topics for NCPTT's distribution. Kat Vlahos volunteered to assist with the digital documentation Best Practice document;
- Help with training efforts;
- Assist NCPTT's interns with research topics and review of experimental plans.

Thanks to all who have attended and participated. Special thanks goes to Jonathan Spodek who organized the meeting, not once but twice. Meeting Adjourns.