

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE LOUISIANA STATE MUSEUM (LSM)  
NEW ORLEANS JAZZ MUSEUM AT THE OLD U.S. MINT  
400 ESPLANADE AVENUE  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2025  
12:00 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Benjamin Dupuy, Christen Losey Gregg, Courtney LeBlanc, Darryl Gissel, Florence Jumonville, Julio Guichard, Kim Abramson, Lisa Ballay, Malcolm Hodnett, Mary Coulon, Nick Mueller, R. Duncan Brown, Sandy Shilstone, Suzanne Perlis, Thelma French, Wendy Lodrig.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Bunnie Cannon, Karl Connor, Kaitlyn Palmer, Tiffany Adler, Phillip Albert.

**LSM STAFF:** Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser, Amanda Smith, Becky Mackie, Blaze D'Amico, Chris Cook, Cody Scallions, Danny Kadar, Greg Lambousy, Jennae Biddiscombe, Jeff Anding, Jen Suran, Julia George Moore, Nicole Coleman, Patrick Burns, Steven Maklansky, Travis Waguspack, Wayne Phillips.

**A quorum was present.**

1. **Call to Order** – Wendy Lodrig called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.
2. **Adoption of the Agenda** – Darryl Gissel moved to adopt the agenda with revisions to indicate there is no action to be taken on Item 5a and to add reference that action will be taken on Item 8e. The motion was seconded by R. Duncan Brown and passed unanimously.
3. **Adoption of Minutes from the September 15, 2025, Meeting** – Florence Jumonville moved to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Thelma French and passed unanimously.
4. **LT Governor's Remarks** - Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser thanked the board members and staff for their contributions, hard work, and dedication, and expressed that he looks forward to working with everyone in the upcoming year.
5. **Chairman's Report** – Wendy Lodrig welcomed new board members Kim Abramson and Christen Losey-Gregg. She noted that on November 11, 2025, she, along with Mary Coulon and Sandy Shilstone, met with representatives from the American Alliance of Museums.

Wendy Lodrig stated that the board now has five standing committees and thanked members for their participation; all have met except the Architecture Review Committee, which is expected to meet in early 2026. She reported attending the Louisiana Civil Rights Advisory Board meeting on December 9, 2025.

The addition of Executive Committee Consent Items to the agenda was noted for future meetings. Consent items would allow for a report of multiple routine actions taken at committee meetings and approved at Executive Committee to be approved with a single motion and vote of the Board. Board members could still call for items to be pulled from the list for a separate vote. This procedure is intended to improve meeting efficiency.

Board members were invited to Cocoa and Eggnog at the Presbytère on December 21st at 5:30 p.m. prior to Caroling in the Square.

6. **Director's Report** –  
**New Hires & Promotions** – Becky Mackie introduced several new hires and announced multiple promotions.

**Capital Projects** - The museum received a grant from the Rosemary Foundation for repairs in the Historic Center archive. Upcoming engineering work for Madame John's Legacy, work coming to the Presbytere to replace air handlers and install fire suppression, and exterior improvements at the Jazz Museum were discussed.

**Public Programs** – The Director made note of the many public programs the LSM provides to the public, including the E.D. White Historic Site's first Oaks & Origins Festival, the Louisiana Civil Rights Museum's second anniversary panel discussion and lecture, holiday offerings at the Capitol Park Museum and Jazz International. Increases in web traffic and sales at the Museum Tickets & Information outlet at the Lower Pontalba were presented by Jeff Anding.

**Reaccreditation Update** - The AAM site reviewers submitted their report, which is now undergoing the review process. A committee vote on reaccreditation is expected by early March. The site visit went very well; both reviewers, who work for governmental agencies, were engaged and recognized structural, policy, and team-building improvements at the museum.

**7. Governance Committee - Vice Chair Nominations & Elections** - Duncan Brown reported that the committee received two nominations. Wendy Lodrig nominated Sandra "Sandy" Shilstone, and Kim Abramson nominated Christen Losey-Gregg. The Governance Committee voted to recommend Sandra Shilstone for a vote of the Board. After discussion, the board decided to table the vote pending clarification of the Governance Committee's process.

**8. Irby Finance –**

**Commercial Update** – Becky Mackie reported plumbing issues on the first floor of the Lower Pontalba due the old cast iron sewer line. Although a third of the line has been replaced at the corner of Decatur and St. Ann, problems persist and it is anticipated the remainder of that line needs to be replaced. The Fives expansion remains on hold as the tenant continues to seek new financing; in the interim, the unit is being used by the tenant as event space. There are currently no vacancies.

**Residential Update** - The third-floor unit at 515 St. Ann Street was vacated this month. The third-floor units at 527 St. Ann Street and 810 Chartres Street are currently available for lease. The second-floor unit at 807 Decatur Street was recently vacated and McEnergy provided an improvements cost estimates of \$13,000. McEnergy is researching noise control solutions for Decatur Street facing units.

**Irby Administrative Policy & Procedure Manual** – Darryl Gissel reported the Irby Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual updates were approved by the Irby Finance and Executive Committees. Sections 1 and 2 remain largely unchanged, while Section 3 is new and outlines purchasing procedures to accommodate the new property management structure.

**Darryl Gissel motioned to accept updates to the Irby Administrative Policy and Procedure Manual. The motion was seconded by Thelma French and passed unanimously.**

**Property Management** - Becky Mackie and Cody Scallions reported that the transition to McEnergy for property management is progressing smoothly. They noted that walkthroughs have been completed and that several ongoing maintenance projects have been successfully transitioned.

**Financial Statements** - Becky Mackie reported that year-to-date income is approximately 22% of the annual goal and is trending well, noting that percentage rents represent 6% of the budget and are not typically realized during the first quarter. Expenses are below budget. In October, \$855,000 of

the \$1.8 million in cash was transferred to the Louisiana Division of Facility Planning & Control to pre-fund the EDA grant for the Jazz Museum capital expansion. This transfer was approved at the December 8<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee meeting and prefunding is required by the State for reimbursable EDA grants. The balance sheet was reviewed with note that the certificate of deposit rolled over.

**Darryl Gissel motioned to ratify the Executive Committee decision to transfer \$855,000 to pre-fund the EDA grant for the Jazz Museum. The motion was seconded by Thelma French and passed unanimously.**

The Board discussed funding an Historic Structure Report for Madame John's Legacy through the Irby Trust.

**Darryl Gissel motioned to approve the \$100,000–\$150,000 estimate for the Historic Structure Report for Madame John's Legacy. The motion was seconded by Suzanne Perlis. Kim Abramson and Christen Losey-Gregg abstained from the vote. The motion passed unanimously.**

9. **Collections Committee** – Florence Jumonville reviewed highlights from the Collections Committee meeting held on November 4. Items recommended for potential acquisition included carnival float designs from a Missouri-based crew illustrating the national influence of New Orleans carnival traditions; a child's carnival ball costume; assorted New Orleans–related documents; recordings by Eddie Jones and the Spiders; a historic clock formerly displayed outside Adler's on Canal Street; and a historic automobile associated with the Reggio family for the Galvez exhibition.

**Florence Jumonville called for a motion from the board to approve proposed accessions to the permanent collections. The motion was seconded by Nick Mueller and passed unanimously.**

The committee recommended the deaccession of 48 items to streamline the collection, improve focus on relevant artifacts, and enhance storage and management efficiency.

**Florence Jumonville called for a motion to deaccession 48 items. The motion was seconded by Suzanne Perlis and passed unanimously.**

The committee reviewed proposed loans to several museums.

**Florence Jumonville called for a motion to approve the outgoing loans. The motion was seconded by Mary Coulon and passed unanimously.**

Florence Jumonville presented non-substantive updates to the Collections Manual clarifying procedures for reproduction and publication rights.

**Florence Jumonville called for a motion to make updates to the collection's manual. The motion was seconded by Mary Coulon and passed unanimously.**

Becky Mackie reported that the Collections Manual should be revised to strengthen safeguards against self-dealing in deaccessions following recommendations from AAM reviewers. The updates clarify that deaccessioned objects may not be acquired or personally benefit state employees, volunteers, board members, support organization members, or their families or representatives.

**Suzanne Perlis motioned to accept AAM reviewers' recommendations to the collection's manual. The motion was seconded by Florence Jumonville and passed unanimously.**

- 10. Education Committee** - Suzanne Perlis reported that the Education Committee met on December 3 and began the meeting by observing a beading class led by Big Chief Darryl Montana and the Big Queen of the Yellow Pocahontes Hunting Tribe, Diane Honore.. She thanked staff for arranging the experience. Suzanne highlighted the extensive education programming detailed in the board packet.

Highlights included the development of traveling educational trunks in partnership with the Office of State Libraries, new family-friendly gallery materials and the educational booklet created for the Michalopoulos exhibition. The Education staff created a New Orleans field trip destination that was adopted into the Congressional America 250 Commission student contest. The Education Committee's charter was presented.

**Suzanne Perlis called for a motion to accept the Education Committee Charter. The motion was seconded by Kim Abramson and passed unanimously.**

- 11. E.D. White** – Malcolm Hodnett reported that the Oaks & Origins Festival was held on November 15 and was well attended, with approximately 850 attendees and favorable weather. Proactive fire safety planning for the E.D. White site in light of the recent Nottoway tragedy was discussed.
- 12. Louisiana Civil Rights Museum Advisory Board** – Thelma French provided a brief update regarding the Louisiana Civil Rights initiative. It was reported that the committee continues to work diligently to secure a permanent site.
- 13. Exhibits** – Patrick Burns reported the Illinois Clubs exhibition will open on January 29, 2026 at the Presbytère. Steven Maklansky reported on the upcoming *Bernardo de Gálvez* exhibition, scheduled to open with a Spanish Gala on March 7, 2026 at the Cabildo. He noted that the exhibition explores Gálvez's critical role in the American Revolution. Curated by guest historian Stephen Kling, the exhibition will occupy most of the first floor of the Cabildo, underscoring the museum's participation in the America 250 celebration.
- 14. New Orleans Jazz Museum** – Greg Lambousy reported that the recent gala was well attended with approximately 1,300 guests and is expected to generate approximately \$500,000, pending remaining pledges. An update was provided on the Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant, noting that construction is underway and progressing on schedule. The \$1.11 million project includes State and EDA funds for improvements to the Jazz Museum event grounds, including grading and leveling to improve drainage and accessibility, construction of a permanent stage, and installation of water, gas, and electrical utilities to support events and enhance the visitor experience. The project is expected to continue through late spring or early summer.
- 15. Capitol Park and Regional Museums** – Jennae Biddiscom reported on activities across multiple museum sites. At the Capitol Park Museum, staff continue to expand Discovery Days, strengthen collaboration with the Friends Group, and plan for 2026's Spanish Town Parade and the museum's 20th anniversary. The Friends Group earned several runner-up recognitions from Baton Rouge Parents Magazine.  
  
She reported that the Wedell-Williams and Cypress-Sawmill Museum has launched new programming under its new curator and held a successful annual fundraiser.
- 16. Louisiana Museum Foundation** – Kristin Shannon reported on recent and upcoming fundraising and grant activities. The Louisiana Museum Foundation's annual Founders Fall gala successfully raised funds for the exhibition, Michalopoulos, which features over 70 paintings highlighting New Orleans architectural styles. The

event hosted approximately 320 guests and honored Quint Davis and Henry Shane for their longstanding support.

Kristin Shannon provided updates on recent grants. She noted that fundraising continues for the upcoming Illinois Club exhibition, opening January 29, with approximately \$30,000 raised from sponsorships to date. She also highlighted preparations for the Bernardo de Gálvez exhibition, opening March 7, noting that the foundation is actively pursuing corporate and organizational support.

**17. Friends of the Cabildo –**

Jason Strada reported that the recent symposium was well attended, with approximately 110 participants joining both in person and via Zoom. The event featured speakers from Switzerland and Washington, D.C., as well as local presenters, and concluded with a presentation by Steven Kling.

**18. Old Business –**

Suzanne Perlis reported that the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) with the Louisiana Historical Society has been finalized. The agreement, developed with input from the Society's attorneys and the Lieutenant Governor's office, formalizes the longstanding partnership and long-term loan of the Society's collection to the museum for an additional five years. She thanked Becky Mackie for her efforts in facilitating the agreement.

**19. New Business –**

Wendy Lodrig took the opportunity to acknowledge Jen Suran and the staff for updating board section of the museum's website. She thanked Jen, Becky, and Nicole for their ongoing efforts in keeping the Board informed and engaged with both immediate and long-term planning. Wendy also reminded Board members to update their manuals with the additional packets provided. Members were asked to insert the three-hole punched materials into their manuals to keep their records current.

Becky Mackie noted that the March 16, 2026 Board meeting location is still to be determined. She highlighted potential challenges with construction in the French Quarter and parking at the Jazz Museum. The Lieutenant Governor is checking availability of a meeting room in his Metairie office's building for that date. Becky will provide confirmation once arrangements are finalized, but it is anticipated that the March meeting will take place in Metairie.

**20. Public Comments –** No public comments

**21. Adjourn –** Florence Jumonville motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Kim Abramson and passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Minutes Accepted

  
Sandra Shilstone, Secretary