

**Bleeding Kansas National Heritage Area**  
Meeting Minutes for November 13, 2003  
Neodesha Public Library  
Neodesha, KS

Eileen Robertson – Humboldt Chamber Tourism  
Ron Harris – Geary County Museum/First Territorial Capitol  
Dave Evans – Hobbs Park Memorial  
Clif Gordon – Wakefield Museum  
Kerry Altenbernd – Black Jack Battlefield Trust  
Steve Collins – Quindaro Ruins/KCK Comm. College  
Dorothy Collins – KCK Comm. College  
Ruth Dorsey – Baxter Springs  
Fannie Bassett – Chetopa/Labette County Historical Society  
Carolyn Green – Humboldt  
John Nichols – Miami Historical Society  
Jackie Clark – Norman #1, Neodesha  
Emma Crites – Fredonia Tourism  
Nancy Wilson - Norman #1, Neodesha  
Gwen Martin – Yates Center  
Marie Horner – Oswego  
Bill Freeman – LeRoy  
Cathy Ambler – Feasibility Study Consultant  
Sharole Prah – Baldwin City CVB  
Diane Niehoff – Baldwin City CVB  
Jerry Barnard – Oswego  
Barbara Sharp – Norman #1, Neodesha  
Judy Billings – Lawrence CVB  
Debbie White – Lawrence CVB

The monthly meeting of the BKNHA was called to order at 10:15 am with Judy Billings of Lawrence at the helm. Group introductions followed. Called for additions to the days agenda. Minutes of the October meeting, as circulated by e-mail, were approved on motion of Gwen Martin and second by Eileen Robertson. For those members in attendance who have not been receiving communications, instructed to contact Debbie White at the Lawrence CVB. Pointed out the importance of documenting the meeting activities, as they will become official records that play into the application process for Heritage Area designation.

The financial report showed receipt of \$6,756 in donations to date. Noted that funds from Kansas Travel & Tourism in the amount of \$15,000 were now in process. Also anticipating \$500 from Coffey and Neosho Counties and \$1,000 from the Topeka CVB. Although we have committed \$32,000 towards the feasibility study, we have set an initial goal of \$50,000 for the BKNHA efforts.

Have set December 11 as the deadline date for Letters of Support, Site Surveys and Asset Data Forms. The later available electronically through the Lawrence CVB site.

With all of the grassroots support happening throughout the region, noted the importance of including any press in the application packet. Be sure and include newspaper cuttings from your local press.

Introduced Cathy Ambler formerly of the Kansas Historical Society who is now living in Tulsa. Cathy has agreed to assist in the feasibility study along side of Dale Nimz. She mentioned that building the study has been a lot like building a tapestry. Although the focus needs to be the "Bleeding Kansas Years", there are lots of sub themes to consider. Although the work is very detailed the narrative needs to be interesting too. Ambler and Nimz have been using other heritage trail applications for guidance, more specifically the "Crossroads of America" Heritage Area in New Jersey.

She also stressed the importance of documenting area special events that play into the time period: reenactments, site tours and other special events depicting life of the time. We will develop an event timeline from this information.

Eileen Robertson talked of her efforts to recruit the Osage Mission in Neosho County as well as Labette County and Coffey County. We have started a conversation with the town of Nicodemus, a community rich in black history. Billings pointed out that our story also transcends the Kansas/Missouri border. Travelers to our area will not be looking for a state boundary line. Suggestion to include those Missouri border communities when we meet in Fort Scott. We have been in contact with the Bushwhacker Museum in Nevada and Diamond, Missouri tells a good story, also.

We have also expanded our partnerships to include Kansas Main Street Program, the Kansas Land Trust, the Kansas Commerce Prosperity Summits and the Pride Programs of eastern Kansas communities.

The steering committee comprised of Judy Billings, Debbie White, John Nichols, Alice Widnor & Chris Meinhardt announced rollout of functioning subcommittees. They are as follows:

**Management of the area:** Those willing to serve include: Debbie White, Gwen Martin and Sharole Prah.

**Data Review:** Group to lend authenticity to our research, the relevance of information received and assist in the overall story telling. Those committee members to be Chris Meinhardt, Eileen Robertson and John Nichols.

**Partnership/Finance:** Group to define our partnerships, work our letters of support and promise of financial commitment. Those assisting in this capacity are Andrea Renick-Bell and Alice Widnor.

**Website Development:** have reserved our domain but not much else. Develop the site to include maps, destinations and narratives of our respective stories. Those volunteering were Kerry Altenbernd, Dave Evans and Stoney Gaddy.

Our next goal is to polish the approach. Sue Pridemore is to provide sample legislation, we will need the support of both state and national elected officials. Pointed out the Senator Brownback is newly appointed to the Interior Committee. Will need to bring Kansas Representatives Jerry Moran, Dennis Moore and Jim Ryan on board soon. We also have the good fortune of the lobbying skills of Federal Judge Deanell Tacha going to bat for the group.

In hopes that the parallel timing of the Kansas Sesquicentennial and our heritage area application work to our benefit. We will be showcasing the rich history of our statehood at a time when Kansas is in the limelight.

Finally the study will be circulated to those members of BKNHA for critique and eventual final approval.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Bauman, Acting Scribe