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27 February 2009

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Dear Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museum members:

In December and January, the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums (the Alliance) partnered with the Minnesota Historical Society, Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, the Minnesota Archaeological Society, and the Council for Minnesota Archaeology to host four public meetings to discuss the Minnesota Legacy Act which was passed by Minnesota voters in the fall election. These meetings were held to get input on the needs of local history community, how they saw the Legacy Act as benefit (or hindrance) to those needs, and how to proceed forward.

The consensus that came out of the meetings was that the organizations that convened the meetings would move forward bring a recommendation to the Minnesota Legislature using the input from the four meetings. In early January, the Alliance sent letters to the other members of newly dubbed Minnesota History Coalition (MHC) affirming that there was a need for operating funds, bricks-and-mortar/capital funds, and project funds.

On February 12, the MHC met and agreed to an official recommendation that would be brought announced to legislators at the February 16 History Matters rally. The full text of the recommendation can be found at <http://www.minnesotahistorymuseums.org/legacyact2.pdf>.

Essentially, it calls for the following:

- 50% of the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund be dedicated in statute to statewide history programs
- Of that 50%, funding be allocated as follows:
  - 45% for History Programs and Projects that are of Statewide Significance and are a State Responsibility;
  - 30% for History Programs and Projects that are operated or conducted by or through Local, Regional and Other Historical Organizations to be distributed through a competitive grant program; and
  - 25% for History Programs and Projects that are operated by partnerships of organizations in order to encourage collaboration to improve capacity and expertise.

Each member of the MHC endorsed the position, the Alliance officially endorsed it with a unanimous resolution at the February 16 meeting of its board of directors.

Our members will most likely be interested in the 30% pot of money (although they could have access



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to all three pots). If this proposal passes through the legislature without changes, it means that the first year there will be approximately \$7.5 million available from this sales tax fund.

The Alliance feels that this proposal is realistic and reasonable to each of the partner organizations involved. The members of the MHC feel that a united front on this is the most effective way to approach the legislature. This was the wish of the organizations and individuals that joined in at the four public meetings and makes the most sense.

The next steps are for the MHC to meet again and for each of its members to bring this to the legislature. A talking points memo on the Minnesota Legacy Act and the MHC's position can be found at <http://www.minnesotahistorymuseums.org/legacyact1.pdf>. If your organization's board of directors takes an official position on the MHC's recommendation we would love to hear it. Please let one of our board members know.

Warmest regards,

Todd S. Mahon  
President