

Wyoming Semiquincentennial (250th) Meeting

January 8, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Wyoming Office of Tourism, 5611 High Plains Road Cheyenne, WY 82007

Meeting #2

AGENDA

***Call to Order** - Representative Sandy Newsome, Task Force Chairman

***Roll Call**

- All present except John Sinclair and Joanna Kail

***Appointment of a Secretary to take meeting minutes** - Kate Barlow volunteered

***Update from the Chairman** - subcommittee meetings underway

Timeline review

- 1/9/2024: Representative Newsome asking for \$1 million from tourism reserve account for Task Force with matching \$1 million from general fund
- Moving next meeting because of Legislature to Feb 9th at 9am - Location: State Museum
- Logo competition announced April 2nd: to schools and to general public
- March meeting also in Cheyenne because of legislature
- April 8th meeting will be held in Riverton likely at the College
- May 13th meeting will be in Cody
- June 10th meeting will be held in Evanston
- July 4, 2024 reveal theme and start countdown to 2026
- July 8th meeting will be in Sheridan
- August 12th will be held in Torrington
- September 9th meeting will be held in Casper
- October 14th meeting will be in Thayne/Afton/Star Valley
- November 18th meeting will be in Cheyenne
- December 9th meeting will be in Cheyenne

***Committee Reports**

-**Theme Committee** - Rebecca West - (**Full Report Below**) Met last week reviewed info - foundation and inspiration - logos and slogans more than a title something to connect people. ASLH has great guidelines 5 areas of focus to guide development - gather momentum on collective idea of Wyoming - something useable for communities - developing options to review before Feb meeting - working closely with marketing committee - moving quickly

-**Timeline/Scheduling:** Representative Newsome - See above

-Community Outreach: Shawn Reese - *(Full Report Below)* Met in December - discussed local guide book draft aug/sep timeframe - published and distributed early 2025 - working on local commission guidelines - using themes to divide work - meeting later this week identify individuals and organizations to help committee reach the public - looking for ways to make this Wyoming centric

-250th Events at the Capitol: Justice Gray - *(Full Report Below)* Met in early January - July 4th, 2026 as the centerpiece - several capitol exhibition projects that are funded seeing how we can blend with 250th Celebration - Viewings of PBS documentary in Cheyenne - working on identifying partners statewide - Capitol for the day possible option - calendar of statewide events - next meeting will bring more ideas - once we have a theme they will be able to build this out more

-K-12 Curriculum: Superintendent Degenfelder - Meeting tomorrow

-Marketing: Diane Shober - *(Full Report Below)* Met in December - broke conversation down in to timeline Nick has report from meeting - 90 day - 3 to 9 months - using already established in state campaign - getting the folks in the state excited - 250 ways to celebrate in Wyoming - working with tribes to integrate their stories - 1 year out

-Fundraising/Grants/Legislative Appropriation: Representative Newsome and Nick Neylon - Newsome going to make an ask tomorrow - 250th seed money application in process

***Old Business - No old business**

- Make effort to integrate other folks into subcommittees

***New Business**

- Kevin reached out to DAR and SAR - going to meet with them and see what their interest is in working with us - will report back.

***Next meeting date and time - Date change discussion**

- See above

Theme Committee Report:

- Theme committee members include Rebecca West, Shawn Reese, Kevin Voyles, Paul Fleischer and Nick Neylon de facto member for all committees
- Committee met last week and reviewed initial information on the purpose and definition of themes for Wyoming in the Semiquincentennial
 - *Very briefly* clarify the role of a theme versus a subject, slogan etc. for the task force
 - Used the AASLH 250 Guidelines for inspiration (Heritage; Unfinished Revolutions; Power of Place; We the People; Doing History and the American Experiment) and a “springboard” but not necessarily the direction we are going.
- Specifically the role of the themes for the Task Force overall and the state of Wyoming
 - Gathering momentum on the collective idea that Wyoming has a unique position historically and today as a place we all love with unique character and strong independence!
 - Thematic framework critical to establish structure and spirit for the task force; ultimately for communities, and organizations to use for the exploration and celebrations.
 - Will apply the theme committee work to inform the marketing and other committees.
 - Acknowledge a sense of urgency to create these important foundations for the other groups.
- Process: Draft themes with several options for review by this task force, we will also consult the Marketing and Community committees with the drafts prior to the February meeting.
- What to expect:
 - Draft several options for your review,
 - discussion, edits, adoption
 - We will present possible “slogans” or key branding phrases along with themes and/or subthemes
 - Goals are to create usable themes for all Task Force purposes going forward.
- This committee will meet again on January 23 and has committed to doing excellent, efficient and creative work in this time frame. Draft several different options – an attempted slogan with a theme.

Community Outreach Report: We discussed Governor Gordon’s highest priority which is the production of a local guidebook. We talked about various partners (We the People and the Library Association, for instance) we need to include in our committee. We talked about the 1976 guidebook and how it used themes to identify partners and suggested activities. We discussed the national themes for America 250 (which may vary slightly from the eventual Wyoming themes). We agreed that the America250 themes are a good way to approach and divvy up our work, even if the Wyoming themes may vary. We talked about a guidebook timeline and set a goal of publication by January 2025 which means we need a draft by August/September 2024. One of the things we will need to talk about more is a local commission “certification” process and Shawn can reach out to WAM and WCCA to discuss

with the executive directors of those organizations for a start. We talked about the need to meet monthly and set our next meeting for Friday, January 12 at 2 pm.

Thematic Assignments for Jan 12 meeting (descriptions and assignees follows)

- Who are the individuals and organizations that can help develop suggested activities at the state and local level? Who are possible audiences and voices that we should keep in mind in developing guidance?
- How can the theme be made Wyoming-centric? Are there sub-themes we should consider in developing programming?
- What are some initial ideas for state and local activities we add to an idea board?
- When are some key dates/events by partner organizations that we should consider? (For example, We the People state competitions are in December of each year; Historic Preservation month is held annually in May.)

Assignees, themes, and descriptions from [America 250 guidebook](#)

- **Shawn**, Unfinished Revolutions. In the United States, the fight for liberty, equality, and justice has a long and complex history. Through formal politics, grassroots organizing, boycott, protest, litigation, war, and a wide range of other mass and individual actions, people have continually challenged America to live up to our highest ideals—often drawing on ideas expressed in our founding documents. Before, during, and after the Revolution, people have fought for their rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and worked tirelessly to secure the blessings of liberty for themselves and their posterity. This history is not a consistent march of progress, but a complex story full of both advancements and setbacks. These stories reveal the ways the Revolution began before 1776 and reverberates through to the present.
- **Nick**, Power of Place. Place offers a powerful lens through which we can view the past. It challenges us to think beyond modern political boundaries and to consider the full history of the space we now call the United States. A deep engagement with place enables us to reconsider significant questions about our history: from Indigenous peoples' past and present connections with American spaces, to a community's relationships with and use of land, waterways, and natural resources, to the profound and unequal consequences of imperial expansion and colonization across the continent. This theme encourages us to reexamine ideas about our natural and built environments and to reorient when and where we find our country's history.
- **Kari**, We the People. Since the nation's founding, definitions of "the people," the boundaries of national belonging, and the very nature of citizenship have changed. For much of our history, the United States has excluded people—women, free and enslaved African Americans, Indigenous people, immigrants, people with disabilities, the poor, and many others—from full participation and representation in the nation's political, economic, and cultural life. Yet over time the United States has also incorporated people of different backgrounds into our society, as diverse populations have staked their claim to belonging and pressed for a more pluralistic, more equitable nation. The expansion of citizenship and belonging has never been pre-determined nor guaranteed, and changes in our population remain a subject of debate and conflict today.
- **Gregg**, American Experiment. The leaders of the founding era did not have all the answers. Though their innovations of representative democracy and rights-based

constitutionalism were transformative, they knew the nation was a revolutionary experiment. They expected future generations to improve upon the republic they created. The 250th anniversary offers an opportunity to reconsider the origins of our government, democratic institutions, and broader civic life, and a chance to reflect on the ways we have changed them over time. Encouraging discussion about our democracy and civic institutions can help strengthen understanding, inspire action, and reveal ways that all of us can participate in and shape the ongoing American experiment.

- **Cindy, Doing History.** To renew public engagement with history, we—scholars, curators, educators, historians, archivists, preservationists, and more—must invite our publics to participate in the process of doing history. The 250th anniversary challenges our field to explain how we interpret evidence and craft narratives about the past, engaging in open conversations about what history is, the many ways it is done, and why it matters. By more transparently communicating our methods for learning about the past, we can help audiences better understand how new questions, evidence, and perspectives inform our histories, how they can better do history in their own lives, and how these histories can speak to present-day challenges. Sharing how we do history will also require us to explain silences and exclusions in our archives and collections, and to communicate how oral history, community knowledge, and the perspectives of other disciplines also inform our understanding of the past. Inviting audiences to engage with the historical method can help them see more clearly the value of inclusive narratives and become more comfortable with the ambiguous, contested, and always-evolving nature of history.

Capitol Subcommittee: The Capitol Subcommittee held its meeting on January 3, 2024. Members of the committee are Kari Gray (Chair), Riana Davidson, Wendy Madsen, Nick Neylon, Mike O'Donnell, Sara Sheen, and Diane Shober.

Nick provided an overview of the Semiquincentennial project including Governor Gordon's three priorities: (1) K-12 educational component; (2) community guidebook; and (3) Capitol celebration along the lines of the grand opening.

This committee's focus is on the Capitol and they agreed that its plan should include a Capitol celebration on July 4, 2026, as a centerpiece of other ideas and projects. Wendy reported that there are a number of Capitol exhibit projects in the works that might blend well with this project. She will provide the committee with a list of those projects.

Wendy and Sara both have files on the activities, budgets, participants, and more from the Capitol grand opening. They will provide these materials to the committee.

Discussion of projects, partners, and funds included a PBS documentary and possible viewings in Cheyenne locations or at the Capitol outdoors; coordination with Cheyenne and its 4th of July activities; outreach to the Wyoming Arts Council, Library Association, 23 communities, Jeremiah Reiman, WAM, Museum Association, Press Association, Daughters of the American Revolution, and others. Projects included: Capitol for a Day remote or in Cheyenne for 23 counties, outdoor viewing of PBS production, special venue viewing of PBS production, work around exhibits

being funded, 2026 gallery exhibit related to 250th, statewide events calendar, website support for events, and funding sources.

Each committee member was tasked with bringing more ideas to the next meeting. It is anticipated a theme will have been adopted, and we can begin to frame the mission. The next meeting will be set between January 8 and February 12, 2024, at the Capitol Classroom.

Marketing Committee Report:

Short-term 90 day

Task force adopts a common theme(s) and a community guidebook for the 23 counties and community organizations activation.

State Parks/Cultural Resource (SPCR) - Set up platform for Wyoming constituent engagement, ie learn about events; apply for funding; task force meeting notes, announcement, etc. Wyoming PBS will assist in producing "How-To Videos." Support SPCR in determining how to aggregate the in-state information.

Mid-Term 3-9 months

Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT) - once the above is accomplished WOT activates with in-state paid media to drive awareness.

Sub-committee vets activation ideas and works with other sub-committees for information to be used for in-state message - getting Wyoming folks excited and involved. Develop a paid, earned and own strategy, including content development and distribution for consumer facing awareness.

Work with K-12 curriculum sub-committee for content on civics, government and democracy.

Explore cultural activations, ie art contests, film contest (PBS), etc.

Explore variations on the number 250 and how to integrate into content and storytelling.

Work with Teresa and _____ (Eastern Shoshone rep) to capture and integrate our native peoples stories, experiences and perspectives. The truth and untold.

Long-term 12+ months to July 4, 2026

Continue outreach to Wyoming communities and collaborate with other committees on opportunities for content.

Media strategy and deployment TBD.