

Pittock Mansion Society
TRANSITION GUIDE

August 2005

Prepared by
CULTURAL IMAGES
Portland, OR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Situation: As a result of City administrative changes and increased demands on the City's General Fund budget, the Parks & Recreation Dept (P&R) requested that the Pittock Mansion Society (PMS) consider becoming more involved in helping to finance and/or administer the Pittock Mansion site and programs. More specifically, it was suggested by P&R that the PMS contribute about \$40,000 a year by the beginning of FY 06/07 to offset a contemplated General Fund reduction of about 20% to the Pittock Mansion's budget.

Recommended Response: Of the several possible response options, it is recommended that the PMS embrace this challenge as an opportunity to enhance the Pittock Mansion program and assert itself as the body responsible for the administration and programs of the Pittock Mansion, still working with P&R who would assume the operational responsibilities of maintaining the structure and grounds. A transition period of between 3 and 5 years is seen as the time it would take to transform the PMS into an organization with the capacity to completely fulfill that new level of responsibility and authority.

Rationale: PMS's acceptance of the challenge to pick up approximately \$40,000 of the City's current General Fund annual budget support of the Pittock Mansion and the resulting transition is based on the assumption that P&R would continue to be responsible for utilities, contracted services, and all maintenance and repair. PMS would begin a 3-4 year transition period over which time they would assume responsibility for the administration and programming components of the Pittock Mansion, including responsibility for all staff. This scenario presents the opportunity for a much clearer delineation of responsibilities between the PMS and P&R than currently exists.

Budget forecasting for the next three fiscal years show that the suggested target figure of a \$40,000 reduction to the General Fund support of the Pittock Mansion would not be achieved until FY 07/08. However, at that point the reduction more than exceeds that initial goal, and in the next year would be reduced even more as the PMS grows its infrastructure and capacity to raise increased amounts of contributed and earned income. At that point the transition plan would have more than met the City's suggested funding goal, and at the same time would have enhanced the Pittock Mansion program's staffing and programs, building a stronger, more relevant institution.

Consequences: By accepting this challenge to assume greater administrative, fiscal and programmatic responsibility, the transition of authority and responsibility, if carefully planned and crafted, would

- help strengthen and grow the Pittock Mansion program,
- help clarify and unify roles and responsibilities between PMS and P&R, as well as between PMS board and committees and Pittock Mansion staff,
- attract more financial support from the private sector,
- encourage the PMS to be more responsive to the community it serves and be more innovative in planning and developing programs that attract and sustain the interest of an increased number of annual visitors, and
- force the PMS to clarify and/or restate their vision and mission, and develop strategic plans, including a strategy for the transition, to help achieve PMS goals and objectives.

Major Steps in the Transition: If the PMS decides to proceed with this recommendation, they must immediately

- Create a Transition Team, with a clear purpose and direction, that can help craft the transition process, incorporating it into the PMS planning process, and meet certain objectives and deadlines with regards to facilitating the shift of authority and responsibility from the City to the PMS. The Transition Team, with the managerial support of the Executive Director, would be responsible for overseeing the successful completion of the next three steps.
- Negotiate an addendum to the Management Agreement between the City and PMS allowing the Executive Director position to report to the Pittock Mansion Society's Board of Trustees, while at the same time remain supervisor for all City funded employees. The Executive Director would assume the staff leadership role in moving the PMS forward in its transition planning, ensuring implementation in a timely manner, while at the same time be responsible for overseeing the complete operations of the Pittock Mansion program, both PMS and P&R components.
- Continue the strategic planning process already underway, rolling the requirement of a quickly developed transition plan and the need to restructure the governance of the organization into the mix. Goals and objectives already developed should be re-evaluated with regard to the restructured organization perspective and consider given to reprioritizing them and/or adding new ones in light of this new development.
- Draft a new Management Agreement for submission to City review by December 31, 2005 that clearly defines the PMS's revised perspective and expectations as the lead administrative, fiscal, and programmatic agency responsible for the Pittock Mansion program

Chris -

No V.P. -

Brought friends on Board

Encourage her applications for Directorship

Key Components of the Transition Process:

- City funded staff positions to be shifted to PMS staff positions over a three to four year period, starting with the Executive Director position.
- Hire a Development Officer and a Curator of Education to augment existing staff. The Development Officer is key to increasing annual income; the Education position is essential to providing justification for increased giving.
- Restructure the PMS governance, creating new and/or redirecting existing committees and embracing more effective ways of conducting business as the Board shifts from a “hands-on” philosophy to more policy setting and fundraising.
- Build an infrastructure that will grow and sustain the PMS as a viable organization.
- Establish careful budgeting and more strict financial practices.
- Rethink and retool, as necessary, the programs of the Pitttock Mansion to make them more relevant and interesting to the public.
- Develop carefully thought out and executed communications plan to assist in the marketing, public relations and community relations aspects of this major organizational transformation.
- Pay attention to the nature of change and its impact on all stakeholders, making every effort possible to minimize the stress and anxiety associated with change.

WILLIAM JOHN HAWKINS, III, ARCHITECT, FAIA

QUESTIONS for PITTOCK MANSION SOCIETY:

- HAVE THE BI-LAWS BEEN CHANGED TO REMOVE THE DUTIES OF THE P.M.S. FURNISHINGS' COMMITTEE?
- WILL A PROFESSIONALLY-TRAINED STAFF BE SOUGHT WHO HAVE SUBSTANTIAL KNOWLEDGE ON:
 - PORTLAND HISTORY, PORTLAND FAMILIES (SUCH AS THE PITTOCKS), SOCIAL CUSTOMS & INSTITUTIONS, ETC.
 - HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE & RESTORATION PRACTICES
 - ART COLLECTIONS, PERIOD FURNISHINGS, INTERIOR (PERIOD) DECORATIONS, ETC.
 - ACCEPTED HOUSE-MUSEUM CONSERVATION PRACTICES.
- WHO WILL TAKE THE LEAD ON THE LONG-RANGE HOUSE/COLLECTION IMPROVEMENTS? REMAINING PROJECTS (AMONG OTHERS) ARE:
 - RESTORATION OF LIBRARY (PITTOCK PORTRAITS, SHELVING)
 - RESTORATION OF DINING ROOM PANELING
 - COMPLETION OF PAINTING COLLECTION & RE-ARRANGEMENT OF PAINTING TO SUITABLE WALLS. IS THE PAINTING/ART COMMITTEE DISCONTINUED?
 - RESTORATION OF NEICE'S BEDROOM (PAINTING, CEILING LIGHT)
 - A GARAGE RESTORATION W/ 1920 CAR
 - CONSERVATION OF COLLECTION
 - SUBSTANTIAL INTERPRETIVE PRESENTATION (NOW LACKING)
- WILL THE MANSION BE AN HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM, PROFESSIONALLY RESPECTED, OR, AS MENTIONED, A RENTAL FACILITY?

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED JANUARY 27, 2006

William J. Hawkins, III FAIA

PITTOCK MANSION, TRANSITION GUIDE, 2005 (EXERPTS RELATED TO FURNISHINGS COMMITTEE)

pp 3 - It also perpetuates a division of authority and responsibility that is awkward to administer, and, quite, frankly, often stands in the way of the Pittock Mansion realizing its full potential. Current staff is City employees reporting to the Parks and Recreation Department. The PMS is a separate sector entity. Although there is a token effort to incorporate the City's interest in planning and budgeting into that of the PMS (and vice versa), there is no real coordination of fiscal or programmatic effort that is in the best interests of all involved without causing unnecessary strife and anxiety.

pp. 13 - Ownership of collections, structures & grounds should be restated, with the PMS having ownership (and responsibility/liability for care) of collections and the City having ownership of structures and grounds, as indicated for the City-operated park.

pp. 14 - Historically, the PMS Board has played an important role in the activities of running the Pittock Mansion as an historic house museum and through the Board committees, has been very hands-on in the acquisition, care and interpretation of the collections, organizing special events for members, organizing educational programs, as well as the more traditional board roles of policy-making, fund raising, planning and community relations.

pp. 16 Existing committees such as the Furnishings Committee and the Membership Committee might be renamed with roles and responsibilities more in line with the "new" PMS organization.

pp. 17 - As noted before, however, there has been an inherent structural defect in the PMS / City partnership that has made it difficult for the staff to be full participants in setting and reaching overarching goals for the Pittock Mansion, those that might be set by the "historic arm" of the partnership, the Pittock Mansion Society. It is likely that the goals set for an historic house museum by a public entity, such as the department of parks and recreation, may be more oriented to its operation as a public park rather than an historic house. Both of these perspectives are important, but the best result would come from shared planning, with staff and Board equally responsible for setting goals and accountable for reaching them.

pp. 28 - However, over the years the authority and responsibility for the acquisition, care and use of the Pittock Mansion collections has created a source of irritation. The City currently funds a Curator of Collections position; the PMS has a Furnishings Committee. Because the curator position is not a PMS position, the uncertainty of where responsibility begins and ends with regards to collections, and with whom that responsibility and authority does or should rest tends to create unnecessary tension.

pp. 28 - It is recommended that the Curator of Collections position be one of the first to be transferred to being funded by the PMS. This would mean that by July 1, 2007, the Curator would be an employee of the PMS, not the City

One of the consequences of the PMS beginning to fund staff positions is that longstanding more "hand-on" practices of committees in the past should be transformed into more of an advisory and advocacy role. Collections, often considered to be the "fun" part of volunteer involvement with a collecting organization, are often hard to let go to paid staff. The Board President and Executive Director must recognize this potentially emotional departure from what "has been" and work to make the collection responsibility and authority transition as smooth as possible, clearly delineating the rationale for any change in the current procedures.

pp. 29 - It is recommended that the PMS consider renaming the existing Furnishings Committee to that of Collections Management Committee, with a complete new set of responsibilities as the

group acting as advisors, advocates for collection development and care practices. Working with the professional staff, they might help draft new collection policies and review them at least annually, review collection management procedures to assure registration and cataloging of the collections is up-to-date and that collections can be easily retrieved by whatever system is in place; be supportive at the Board level and advocate for appropriate levels of funding to accomplish well-defined and prioritized collection related tasks or acquire need equipment and supplies; continually advocate for the improvement of collection storage; act as the in-between group between the staff and Board for reviewing collection items being recommended for deaccessioning; and be pro-active in the community to help staff select and acquire items on a continually updated acquisition "want list" and/or Collection Plan (which they worked with staff to help generate).

Most institution rely entirely on the professional curator's judgment, experience, knowledge and familiarity with the existing collections to accept items into the permanent collection. If the collection management committee and board of a collecting institution approves a Collection Policy that clearly delineates the parameters for what should or should not be collected, there should be no need to continually second guess the decision of a curator of collections.

pp. 30 - The PMS should view such a change in committee structure in a positive manner. It is not just taking away some authority from the current Furnishings Committee; it is developing a support and oversight role for a Collections Management Committee that has far broader ramifications than that of the Furnishings Committee.