

TO: Members of the Senate State Government And Finance And Policy Committee
From: Stephanie Chappell, District 18B
Date: 2-21-2022
RE: MN Historical Society Supplement Budget Request

Please take a moment to look at pages 97 and 98 of the Governor's Supplemental Budget (dated January 27, 2022). MN Historical Society (MNHS) makes two requests.

MNHS is a nonprofit organization that is completely separate and independent from MMB. (Neil Cunningham, MMB. Data Request 193. 22 Nov 2019.)
The nonprofit needs to separate its statutory obligations from its nonprofit passions.

Request 1 Operating Adjustment "salary, benefit increases" No Need

MNHS employees voted to unionize in November 2021. It is not state responsibility to incur expenses for a nonprofit's initial union agreement. MNHS can increase its nonprofit membership dues, increase book and gift shop sales, ask for donations and use State assets to increase admission prices to offset union fees. Volunteers can staff more hours at gift shops, ticket counters, historic sites and perform more tasks within statutory obligation arenas.

MNHS *chooses* third parties to manage some historic sites ([138.669](#)). It is not state responsibility to step in when MNHS is unable to enforce its contracts. For example, \$42,000 is excessive when a historic trail is neglected for numerous years. The trail was used by 1862's massacre victims and leads to the Battle of Redwood Ferry. (Lower Sioux Agency Historic Site).

Request 2 "Statewide Reopening" expenses No Need

Already, MNHS uses Legacy Amendment funds for employment (FTEs). MNHS received funds for sites that remained closed. Any funds not used in a biennium need to be returned ([16A.28 subd. 8](#)) or used in the biennium. Nonprofit financial mismanagement is not state responsibility. MNHS needs to provide a matrix for its closure decisions and address *conflicts of interest* regarding Historic Site Network property ownership since 1993 ([138.661](#)).

MNHS is *promoting removal of two Network historic sites*. [SF2544](#) and [DNR priority 11 of the Governor's 2022 Bonding \(page 51 of 54\)](#) & [2021's Land Bill](#) outline MNHS's plans and support to reduce its state obligations by "defeasance". *Fewer sites require less money.*

MNHS is a nonprofit that needs to account and pay for its statutory duties to Minnesota with its corporate stash of cash.

Thank you for taking time to review MNHS's state obligations.

Available to help with questions and supportive materials,

Stephanie Chappell
District 18B – Glencoe, MN
(member and federal signatory of VOICES, created for the federal Section 106 Process of the Fort Snelling Revitalization construction project)