

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

2013-2014 Performance Report

Will Rogers Memorial Commission

AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT:

Here a simple statement of the adopted mission of the agency should be provided, along with the entity or person(s) who adopted the mission statement and when it was adopted.

The mission of the Will Rogers Memorial Commission, as adopted by the Commission and its staff in 2010 and reaffirmed since, is to collect, preserve, and share the life, wisdom, and humor of Will Rogers for all generations.

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR:

Here the name, title, and contact information for the lead administrative person should be listed.

Steve Gragert, Director, P.O. Box 157, Claremore, OK 74018-0157; 918 343 8118 office; 405 612 1965 mobile; skgragert@willrogers.com

GOVERNANCE:

Here a brief description of the agency's governance structure should be provided. Is the agency headed by a Governor appointee? An appointee of an independent board? Who selects the board, and who are the current members of the board? Does the Board have any committees or subgroups? If so, please provide a detailed listing of the subgroups and their areas of focus.

By statute, the Will Rogers Memorial Commission is composed of seven members, one of whom is a lineal descendent of Will Rogers, unless no surviving lineal descendant of Will Rogers chooses to serve. Each member, including the Chair, is appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate. Each member is appointed to a six-year term and may be eligible for reappointment. Each serves without compensation. Each member holds office until a successor is appointed and qualified. Each is subject to removal in the same manner as other state officials not subject to impeachment.

Present members of the Will Rogers Memorial Commission are:

Jim Hartz, Chair

Philip D. Hixon

Steve Turnbo, Vice Chair

Stephen R. Pazzo, Jr.

James K. (Kem) Rogers, Secretary-Treasurer

Cara Cowan Watts

William R. Biard

The Commission does not operate with set committees, but ad hoc committees can be formed if needed.

GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY:

Please provide copies of the minutes for any Commission/Board meetings the agency has had since July 1, 2010 in electronic format (only in PDF format). Is there an attendance policy for board members/commissioners? If so, is it being followed?

Please see accompanying PDF of the approved minutes of the all regular quarterly meetings of the Will Rogers Memorial Commission held since 1 July 2010.

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The Commission does not have an attendance policy.

MODERNIZATION EFFORTS:

Please provide a listing of all government modernization efforts undertaken by the agency since July 1, 2010. Additionally, please provide any authorizing statutory changes that prompted the modernization efforts and whether those efforts have led to cost savings or additional cost burden. What steps has the agency taken to cut costs and/or eliminate waste? Are there efforts that have been successful which you believe could serve as a model for other state agencies seeking to keep costs minimal?

The Commission is fully cooperating with the implementation of the state IT and Telecommunications, Transfer, and Modernization program, but the agency's direct participation, other than in responding to requested reports, has been minimal because the extent of IT and telecommunications applications in our small agency is relatively insignificant. No member of the staff is designated or qualified to hold a position in Information Technology. We have a small network of users and only a handful of computers. We had progressed significantly, even before the state modernization plan was implemented, to convert internally from hardcopy filing systems to electronic, to adopt and use electronic documentation, and to take other steps towards inter-agency and intra-agency modernization of recordkeeping and communications. When IT questions arise, we consult among ourselves or very occasionally seek outside assistance. Our IT expenditures are insignificant. They comprised only .135 percent of the agency's requested budget for FY-2013.

The Will Rogers Memorial Commission has contracted with Agency Business Services (ABS) of the Office of State Finance since August 2010. ABS provides the Commission with support services in budgeting, procurement, accounts payable, general accounting, reporting, asset management, accounts receivable and billing, and document imaging services. The Commission's partnership with ABS has resulted in hours saved, but our staff must still regularly, if not daily, perform some accounting, budgeting, and reporting tasks. On the other hand, the hours that have been saved have allowed the one full-time and one part-time staff members previously performing tasks now covered through our relationship with ABS to redirect those saved hours to other tasks in our agency. They have been able, for example, to assist with our educational programming in an education-focused agency that cannot afford even a part-time education coordinator and also to implement and manage our new project to collect admission charges at the Memorial Museum in Claremore.

In addition to the cost-saving steps noted above, the Commission has moved to convert to more efficient lighting systems throughout its museums and to adopt and use electronic forms and filing systems.

For the first time in its 74-year history, the Memorial Museum, Claremore, began charging admission on 1 January 2012. We just completed our first full year of admission fees. We

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had projected \$100,000 in collected charges, but ended the calendar year grossing \$85,351, about 15 percent below the projection. We recorded 33,028 visitors per the admissions desk, and our net income through September for calendar year 2012 was \$46,248.55.

Collecting admission charges will help fill the gap caused by recent budget reductions and, eventually perhaps, will enable us to address critical deferred infrastructural issues, such as the installation of a dehumidification system at the Memorial Museum and the preservation of the 74-year-old native limestone structure.

CORE MISSION:

What services are you required to provide that are outside of your core mission? Are any services you provide duplicated or replicated by another agency? Are there services which are core to your mission which you are unable to perform because of requirements to perform non-core services elsewhere?

The Will Rogers Memorial Commission's core mission, as stated above, is unique among state agencies and has been since it was established by statute in 1937. The Commission is not required to provide services that are outside its core mission. No other state agency provides exactly the same services that the Commission provides in fulfillment of its unique mission. The Commission does partner with other state-operated museums whenever and wherever possible and appropriate, such as in museum-standard conservation measures and consultation about collections management, best practices, exhibit design and installation, and educational programming.

PRIVATE ALTERNATIVES:

Are any of the services that are performed by the agency also performed in the private sector in Oklahoma? In other states? Has the agency been approached by any foundation, for-profit or not-for-profit corporation with efforts to privatize some of the functions of the agency?

No private entity in Oklahoma or elsewhere provides the same services that the Commission provides in fulfillment of its unique mission. The Commission does partner with other museums, public and private, whenever and wherever possible and appropriate, such as in conservation services and consultation about collections management, best practices, exhibit design and installation, educational programming, and many other areas.

The officers and director of the Will Rogers Memorial Commission have been in conversation with the Board of Directors of Will Rogers Heritage, Inc., a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation doing business as the Will Rogers Memorial Foundation, about a possible public/private partnership embracing management, maintenance, and support of the Will Rogers Memorial Museum, Claremore, and Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, Oologah.

As provided by statute, the Commission leases to Will Rogers Heritage retail space in the Will Rogers Memorial Museum for sale of, but not limited to, books, periodicals, memorabilia, souvenirs, and other items related to Will Rogers.