

January 8, 2023

Representative Ginny Klevorn, Chair
and Members of the House State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS). My name is Molly Jessup, and I am a Public Program Specialist at Mill City Museum in Minneapolis. I am also the President of our Minnesota Historical Society Union. Our Executive Board represents AFSCME Local 3173 and the non-managerial staff of the Historical Society.

We announced our intention to unionize on September 1, 2021. Our staff voted overwhelmingly in favor of unionization during our election under the National Labor Relations Board in November 2021. Since that time period, our members created a constitution that spoke to the needs of our MNHS worker community, elected an Executive Board, and trained stewards. Most importantly, we surveyed and conversed with bargaining unit eligible staff at the Historical Society to learn their priorities for bargaining. This information was then used to guide our initial proposals with the end result being thirty pages of proposals being delivered to management on June 1st, 2022. We are currently in negotiations.

We are proud of the work that we do to serve Minnesotans. Our members do many different kinds of jobs including, but not limited to: library and archives work, managing collections, researching and developing exhibits, teaching students on field trips, mentoring students in History Day programs, maintaining historic properties, and providing outreach services to county historical societies. Our members work in sites across the state, and we are the face of the organization for much of the public.

We are entrusted by people, organizations, communities, and the state to be stewards of our stories, objects, and places for the current and future generations. It is an incredible honor to do this work, and our members are invested in Minnesota history.

We appreciate the Legislature's continued support of our union members, MNHS colleagues, and our institution. We look forward to continuing the conversation about how the Minnesota Historical Society can best continue its work and serve the people of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Molly Jessup
President, AFSCME Local 3173