

Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission
MINUTES
Regular Monthly Meeting
9:30 a.m., Wednesday December 3rd, 2014
Historic County Court House, 71 Main Street Flemington., NJ

Present: Stephanie B. Stevens, John Kuhl, Jim Davidson, Frank Curcio, Lora Jones, Beth Rice, Maeve Pambianchi, Freeholder Suzanne Lagay,

2 Vacancies open on Commission

Executive Director: Carrie Fellows

Staff Present: Susan Holcombe-Pena

O.P.M.A.

At 9:34 a.m. Chair Stevens declared the meeting open and properly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

I. APPROVAL OF October 30th, 2014 REGULAR MONTHLY MINUTES
Moved by Rice to approve, Seconded by Jones, Motion Carried.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Fellows shared an emailed letter from Nick Paleologos, Executive Director of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and a lovely note from Elizabeth Mattson, Chair, New Jersey State Council on the Arts about how great the NJSCA meeting had went here at the Historic County Courthouse. Executive Director Fellows reported that she completed and executed the Arts Council Grant contract that is due on December 20th. The 2014 re-grants are due on Monday December 8th at noon. The Special Projects grants review panel met on November 5th, recommendations are pending the Freeholders approval of that budget line item for 2015.

Executive Director Fellows reported that courthouse move; the goal is to be in by the first full week of January 2015, pending furniture arrival. All non-current files have been moved and cabinets. The AGTS materials are still in the Planning Department. Computer set up for the front office, copy/fax/printer has been moved into the front office as well. Communications with Century Link has been established along with IT. The main computer will move at the very last since it's in use. A reconditioned computer for the file room could be in the works at some point. The proposal for the conference table, chairs and suite of furniture for the front office should arrive today. Attended a meeting with Frank Bell and Commissioner Jones to discuss hanging systems and gallery lighting within the courthouse. It may be March before systems are in place due to the time needed for bidding and purchasing approvals. Discussed with Frank Bell and County Counsel to determine an interim procedure for renting the courthouse, going forward after this Commission meeting there will be a meeting with Freeholder Lagay, Sue Dziamara and Frank Bell to see what we can do with the current formal policy for renting the space after the new year. The courthouse rental policy hasn't been updated since 2007 and it doesn't take into consideration offices within the building. Executive Director Fellows reported that the master list of items to purchase and things to be moved is being updated daily.

Executive Director Fellows reported that regarding the two open spots on the Commission, the Clerk of the Board has advised her to hold all recommendations until after the first of the year for review so that the terms start all at the same time.

Chair Stevens asked if the press release went out about the NJSCA meeting that was held here, Executive Director Fellows reported that it did make it in the online NJ.com edition with a few photos.

Executive Director Fellows reported that she has been working on the 2015 budget, web site updates, and Facebook.

III. GRANT REPORTS

Special Projects-Commissioners Kuhl, Curcio and Rice. Commissioner Kuhl reported that they took in all the applications and looked over them thoroughly, and it hurt him very much that they had to turn down the only history application for incompleteness, no matching dollar amounts as specified within the grant requirements. Successful grant applicants cannot be assigned exact amounts until the budget line item is approved by the Freeholders. Commissioner Rice explained that the only consistent thing about all the grants is that no one knows how to properly fill out the applications. Rice thought that a workshop might be in order, or simplifying the forms. Commissioner Pambianchi thought the questions on the form – at least for the arts groups - are not well thought out and it's hard for the applicants to apply correctly. Commissioner Rice wanted to let the Commission know that the panel tried to be "Objective" versus "Subjective" when going over the applications. Commissioner Kuhl said that in most cases the amounts awarded were more than last year. Chair Stevens reported that Special Projects monies come from the Hunterdon County Freeholders, but the rules need to be revisited since history organizations are getting bumped out. It reads that the History people can only use funds to preserve a building that they own and is on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, they cannot use funds for brochures or printing, or conserving artifacts. Freeholder Lagay suggested that the grant guidelines may need to be addressed to correct this.

Chair Stevens entertained a motion to accept the recommendations pending monies that are dispersed by the Freeholders. Moved by Jones, Seconded by Curcio, All in favor

Commissioner Kuhl agreed that the forms need to be addressed. Executive Director Fellows agreed that there is a clear need to overhaul the forms to make them user friendly, with a workshop to help potential applicants.

Chair Stevens reminded the Commission that we lost the presence when the Commission moved from the Choir school to Route 12. Now with Carrie being the new ED, we need to obtain our presence again. Commissioner Pambianchi suggested a yearly gathering of arts and history organizations hosted by the Commission to help bring them all together.

IV. COMMISSION PROJECTS

Arts

Kids Kulture: Commissioner Pambianchi reported that the Immaculate Conception School changed their performance to "The Arm of the Sea" group due to parent concern that "Ten Hairy Legs" would be inappropriate for children of that age group. The Lambertville Public School picked up "Arm of the Sea" for their performance on December 11. Commissioner Pambianchi thought that going to the schools in July might help them in scheduling for the upcoming school year, or start a letter in January and February for scheduling. Freeholder Lagay thought personal contact is the best route, but you need to find that contact. Commissioner Pambianchi asked how much the program is funded each year, Commissioner Jones replied \$5000. Commissioner Pambianchi also brought up the possibility of doing a Friday evening performance, distribute tickets through the school and work with the PTAs to invite the student body. Possibly two main shows, one in north county and one in south county. Commissioner Davidson suggested the "Little Theatre" at Hunterdon Central High School. The theatre holds 300 people. To do a show at the theatre on a Friday night or Saturday there would be no cost to use the theatre. Chair Stevens suggested a committee. Commissioner Pambianchi and Davidson assigned to it.

Art Goes to School:

Chair Stevens reported that AGTS ramps up January through May. They are a self-governed group that does a fabulous job with bringing art into the schools.

History & Preservation

Site Signs:

Commissioner Kuhl said that Peter Apgar wants a sign at Schaefer Egbert Corner in Califon; Commissioner Kuhl has made several attempts to contact Mr. Apgar, then was directed to contact Shaun Van Doren, to determine where the location in question is – no one seems to know. At this point the sign is in limbo until confirmation of information provided is verified; additional concerns are that the information provided will not fit on a sign, and the language is not consistent with the Commission's style.

Chair Stevens asked in regards to the cost of these signs with the new sign maker "FASTSIGNS", Commissioner Kuhl replied that the cost is up approximately ten dollars.

Commissioner Kuhl stated that we received a request from Califon for assistance with an interpretive sign for remediation on encroachment for a stormwater improvement project on which the DEP is working with them. It's for the Waldron's Creamery – the remains of the historic stone-lined channel which carried stream water through the town for creamery operations in the 19th century are being disturbed for the project. Chair Stevens said that it appears that they just want us to do the verbiage. Executive Director Fellows said the town may erect a sign similar to our site signs but it cannot have our county seals or county logos, as it is not a Commission marker per se.

Roads of Home:

Commission Curcio stated that it's moving along.

Sites of Historic Interest:

Chair Stevens had nothing to report at this time. She did state that she would continue the project even though she is retiring from the Commission.

V. FREEHOLDER UPDATES/COMMENTS/BOARD DEVELOPEMENT

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Open Commission spots:

Chair Stevens updated the Commission that we have one historian nominated by Jim Davidson; Dave Harding. Bob Sussna was nominated by Lora Jones, although he can only serve one term due to his age. Commissioner Jones thought he would be a great candidate since he knows many artists and many contacts in the South County area. Maureen Chatfield also nominated by Commissioner Jones. Maureen is a dynamite marketer and artist in the Tewksbury area has also lots of contacts in that area. Chair Stevens asked Executive Fellows if all the needed paperwork has been submitted for the next meeting of the Freeholders, and it has.

Chair Stevens requested a motion to recommend them, moved by Commissioner Rice, Seconded by Commission Davidson; All in favor.

Commissioner Curcio has brought up the conflict of interest policy at the County level. Freeholder Lagay suggested that a formal letter needs to be drawn to outline the policy and have County Council go over the policy. Fellows will discuss with County Counsel to seek guidance for next steps.

Nomination Committee

Chair Stevens reported that a committee was chosen to nominate members for position within the commission. The committee comprised of Commissioner Kuhl, and Commissioner Curcio, with Freeholder Lagay sitting in. Commissioner Kuhl reported that it was a rather quick meeting; they nominated Commissioner Jones as the Chair and Commissioner Pambianchi and Vice Chair starting in January 2015.

Commissioner Davidson made a motion to nominate both and close nominations. Chair Stevens asked if there were any other nominations.

Commissioner Kuhl moved that nominations be closed, Commissioner Davidson seconded; All in favor

Commissioner Pambianchi was asked if she accepted this position in the Commission, she accepted.

Chair Stevens made a motion to accept; all in favor. None opposed.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Paul Jennis Mural Update:

Chair Stevens replied that it's done and gorgeous. The reception came together; everything is complete.

Cultural Directory Update:

Staff reported that the Directory is up and running on the Cultural & Heritage website. People can still be added at any given time, just submit information to staff.

Tillers of the Soil:

Chair Stevens reported that 400 copies have been printed and are steadily selling.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS / CORRESPONDENCE:

Chair Stevens announced her departure from being the Chair of the Commission, gave her last blessings.

Various flyers/brochures, newsletters, press releases were available for review by the members.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Commissioner Rice moved to adjourn. **Motion carried**
Meeting adjourned at 10:45 am so members could attend a reception in Commissioner Stevens' honor.

Respectfully submitted

Susan Holcombe-Pena