

Hunterdon County Cultural & Heritage Commission
MINUTES
Regular Monthly Meeting
9:30 a.m., Thursday February 26th, 2015
Historic County Court House, 71 Main Street Flemington., NJ

Present: Lora Jones, John Kuhl, Jim Davidson, Frank Curcio, Maeve Pambianchi, Beth Rice, Robb Sussna

2 Vacancies open on Commission

Executive Director: Carrie Fellows

Staff Present: Susan Holcombe-Pena

Guest: Steve Fox, Flemington

O.P.M.A.

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

I. APPROVAL OF January 29, 2015 REGULAR MONTHLY MINUTES

Moved by Davidson to approve, Seconded by Kuhl, Motion Carried.

II. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Jones welcomed Robert (Robb) Sussna as one of the newly elected Commissioners to the Commission. He comes to us with a vast art background and many great connections. Chair Jones also noted that we still have 2 vacancies on the Commission. Concern was raised that we retain a balance between history and the arts within the Commission.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Fellows reported to the Commission about how its role fits into the CEDS document: to support and develop a supportive and productive environment for the arts, history, and culture within the county as described within the CEDS Executive Summary (copies distributed). There is a need to tie into and engage the community about the CEDS goals, so bringing in Commissioners experienced in these areas would be beneficial.

Website updating is ongoing. The Facebook page currently stands with 120 "likes", and is active.

Executive Fellows reviewed the calendars in the meeting packets, with updates and potential workshop dates listed. Executive Fellows put in a funding request for the Mid-Atlantic ALHFAM meeting at Monmouth County Parks; and the NJHC Best Practice Workshop, both in March. Her session proposal for the June ALHFAM Annual/International conference (Williamsburg, VA) was accepted; she has applied for a fellowship to cover registration and lodging expenses.

Executive Fellows reported that there had been an issue reported with the bindings of the Tillers of the Soil book; she asked if faulty bindings were found, to report them to her and Pam at the print shop, and the books will be replaced.

IV. GRANT REPORTS

Executive Director Fellows reported that the Local Arts Staffing Initiative (LASI) grant and final 2014 Local Art Programs (LAP) grant reports have been submitted to the State Council on the Arts. The LASI grant, if fully funded, will fund salary and benefits starting in January 2016 for a Local Arts Coordinator. The Special Projects Grants,

funded through the Board of Chosen Freeholders, in the past has been a \$22,500.00 line item. The budget is still pending. Grant recipients will receive an award letter stating if they have been funded or not, with the amount dependent on acceptance of the county budget.

The possibility of bringing on an unpaid intern for the summer is being explored through the Department of Human Resources.

V. COMMISSION PROJECTS

Arts

Kids Kulture: No report.

Art Goes to School:

Executive Director Fellows reported that a couple more schools have been added to the active program. School visitations are scheduled through June.

Essay Contest: Executive Director Fellows reported that a media release had been distributed and was published in the Hunterdon County Democrat. Schools have until March 20th to send in their forms if they plan to participate. Reminders will be sent out in a few weeks.

In response to the question if there are any contests for children who cannot express themselves in an essay, Chair Jones asked that Commissioner Sussna to chair an ad hoc committee to develop an art or architecture contest.

Art/History Expo:

Executive Director Fellows reported that June 13th has been reserved for the Expo. Each participant will receive one six foot table to display there. A flyer and agreement are in the works to be distributed in the near future.

Exhibitions and Programs: An Art Committee will be established to help prepare and plan future exhibitions.

History & Preservation

Historic Site Signs:

Executive Director Fellows reported that a citizen is concerned that the language on one historic marker is historically inaccurate and calls into question the accuracy of all the other county historic markers created under the program. The citizen has offered to review future marker text for accuracy, and to assist the Commission to develop new, stricter marker policy standards.

Chair Jones asked that Commissioner Kuhl review the regulations that are on the web to make sure that that the policy is clear. The marker committee will meet (time/date to be determined) to review the current policies.

It was asked that we do a maintenance survey to determine if maintenance is needed on the signs already established.

NJ History Fair:

Executive Fellows reported that the Commission is signed up for the fair, and that she, Chair Jones and Commissioner Davidson will attend this year.

VI. FREEHOLDER UPDATES/COMMENTS/BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Nothing to report at this time.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Request for support:

Executive Director Fellows reported that 1759 Vought House requested \$200.00 in support from the Commission for a one day conference taking place in May. Concern was raised about setting a precedent for supporting programs/projects of other groups outside of the grant process. After discussion, it was determined to support the conference provided language crediting the Commission according to its requirements was included on all conference materials.

NJ Council on the Humanities:

Chair Jones and Executive Fellows are working on finding appropriate speakers to present at the historic Courthouse through this program. An agriculture theme will complement the work of the 300th Committee.

All Roads Lead to Pittstown:

The county print shop has the cover for Stephanie Stevens' new book; 200 will be printed to start.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Nothing to report at this time.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS / CORRESPONDENCE:

Announcements:

Commissioner Davidson reported that a successful program celebrating Black History Month took place to benefit the East Amwell Historical Society; proceeds to be used to increase the Society's collection. He also reported that in April, the Black River & Western Railroad will be celebrating 50 years; activities are planned and a DVD was developed about it for a school program. Commissioner Davidson was contacted by the Sourland Conservancy about the Commission funding markers about the Sourlands.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Chair Jones moved to adjourn. **Motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted
Susan Holcombe-Pena