

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE  
COMMISSION MINUTES**

**April 28, 2015**

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on Tuesday, April 28, 2015 at 3:30 PM., in the freeholder conference room in Bridgeton, New Jersey.

**Present:** Penny Watson                      Suzanne Merighi  
Roy Kaneshiki                              John Garrison  
Maria Cerda-Moreno                      Merle Silver

Matthew Pisarski, Assistant Planning Director  
Jennifer Morgan, Recording Secretary

**Guest:** Kim Gauntt, Cumberland County Recreation & Tourism  
Dr. Richard Hunter, Hunter Research  
Patrick Harshbarger, Hunter Research  
William Liebeknecht, Hunter Research

**Approval of Minutes – March 24, 2015**

A motion was made to approve the minutes from March 24, 2015 by Mr. Garrison. The motion was seconded by Ms. Merighi and passed unanimously.

**Update of Battle of Dallas' Landing – Dr. Hunter, Hunter Research**

Dr. Hunter passed out several documents. Most of the research was presented at the public meeting in November. Dr. Hunter said not much information is available to report, no new solid information has been found. Mr. Hunter researched the Riggins family. The Riggins families were the land owners in the Leesburg and Dorchester area. Hunter research found two small newspaper articles that were published in two different newspapers. Both newspaper articles conflict with each other with no names mentioned. Prison records have been researched also. Mr. Harshbarger said since nothing was found in prison or military records the Loyalists were probably refugees rather than an organized military unit. A James Riggins was found in the Revolutionary War pension records but he was imprisoned on one of the ships in New York harbor at the time of the Battle of Dallas' Landing. The family names Riggins and Peterson were found in secondary accounts not the original accounts. Dr. Hunter commented that no one knows the exact location of the Battle of Dallas' Landing, but the best guess is that it was between Dorchester and the mouth of the river. Hunter Research has done field work, metal detecting, a boat trip and ground penetrating radar. Mr. Liebeknecht said they are going to do further ground penetrating radar on the Calpaldi Farm. Mr. Liebeknecht said there is a lot of trash along the bank of the river, which is causing complications with the metal detection and ground penetrating radar. Mr. Pisarski asked if they found anything that dated back to the period in question during the metal detecting, but nothing was found. Mr. Pisarski questioned if there was another area that could potentially be part of the battle site. Mr. Liebeknecht said the site across the street has too much trash and debris to find anything. Mr. Harshbarger spoke about the KOCOA analysis map that is required for the grant. KOCOA is designed to analyze

traditional land battle fields. Mr. Liebeknecht said the original accounts said people were captured on a boat and later accounts suggested it was a boat to boat boarding action. Mr. Garrison asked if oystering was done at Bivalve during the time period. Mr. Harshbarger commented that it was done at a much later period. Dr. Hunter suggested removing battle from the Battle of Dallas' Landing since no proof has been found of there being a battle. Mr. Harshbarger said the word battle was added in 1976. Mr. Pisarski will reach out to the National Park Services (NPS) and see what they suggest regarding a name change. Mr. Pisarski said he doesn't think the locals will want the signage changed in Port Norris. Dr. Hunter said he does not think there is enough information to support a nomination for the National Register. Mr. Pisarski will reach out to NPS and the SHPOs office regarding revising the grant agreement since it will not be available for the National Register unless Dr. Hunter and his team find something in the next two – three weeks. Ms. Moreno asked if a burial site was found how long would it take to determine the age of the burial. Dr. Hunter said hopefully they would find artifacts with the body to help determine the time period. Dr. Hunter will provide a draft report in May and a public outreach meeting will take place June 25<sup>th</sup> in Leesburg.

Dr. Hunter said they are completing a nomination for East Point, Dr. Hunter gave some background history. Ms. Merighi asked if there was any connection to the Underground Railroad, Dr. Hunter said there was not. Mr. Pisarski commented that a three way contract is being signed with the County of Cumberland, Cumberland County Improvement Authority and the Maurice River Historical Society to complete a grant for the rehabilitation of the lighthouse.

#### **Battle of Dallas' Landing Signage Quote**

Commission members received in their packet an email from Jeremy Tenenbaum, VSBA regarding the signage for Dallas' Landing. The oculus and pole will cost \$6,980 the Cumberland County Public Works Dept. will handle the installation and the physical mock-up price will be reduced by using different materials. The signage is \$3,000 higher than what was budgeted in the grant application but expenses have been saved in other categories. The text has not been drafted yet just the sign itself. The total grant is \$19,500 and is supposed to cover: the sign, video podcast, design fee and heritage day. Several sign designs will be made to see what works best in the area where it will be posted. Mr. Pisarski will ask if the sign can be buffed out after years of sitting out in the open, the sign will be under a cover. A motion was made to approve the sign proposal for \$7,000 pending any design changes by Mr. Kaneshiki. The motion was seconded by Ms. Moreno and passed unanimously.

#### **Nomination of Commission Open Seat – Yogesh Thakur**

Commission members have a bio for Yogesh Thakur in their packet. Mr. Thakur attended a meeting several years ago for a special request for a kite festival. Ms. Merighi asked if the timing of the meetings would be a problem for Mr. Thakur, Mr. Pisarski said it should not be and he is very involved in the Indian Community. A final decision has to be made by the Freeholders. A motion was made to approve Yogesh Thakur's nomination to the board by Ms. Silver. The motion was seconded by Ms. Moreno and passed unanimously.

#### **2015 Saturday Artists' Talk Forum – Recap**

Mr. Pisarski said it was a very positive event with over 50 attendees. Encouraging comments were made on the Commission's Facebook page. Attendees were asked to fill out a questionnaire, attendees commented they did not know what to expect but were very glad they attended and would like to see similar programming in the future. The event was recorded and

will be posted on YouTube. Mr. Pisarski will apply for the grant for next year's forum.

**2015 Encore Awards – Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup> – Flyer Theater, Camden County College**

An invitation to the Encore Awards is in Commission members packets. Paul and Janet Somers have accepted the Encore Award. They will receive four complimentary tickets and they will receive an extra award. Let Mr. Pisarski know by May 11<sup>th</sup> if you will be attending the awards.

**Senior's Month Bay-Atlantic Symphony Concert – Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> – Guaracini PAC**

The Commission has donated 50 tickets to Office on Aging for the May 2<sup>nd</sup> concert at Cumberland County College. Mr. Pisarski checked with the Levoy to see if there was an event later in the month. The Celtic Tenors will be at the Levoy but the group rate was high. Mr. Pisarski suggested putting funds towards Disability Awareness month in October and give tickets to the disabled.

**[www.ccculturalheritage.org](http://www.ccculturalheritage.org) Redesign Quote – Omni Developers**

Commission members received in their packet an email from Jack Hartigan, Omni Developers regarding the new website design. The total cost to revamp the Cumberland Historical website would be \$6,000 and the cost for the Cultural & Heritage website would be \$7,000. From the 2014 budget \$7,813.75 was set aside to cover some of the cost and \$5,665 is budgeted from this year's budget. Mr. Pisarski has not received any communications from Loaded Media. A motion was made to approve the quotes from Omni Developers by Mr. Kaneshiki. The motion was seconded by Ms. Moreno and passed unanimously.

**Commission Budget – 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Review**

Mr. Pisarski went through the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter review. The Commission has a total of \$2,634 from SSRDMO funds that needs to be spent on marketing. The Commission paid for eight memberships to SJ Cultural Alliance. The income from the Artists Talk forum went into the trust account for a total of \$330. Mr. Kaneshiki asked if anymore West Jersey Time Traveler podcasts can be done, Mr. Pisarski said more podcast signage will be discussed next month.

**Liaison Reports**

Ms. Merighi attended the Upper Deerfield Community Day she said it was well attended. They had children's games, food and music. Gallery 50 will have an opening reception for Moe Pagano on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Garrison took a tour of the Bayshore Center he said it was very educational. Meghan Wren told Mr. Garrison that the Bayshore Center is seeking landmark status.

Mr. Kaneshiki gave a report on the Buddhist Temple Fashion Show. Ms. Merighi said it was a great show.

**Tourism Advisory Council Comments – Kimberly Gauntt**

Ms. Gauntt said Kids Fest will be held at the Cohanzick Zoo on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Fishing Derby will be held May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Cumberland County Recreation & Tourism will have a booth at the Millville Air Show. Mr. Pisarski commented that the previous tourism meeting was held at the NJ Motorsports Park and they are doing very well.

The next Commission meeting will be held at the tribal lands of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape

Indians in Fairfield Township. Mr. Garrison said he will be going to the tribal lands on May 16<sup>th</sup> for Tribal Day. Mr. Pisarski said maybe a meeting can be held in the fall at the Motorsports Park.

**Other Old/New Business**

**Correspondence**

A letter was received from EBI Consulting regarding a cell tower at the Millville high rise.

**Adjourn**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Ms. Merighi. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kaneshiki and passed unanimously.