

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE  
COMMISSION MINUTES**

**February 26, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on Thursday, February 26, 2021 at 4:00p.m., via teleconference.

**Present:**                    Suzanne Merighi                    Maria Cerda-Moreno  
                                   Marianne Lods                     Sharon Yoshida  
                                   Penny Watson                     Olive Doss

Commissioner Pearson  
 Matthew Pisarski, Planning Director  
 Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator  
 Kim Gauntt, Cumberland County Recreation & Tourism  
 Matt Horowitz, Recording Secretary

**Guests:**

**Approval of Minutes – January 28, 2021**

An inaugural motion to approve the January 28, 2021 minutes was made by Olive Doss. The motion was seconded by Maria Cerda-Moreno and passed unanimously by the Commission.

**Discussion of The Updated Cultural & Heritage Logo**

Omarey Williams stated included within each Commission members’ packet were copies of the updated Cultural & Heritage logo design. It was facilitated by the recent change from County Freeholders to County Commissioners. Mr. Williams explained local artist Ellen Gavin designed the logo initially and she was asked to re-design it. Mr. Williams stated the Commission had saved about \$500.00 from last year’s budget for such expenses. Mr. Williams further explained, although, Ms. Gavin only wanted \$100.00 or so for her work, he thought she should be compensated to a greater degree for her time. Mr. Williams’ staff recommendation would be to compensate Ms. Gavin \$250.00. Following a brief period of discussion, a motion to compensate Ms. Gavin \$250.00 was made by Marianne Lods, seconded by Olive Doss, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Mr. Williams said he could always make different color/logo combinations as needed, as well.

**Update On The Long Term Plan – Christopher Shrum**

Mr. Williams thanked the Commission members for their comments at last month’s meeting regarding this current agenda item, as well as the additional comments that were sent over to him after the meeting. Mr. Williams stated he planned to get in touch with Chris Shrum to send him the Commission’s comments, as well as staff comments thus far. Mr. Williams planned to have a Draft Long Term Plan ready for the March meeting with the intention that they could have a finalized Plan to be presented and approved at the April meeting. Mr. Williams stated he would email the Draft Long Term Plan out to the Commission members as soon as possible.

**Request for Support – Revive SJ**

Mr. Williams explained Jonathan Cummings, the Executive Director of Revive South Jersey/SJ (RSJ,) had reached out to him directly with the letter included within the monthly meeting packet. Mr. Williams stated it was a great organization and he had even personally attended one of their events while working on the 2020 Census. Mr. Cummings was now asking for \$1,000.00 from the Commission to help support some of their forthcoming programming, as well as a STEAM project. Mr. Pisaski further explained there was \$2,000.00 available within the budget as a line item for such special requests. Following a brief period of discussion regarding the particulars, a motion to award Revive SJ \$1,00.00 was made by Maria Cerda-Moreno, seconded by Penny Watson, and passed unanimously by the Commission. It was added that Mr. Williams, would reach out directly to Mr. Cummings to see if RSJ would like to apply as a re-grantee for 2022, rather than applying for special request funds year after year.

**Discussion About 2021 Workshops Focusing On Social Media & Navigating Increased Web Presences**

Mr. Williams explained something he and his staff had noticed during the pandemic, many of the re-grantees and organizations had moved to more of a virtual or online-based presence. He added that some of this year's re-grantees expressed an interest in moving towards more of an online presence, but did not know how to navigate it, as well. Mr. Williams & Mr. Pisarski had discussed that it might be a good idea to have some workshops based around social media, increased web presences, livestreaming, etc. that would be beneficial to their re-grantees. Following a brief period of discussion, it was decided upon that Mr. Williams would start researching possible speakers related to the aforementioned topics.

**Liaison Reports**

Olive Doss mentioned she had heard from Greg at The City of Vineland after sending a letter of introduction to each of her assigned organizations. Ms. Doss sent a letter of inquiry to Greg, who promptly answered all of her questions and introduced her to the Art Director at the senior center in Vineland. Ms. Doss shared she also heard back from the Seabrook Education Center, which she recently visited with her family. Ms. Doss additionally reached out to Ralph Padilla at P.R.A.C. and despite trying various forms of contact, had yet to hear anything back from either Mr. Padilla or anyone at his organization.

Maria Cerda-Moreno shared an update on The Bayshore Center At Bivalve and had spoken with Chase Jackson, the Executive Director there. Ms. Cerda-Moreno stated they had three tours to East Point Lighthouse planned on the A.J. Meerwald. Ms. Cerda-Moreno briefly mentioned updates from Mike McGraff and Nancy Patterson at The Maurice River Historical Society, as well. Ms. Cerda-Moreno mentioned they were currently at an impasse with DEP.

Sharon Yoshida explained she had spoken with Courtenay Reece, who had some monthly activities planned at The Millville Public Library. Ms. Yoshida explained, every other month, the Library would switch back-and-forth between food and art with February's activity being a virtual taco-making demonstration with Bogart's Bookstore. Ms. Yoshida said March's activity video would be with Jackie Sandro at Clay College and they would be demonstrating how to make a clay turtle "rattle" paying homage to the local Lenni Lenape tribe. For April, Ms. Yoshida further explained it would go back to food once more and the Library would be contacting different local restaurants to create such a virtual demonstration video. In May, they would be doing something with the Riverfront Renaissance Center for The Arts (RRCA)

regarding an as-yet-to-be-selected Indigenous painting style, Ms. Yoshida stated. Ms. Yoshida had contacted the Boys & Girls Club, as well, and received a message from Chris Volker explaining their efforts regarding environmental-themed art. Ms. Yoshida recently received a new contact for the Mauricetown Historical Society from Mr. Williams and will reach back out.

Suzanne Merighi reported the Vineland Regional Dance Company (VRDC) had still not responded back to her messages, but she saw on Facebook they are currently planning an outdoor spring concert. Ms. Merighi shared there were some great photos of the VDC's current classes, which featured everyone wearing masks and appropriately Social Distanced. Ms. Merighi stated there was also a video of one of the young dancers outside during a snowstorm dancing The Waltz of The Snowflakes from The Nutcracker. Ms. Merighi had not yet heard anything back from the Festival Festival Puertorriqueno regarding their annual festival this upcoming summer

### **Tourism Advisory Council/Recreation Commission Comments**

Cumberland County Tourism & Recreation Director Kim Gauntt shared she was currently working on her 2020 Annual Reports for both the Recreation & Tourism Commissions. Ms. Gauntt stated they had received the grant money for \$25,000.00 to go towards marketing grants for any non-profits that needed help. Ms. Gauntt stated she was actively working on coordinating what would have been the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Kids' Fishing Derby (but is now the 39<sup>th</sup>.) Ms. Gauntt explained the event would be held outside at appropriate social distance on Sunday May 2, 2021 from 8-1:00pm at Mary Elmer Lake located in Bridgeton.

### **Other Old/New Business**

Mr. Williams made reference to two specific items: firstly, he was creating the annual report for the Commission and when completed, he would send it out to everyone and it could be discussed at the upcoming March meeting. Secondly, Mr. Williams made mention of an email he had sent out to the Commission members requesting headshots/photos of themselves for the website. Mr. Williams thanked those who had already sent their headshots over to him and asked everyone else to, please do so at their earliest convenience. Ms. Merighi mentioned she had recently attended the Virtual Eagle Festival in February across four nights of programming, which she enjoyed very much. Ms. Merighi added the trail walks were very well-attended, as well.

Ms. Merighi also attended another Citizens United (CU) Maurice River-sponsored event with a teacher named Jim Bloomingstein on discovering your cultural roots. Ms. Merighi added Mr. Bloomingstein mentioned the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission about 10 times throughout his presentation and made reference to the Long Term Plan. Mr. Bloomingstein's main point was "there is still so much to be discovered." Ms. Merighi stated Mr. Bloomingstein was talking about using high school students to help capture this information, via oral history and wondered if the Commission should start embracing this ideology. Commissioner Pearson stated she agreed with this idea, felt the County was filled with a crazy amount of history and culture, and thanked Ms. Merighi for this information. It was mentioned what a great tool the CU Maurice River website could be used as for the Commission, too. Ms. Doss asked if she was required to have any type of Commission training mentioned within the Long Term Plan Draft, to which Mr. Pisarski stated he would check and let her know soon.

### **Correspondence**

Mr. Williams explained all of the Commission's recent Correspondence was included within the meeting packet emailed out to each Commission member; those four items being a thank-you

certificate the Commission received from the United States Census Bureau and the United States Department of Commerce, a letter and an email from Dr. Alaya at CHABA regarding their book on The Nail House thanking the Commission for their support, and two more thank-you letters for the support of the Commission for the re-grant funding. One, from The Bayshore Center At Bivalve and the other, from The Millville Public Library. Ms. Merighi just wanted to say what great hands she thought the Commission was in with Omarey, Matt, and the other Matt. Ms. Pearson stated this was an amazing committee and thought it was an amazing part of the County and was honored to now be a part of it!

**Adjourn**

One final motion to adjourn the February 26, 2021 meeting was made by Ms. Yoshida, seconded by Ms. Lods, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Ms. Merighi stated the meeting was now adjourned, wished everyone a great weekend ahead and would see all of them in March.