

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE
COMMISSION MINUTES**

January 29, 2020

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on Wednesday, January 29, 2020 at 4:00 PM., at Cumberland County Administration Building Bridgeton, New Jersey.

Present: Maria Cerda-Moreno Yogesh Thakur
Michael Cagno Sharon Yoshida
Robert Dragotta Suzanne Merighi

Matthew Pisarski, Assistant Planning Director
Jennifer Morgan, Recording Secretary

Guest: Dr. Iveta Pirgova, Folklife Center
Lisa Garrison
Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator

Approval of Minutes – November 21, 2019 & December 19, 2019

A motion was made to approve the minutes from November 21 and December 19, 2019. Ms. Merighi made a correction to the December minutes under adjournment, she stated she was not at the December meeting. There was no adjournment for December. Ms. Yoshida made a correction under the liaison reports in November it should state Japanese American Citizens League not Seabrook Buddhist Temple. A motion was made to approve the minutes as corrected by Ms. Merighi. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dragotta and passed unanimously. Ms. Watson abstained.

Welcome Freeholder Deputy Director Darlene Barber and Freeholder Jack Surrency as Liaisons

Deputy Director Barber sends her regrets she plans to attend the remaining meetings.

Welcome Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator

Mr. Pisarski introduced Mr. Williams, Mr. Williams will be working with Mr. Pisarski for the remainder of the year with the intent that Mr. Williams will take over Cultural & Heritage in 2021. Commission members welcomed Mr. Williams.

2020 Officers' Slate and Nominations – Memorialization of December Recommendation

At the December meeting there was not a quorum but the nominations committee recommended the following officers for the 2020 slate:

Ms. Watson – Chair
Ms. Merighi – Vice Chair
Mr. Cagno – Treasurer
Ms. Yoshida – Secretary

A motion was made to approve the slate of officer's by Ms. Merighi. The motion was seconded by Ms. Moreno and passed unanimously.

WheatonArts Special Request – Creativity across Cultures – Dr. Iveta Pirgova

Dr. Pirgova said the State Council on the Arts is very happy with WheatonArts partnership with the Commission. WheatonArts is looking for a co-sponsor for a new project "Creativity across Cultures". The first part of the project will be held at the Vineland Senior Center working with Fiber Arts. The second part of the project is called Drum Beats, Music and Glass. Ms. Pirgova is requesting \$3,500 and in-kind services from the Commission. Mr. Dragotta asked for a clearer explanation regarding the program and who picks the cultures that participates in the program. Mr. Pisarski said WheatonArts usually picks cultures that they have done programming with in the past. Mr. Dragotta would like to see Greek and Italian cultures included. Mr. Cagno asked if the program would be scaled down if grant funds were not received from the state. Mr. Cagno questioned where the Institute for Therapeutic Craft & Creativity is located, Dr. Pirgova said it is a new organization located in New Jersey. The programming that will be held at WheatonArts is free and open to the public. Dr. Pirgova would like to do short interviews with the visitors to determine the success of the program. Dr. Pirgova said with a low budget the drum circle will be held only once. Ms. Merighi asked what artist will be paid. The artist at the rotating stations will be paid. Dr. Pirgova commented that they are asking for other sponsorships. Mr. Pisarski said he would email Dr. Pirgova regarding the Commission decision.

Vineland Historical & Antiquarian Society Special Request – A Race Through Time – Patricia Martinelli

Ms. Martinelli is requesting \$1,000 to offset the cost of "A Race Through Time" event. The event was held a few years ago with great success. They did not apply for a regrant because they are short on staff and was not sure if they were having the event. Mr. Pisarski said there is \$2,500 total in special request funds with \$4,500 being requested already. Funds can be pulled from other accounts.

Ms. Merighi is concerned that it is only January and would rather not deplete funds so soon. Mr. Cagno has reservations about the WheatonArts project. Mr. Pisarski said 60-80 kids participated in the first "A Race Through Time". Mr. Cagno suggested funding Vineland Historical and offer in-kind services to WheatonArts. Mr. Pisarski said it is WheatonArts 50th Anniversary and would like to offer them some funding. Ms. Merighi is concerned that WheatonArts programming will not hit a big enough audience. Mr. Pisarski suggested offering each organization \$1,000. A motion was made to approve a \$1,000 to Vineland Historical Society by Mr. Cagno. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dragotta and passed unanimously.

Mr. Dragotta asked if the Tourism Council can offer funding to WheatonArts. Mr. Pisarski said they could probably receive a \$1,000 from the Council.

Network to Freedom Project – Lisa Stewart Garrison

Mr. Pisarski gave some back history. There are three Network to Freedom nominations, Bethel AME Church, Ambury Hill Cemetery and 663 Greate Street (Methodist Meeting House). The date has passed for the completion of the grant. The state still needs a final report but is willing to give a few months to complete the project. Ms. Garrison was being paid in three installments she has received the first payment. Ms. Garrison said the third site is bank owned and very hard

to find information on the site. Mr. Pisarski would like to know how the Commission would like to proceed with the grant. The original contract for Ms. Garrison was \$11,700 with a due date of August 2019. Mr. Pisarski suggested amending the contract with a new completion date. In addition, if the third site does not have enough information to get added to the Network to Freedom does the contract need to be amended for a lesser amount? Ms. Garrison will receive a second payment when she submits information for Ambury Hill. Ms. Moreno asked if it was possible if the third site was not added could the Commission memorialize the research. Mr. Pisarski will get Ms. Garrison an amended contract.

Mr. Pisarski suggested giving WheatonArts \$1,000 and if funds are available later in the year the Commission can assist with another project. A motion was made to approve \$1,000 for the Creativity across Cultures project and a recommendation to seek funds from the Tourism Council by Mr. Dragotta. The motion was seconded by Ms. Yoshida and passed unanimously.

Olive Doss Nomination for Ella Boykin's Unexpired Term

Everyone received in their packet Ms. Doss's bio. Ms. Boykin and Freeholder Surrency both recommended Ms. Doss. A motion was made to approve Ms. Doss's recommendation to the Freeholders by Ms. Moreno. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cagno and passed unanimously.

Winter Eagle Festival – Saturday, February 1, 2020

Jackie Sandro and Diane Roberts and several volunteers will be working the kids table that the Commission sponsors. All are welcomed to stop by.

Liaison Reports

Ms. Moreno said Bridgeton Library would be hosting Makers Day on March 21. Pastor Bartley with Hands in Action told Ms. Moreno they would be celebrating Jamaican Independence Day in August the event will take place in Vineland.

Tourism Advisory Council Comments – Kimberly Gauntt

Commission members received a draft copy of the Calendar of Events. Mr. Pisarski informed the Commission that the planning department would be handling the booking of events at the fairgrounds. Several new events will be held: Salsa & Food Truck Festival, Country Music Festival and a 5K Run.

Other Old/New Business

Ms. Yoshida said she has a copy of Helga Merits "Coming Home" if anyone would like to see it. Ms. Lods was honored with the Outstanding Citizen Award. Ms. Yoshida passed out a flyer, South Jersey Holocaust Coalition will have a workshop titled, An American Shame: Executive Order 9066. It is free to attend.

Correspondence

Mr. Pisarski sent out two letters both to DEP, the first one was about the demolition of 202 Sharpe Street in Millville. The second letter was regarding improvements to Ye Greate Street in Greenwich.

Richard Grubb and Associates sent in a letter regarding Burnt Mill Pond Park in Vineland.

Katie Kiessling with Levoy Theatre sent an email about the Teen Arts Festival.

Mr. Cagno would like to discuss the trust account, Mr. Pisarski will set up a meeting.

Adjourn

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