

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE  
COMMISSION MINUTES**

**July 29, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on Thursday, July 29, 2021 at 4:00p.m., via teleconference.

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

Commissioner Pearson

Matthew Pisarski, Planning Director  
Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator  
Matt Horowitz, Recording Secretary

**Guests:**

**Approval of Minutes – June 24, 2021**

With one correction suggested by Sharon Yoshida, Marianne Lods made a motion to move to accept the June 24, 2021 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Penny Watson and passed unanimously by the Commission.

**Discussion of Commission Long Range Plan**

Omarey Williams extended his thanks to Robert Dragotta for hosting select Commission members in-person at his residence, as well as Mses. Merighi, Yoshida, Watson, and Cerda-Moreno for their attendance and assistance. Mr. Williams said he had sent the latest changes to the Long Range Plan over to Chris Shrum. As soon as he got said corrections back from Mr. Shrum, Mr. Williams stated he would get the draft out to the Commission. If all went well, Mr. Williams added he hoped the Commission could finally approve the Long Rang Plan at their upcoming August meeting. Mr. Williams thanked everyone for their continued edits, additions, comments, and mostly importantly, patience. Ms. Merighi added it was a wonderful experience.

**Discussion of NEA Local Arts Agency Subgranting Program**

Mr. Williams explained there was a National Endowment for The Arts (NEA) Local Arts Agency Subgranting Program accepting applications. He was very excited to submit an application on behalf of the Commission. Mr. Williams added Part 1 had already been submitted and accepted and he was currently working on Part 2, which was due the following Monday by midnight. Mr. Williams had gone over the particulars with Mr. Pisarski and now, felt much better about the tight deadline. Mr. Williams stated he was planning to apply got the “middle-of-

**JULY MINUTES**  
**PAGE 2**

the-road” amount, \$250,000.00 and would let the Commission know as soon as he had additional information to share. Mr. Williams added it could ~~beeb~~ another great opportunity to do some really great things for their re-grantees and try to attain new and innovative arts programming, as well. Ms. Merighi and the Commission thanked Mr. Williams for his diligent work on the NEA subgranting application.

**C&H Commission Budget – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Review**

Mr. Williams explained, regarding the 2021 Cultural & Heritage Budget – 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter chart contained within each Commission members’ meeting packet, so far, money had been spent on Teen Arts, Cumberland County On Canvas, and the membership dues out of Promo of The Arts. Mr. Williams added out of the Budget Line Item, they had expended funds for the Millville Plein Air event, the Vineland Historical & Antiquarian Society funding for Mr. Nutt’s book, \$1,000.00 for the feasibility study, another \$1,000.00 to support the Juneteenth event, the logo re-design, \$100.00 for County On Canvas judging fees. Mr. Williams added there were monies still set aside for Artist Day, the Senior Art Show, the mural program, etc.

**2022 Re-Grant Guidelines & Application – Review & Approval**

Mr. Williams stated he was very excited to be able to put these guidelines out and would upload them to the website the following day. Mr. Williams said the Guidelines would be available for interested parties to download and a workshop would be held sometime in September all in preparation for the October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. Mr. Williams added said Guidelines had been sent out earlier in the week, via email, to each Commission member. Mr. Williams mentioned one change to be made and noted (on Page 7) pertaining to the Matching Requirements now being nonexistent. Aside from that, everything would remain as-is from the Draft Guidelines. Mr. Pisarski requested the specific language to be added to Page 7 be read.

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Mr. Williams, then, stated: “For the 2022 Funding Round, there are no Match Requirements. However, Match shown in the application will influence competitive scoring in the review process...” Mr. Pisarski mentioned a Budget Sub-committee would be assembled soon ahead of the 2022 funding round. It was mentioned there were currently two open seats on the Grants Review Panel, as well. Ms. Merighi, Ms. Lods, and Mr. Cagno all volunteered for the Budget Sub-committee. A motion to approve the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission N.J. State Council On The Arts Re-granting Program and N.J. Historical Commission Re-granting Program Guidelines & Application was made by Ms. Lods, seconded by Robert Dragotta, and passed unanimously by the Commission.

**Recap of Cumberland County On Canvas – July 16, 2021**

Mr. Williams explained this was an outstanding event with a great turnout. Mr. Williams added, if the Commission members have not seen the exhibit yet, please, head over to the Riverfront Renaissance Center for The Arts (RRCA) to check it out. Additionally, he stated, included within this month’s meeting packet were the winners for First, Second & Third Places (to be added to the County collection,) as well as Honorable Mentions. Mr. Williams explained RRCA was kind enough to select three Honorable Mentions, each awarded a prize of \$50.00. He thanked the Commission for their support, especially, for providing refreshments. Ms. Lods added it was

great having the event hosted there at RRCA and foot traffic was steady for people still wanting to view the Cumberland County On Canvas show.

**Discussion of Cumberland County Day of Remembrance – August 7, 2021**

Mr. Pisarski stated a County-wide Day of Remembrance would be held on Saturday, August 7<sup>th</sup> being led by The Bridgeton Christian Ministers Association at The Bridgeton Amphitheatre starting at 6:00p.m. It would be a solemn event with songs, psalms, and prayers commemorating all who had passed during the period of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Mr. Pisarski explained there would be a symbolic candle lighting followed by a County-wide commemorative bell ringing. Mr. Pisarski would send out a flyer containing additional details to the Commission.

**Discussion of Summer Plein Air In Bridgeton – August 28, 2021**

Mr. Williams had included a flyer within the meeting packet and stated he was simply bringing it up now for awareness. Ms. Merighi asked if anyone had registered yet, to which Mr. Williams explained, to his knowledge, it was a little too early and no one had registered just yet.

**Discussion of Mauricetown Artist Day – September 11, 2021**

Mr. Williams enthusiastically explained this would be his first Artist Day. Mr. Williams stated he recently had a chance to visit the Mauricetown Historical Society and received a tour of the facility from Carol Peirelli. Mr. Williams added lots of planning for the event was happening behind-the-scenes and as soon as they had a flyer finalized, he would send it out to the Commission. Mr. Williams was excited the Commission as a whole was getting back to holding regularly scheduled (outdoor) events once again.

**Discussion of WheatonArts Programming – Maria Cerda-Moreno**

Maria Cerda-Moreno mentioning a letter of invitation from Rowan College of South Jersey included within each Commission members' meeting packet. Ms. Cerda-Moreno mentioned Venezuelan artist Francisco Grisolia and his upcoming exhibit at WheatonArts. Ms. Cerda-Moreno stated this would be a wonderful opportunity for both WheatonArts & Rowan College to showcase artwork from a very well-known Venezuelan artist. Ms. Cerda-Moreno explained the exhibit would run from November 19<sup>th</sup> until December 21<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Cerda-Moreno said Mr. Grisolia was planning to send his artwork to the States and received an estimate of \$745.34, which will not be paid for by WheatonArts or the Arts & Innovations Center at Rowan College.

Mr. Pisarski further explained, the cost to transport the artwork from Venezuela to Cumberland County would be just under \$750.00 for one-way transport. Ms. Cerda-Moreno thought she understood Mr. Grisolia would want his artwork to stay within the States, but would still need clarification. Mr. Pisarski explained Mr. Grisolia was unable to leave Venezuela, but would be recording his presentation. It was believed some, if not all, of the artwork would be for sale after the exhibit, but Ms. Cerda-Moreno would need to attain further clarification. Following a brief period of discussion amongst the Commission, staff recommended allocating a shipping transportation fee of up to \$1,500.00. A motion to approve was made by Ms. Yoshida, seconded

by Penny Watson, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Ms. Cerda-Moreno abstained from the vote. ~~Mr. Dragotta said he would do his best to pass the information on to some Venezuelan house guests he just hosted at his estate.~~

#### **Discussion of Bridgeton Rotary Club Mural Request**

Mr. Williams made mention of a letter from Mark Wiley at the Bridgeton Rotary Club (with an Attached image,) sent via email, included within each Commission members' meeting packet. Staff recommendation would be to go back to Mr. Wiley to attain some additional information, as well further explore his intentions. It seemed to be more so an advertisement for the Rotary, rather than a proper mural, Mr. Williams explained. Ms. Lods asked if there were any specific organizations in Bridgeton that specialized in public art and if so, the Rotary should partner with them. Commissioner Pearson suggested reaching out to the Bridgeton Mural Project, as well. Mr. Williams agreed with everyone's thoughts and suggestions and said he would reach back out to Mr. Wiley. Mr. Cagno even suggested establishing a Public Arts Plan for the County to help the Commission with such mural projects, proposals, etc.

#### **County Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner Pearson mentioned the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of The State of New Jersey was having their annual Community/Family Day festival and for the first time ever, they had selected Bridgeton to host it. Commissioner Pearson said the two-day event usually attracts 1,000 people every year. On September 11<sup>th</sup> the City of Bridgeton would be hosting them on the Riverfront. Commissioner Pearson just wanted to send her thanks to Messrs. Pisarski & Williams for fielding her questions. They were looking for unique vendors, as well as representatives from throughout the County family. Commissioner Pearson just wanted to let the Commission know it was a free public event and they were still looking for vendors, service agencies, participants, etc. Mr. Pisarski added he hoped they would have the re-wrapped County Outreach bus back by that date, in which case, it could be parked at the events, as well.

#### **Liaison Reports**

Ms. Merighi reiterated the Festival Puertorriqueño had been canceled this year due to COVID-19-related concerns, but normally would have been held during the last week of July. Ms. Merighi, also, wanted to give a special shout-out to Mr. Cagno, as she and her husband visited the Noyes Arts Garage of Stockton University to see a show of ceramics by Jacqueline "Jackie" Sandro-Greenwell with companion pieces by her husband, James "Jim" Greenwell. The Merighis had enjoyed it very much and even though it was not a County-funded event, Ms. Merighi thanked Mr. Cagno for his efforts. Olive Doss stated Greg Gallo from the City of Vineland had sent her a tentative list of dates for Senior Art Classes at the Senior Center in Vineland, which would run from September through December 2021.

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#### **Tourism Advisory Council/Recreation Commission Comments – Kimberly Gauntt**

Mr. Pisarski informed the Commission that Kim Gauntt had transferred over to the 4-H Center and the Department had the Tourism title open as a position announcement. Mr. Pisarski and the Department hoped to fill the position in due order and as soon as someone was hired, they would

be presented to the Commission during the monthly meeting space. In the meantime, Mr. Pisarski would be handling the Tourism Advisory Council/Recreation Commission and did not have anything else to bring up in regards to “Comments” on behalf of those Boards at this time.

**Other Old/New Business**

Mr. Pisarski mentioned the Cumberland County COVID-19 Cultural, Recreational, and Hospitality Assistance Program. He stated Mr. Williams had emailed the Commission members a Draft Request for Funding Application and process Guidelines. It was for \$200,000.00, which Mr. Pisarski envisioned 20 individual \$10,000.00 grants for non-profit organizations to assist with any costs related to alterations to programming due to the Pandemic. The one criteria would be that the majority of the audience being served by said non-profit must be of low or moderate income, Mr. Pisarski explained, which he did not envision to be particularly problematic. It would be open to cultural organizations, such as the Cultural & Heritage Commission, as well as the Tourism Advisory Council and the Recreation Commission, who would all be reviewing this document prior to its eventual release to the public. Following a number of questions, Mr. Pisarski explained the eventual application would be submitted on behalf of the Department (for a number of various organizations) and the funding was Federal.

Ms. Watson said she was recently down at the Bayshore Center and noticed the Commission’s Dallas Landing Skirmish display was no longer being actively displayed. It was suggested to ask the Bayshore Center if they planned to re-display “The Oculus.” Messrs. Pisarski & Williams stated they would reach out to the Bayshore Center and investigate further. Ms. Doss asked where the Commission stood with the Long Range Plan. Mr. Williams stated it was discussed earlier in the meeting and it had been sent over following the July 12<sup>th</sup> meeting to Mr. Shrum. As soon as Mr. Williams got a new Draft back, he stated he would send it out to the Commission for review ahead of their August meeting prior to approval at that very meeting. Ms. Merighi wanted to quickly offer a compliment to Ms. Cerda-Moreno for offering the Spanish language assistance for the sub-grants and re-grantees, which was very valuable and greatly appreciated.

**Adjourn**

Ms. Merighi stated, with nothing else to tend to on the agenda, she would like to entertain one final motion. Thus, a motion to adjourn the July 29, 2021 Cultural & Heritage Commission meeting was made by Ms. Lods, seconded by Mr. Cagno, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Ms. Merighi thanked Messrs. Pisarski, Williams, and Horowitz for all of their hard work and for writing an application for the County that brought in so much money from the State Council On The Arts on behalf of the Commission.