

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE  
COMMISSION MINUTES**

**June 23, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on Thursday, June 23, 2022, at 3:00p.m., via teleconference and/or in-person at The Authority's Training Room located in Millville, NJ.

**Present:** Michael Cagno Robert Dragotta  
Suzanne Merighi Maria Cerda-Moreno  
Karen Barnett

Commissioner Deputy Director Pearson, Commissioner Liaison

Carole Green, Temple Vision Corporation  
John Fuqua, Life Worth Living, Inc.  
Joseph Carr, Ionic Lodge #40 Free & Accepted Masons  
Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator  
Matt Pisarski, Department Head/Director  
Matt Horowitz, Recording Secretary

**Approval of Minutes – May 26, 2022**

Michael Cagno indicated, following Roll Call, that a quorum was met and would like to entertain a motion to approve the May 26, 2022, Cultural & Heritage (C&H) Commission meeting minutes. A motion to approve the May 26, 2022, meeting minutes was made by Karen Barnett, seconded by Suzanne Merighi, and passed unanimously by the Commission.

**Follow-up: Special Request for Temple Vision Corporation – UNITY Day (Sept. 3, 2022)**

Omarey Williams explained the Commission entertained Carole Green on behalf of Temple Vision Corporation last month, who was returning at this month's meeting. Mr. Williams said UNITY Day would be held on September 3, 2022, in the Bridgeton Park. Mr. Williams said he had spoken with Ms. Green, as well as representatives from the Bridgeton Area Brothers United (BABU) who were hosting a similar, yet different, event. Ms. Green said Temple Vision were hosting a contest for students to design and submit a logo for UNITY Day to be turned into event merchandise and fund prizes for participating students. Ms. Green was aware of BABU, their event, and hoped to attend it, but Temple Vision & BABU would not be collaborating on a single UNITY Day event together this year.

Commissioner Donna Pearson shared additional information on BABU's event: their event would be held on August 20, 2022, at Cherry Street School in Bridgeton. Ms. Pearson after speaking with BABU, realized the two events would be very different in nature. BABU's event would be much smaller in nature and shorter in length and would be directly supporting children

of the local community. Mr. Cagno thanked Commissioner Pearson for the information. Ms. Merighi inquired about the amount of money Temple Vision Corporation was requesting for their UNITY Day event. Ms. Green said they were requesting \$1,500.00. Mr. Cagno thanked Ms. Green for her participation, said the Commission would discuss amongst themselves, and Mr. Williams would be reaching out to her with their decision following the meeting.

### **Special Request – Life Worth Living, Inc.**

Mr. Williams introduced John Fuqua from Life Worth Living, Inc. Mr. Fuqua explained Life Worth Living planned to partner up with photographer Levi Feeny and his organization, The Book of Levi, for a youth arts contest. It would be a new performing arts initiative under Life Worth Living dealing with the ever-growing movie/film production business in New Jersey. Mr. Fuqua said Levi was part of the Screen Actors Guild for his work in both commercials and movies. Mr. Fuqua said they planned to focus on writers (specifically poets,) public speaking and speechwriting, an essay contest, scene/staged photography, video production, mini-documentaries, painting, abstract art, creative drawing, digital art, etc. Life Worth Living would like to give awards to kids in each category and the program would launch the week of July 5, 2022, to coincide with summer programs throughout schools across the County, as well as the Alms Center in Bridgeton. Mr. Fuqua said the project costs would exceed \$5,000.00 and would be thankful for whatever funding the Commission was willing to provide. Following a brief period of questions from members of the Commission, Mr. Cagno thanked Mr. Fuqua, said they would discuss amongst themselves, and Mr. Williams would reach out shortly.

### **Special Request – Ionic Lodge #40**

Mr. Williams introduced Joseph Carr from Ionic Lodge #40 Free & Accepted Masons. Mr. Carr stated they had an ongoing partnership with Life Worth Living and John Fuqua. They wanted to do a paint competition/art camp by taking pictures of historic sites throughout Cumberland County and having participating kids paint or draw said sites. Mr. Carr said the contest would start on July 5, 2022, and end during the first week of August. It would conclude with an art show to be held at Ionic Lodge #40 located in Bridgeton. Mr. Fuqua added Cumberland had so many great, historic buildings the youth of the County was simply unaware existed. Following a brief period of questioning from the Commission members, it was shared they would like to target all areas and cultures of historic buildings across the County. Mr. Fuqua said there would be a sign-up sheet for desired sites and students would be bussed to these various locations. Mr. Cagno thanked Messrs. Carr & Fuqua and said Mr. Williams would follow-up with them shortly.

### **C&H Commissioner Reports**

Ms. Merighi shared the Cumberland County Library had planned a string of upcoming events, the first of which to be held on July 9, 2022. She said it would be Ceremonial Brass, a musical program, and they were scheduling events for the summer/fall. Ms. Merighi said these would include actor/scholars from Philadelphia coming to perform American historical theatre. She said Ceremonial Brass was actively being promoted in Spanish, as well. Ms. Merighi had recently attended the Millville Public Library's LGBTQIA+ program held at Clay College in May and planned to attend another one that evening centered around acting.

**Planning Department Update – Matt Pisarski**

Mr. Pisarski said there was a variety of Departmental projects ongoing. The County had their first major event at the Fairgrounds with the Kite & Color Festival, at which staff were in attendance. He explained it went very, very well and the crowd was larger than expected. Mr. Pisarski stated multiple board members from the Friends of India Society said the Fairgrounds were much improved from years past and expected to be back again next year on the second Saturday in June. The next event to be held at the Fairgrounds would be the County Fair to be held the week of July 5-9, 2022. Staff was currently preparing all of the logistics for the upcoming County Fair and event organizer Kathy Wright commented on how great the Fairgrounds now looked. Mr. Pisarski said Departmental staff would be out at the Fair with the Tourism booth every night from 4-8:00p.m. and most of the day on Saturday. Staff from Clark Caton Hintz would be in attendance conducting surveys with those in attendance on select days.

**Other Old/New Business**

Mr. Williams explained concerning the previously mentioned Greenwich tower issue, a successful balloon test had been conducted. He explained staff had received the communication back on it. Mr. Williams shared it on-screen for those in the room and said he would email the correspondence out to everyone in attendance online. Mr. Pisarski said it was provided to the Cultural & Heritage Commission because they were a commenting organization regarding historic preservation aspects of the County. He said it would be an upgrade to the 911 tower and Office of Emergency Management (OEM) system County-wide. Mr. Pisarski explained the uses and inner workings behind it and largely saw it as a non-issue. He said it was scheduled to be presented to the Greenwich Planning Board at their upcoming July 11, 2022, meeting.

**Discussion On Special Request Funding**

Mr. Cagno said he would now like to circle back to the Special Request items from earlier in the agenda: Temple Vision Corporation for UNITY Day, Life Worth Living, Inc., and Ionic Lodge #40. Mr. Cagno briefly explained this was the second time Temple Vision had come to the Commission for a request and there would be two separate events held for UNITY Day(s). Ms. Merighi indicated since the two events could not be combined, she felt the Commission could give something to Temple Vision to help fund their event. Staff recommended awarding the full \$1,500.00 and Mr. Pisarski clarified they would be relaying to all of these Special Request recipients that these are one-time awards, and the expectation is to not see these again in years to come. He stated if they wanted to be funded for such events again, they would have to go through the re-grant process. Mr. Williams said staff were relaying that and would continue to and planned to work with the new organizations to help guide them through the process. He said staff had a great meeting with the State Arts Council the previous day and they relayed how many organizations they had in their re-grantee program.

A motion was made by Ms. Merighi, seconded by Robert Dragotta, and passed unanimously by the Commission with one abstention from Karen Barnett to approve \$1,500.00 to Temple Vision Corporation for their UNITY Day event to be held on September 3, 2022. Following a brief period of discussion, a motion as made by Mr. Dragotta, seconded by Ms. Merighi, and passed unanimously by the Commission with one abstention from Ms. Barnett to approve \$2,000.00 as

requested by Life Worth Living, Inc. Following a further period of discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Merighi, seconded by Mr. Dragotta, and passed unanimously by the Commission, with one abstention from Ms. Barnett, to approve \$2,000.00 for the Special Request funding from Ionic Lodge #40. The Commission thought all of these were great groups to support and help further extend Cultural & Heritage organizations within the County.

**Adjourn**

Mr. Cagno kindly asked for one final motion: a motion to adjourn the June 23, 2022, Cultural & Heritage Commission meeting was made by Ms. Merighi, seconded by Mr. Dragotta, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Mr. Williams thanked everyone for their attendance and continued involvement.