

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE
COMMISSION MINUTES****November 18, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on Thursday, November 18, 2021 at 4:00p.m., via teleconference.

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

Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator
Matt Pisarski, Department Head/Director
Wanda Riviera, Confidential Assistant

Approval of Minutes – October 28, 2021

Suzanne Merighi asked for an initial motion to approve the October 28, 2021, meeting minutes. Sharon Yoshida made a motion to move to approve said October 28, 2021, meeting minutes, as presented. The motion was seconded by Maria Cerda-Moreno and passed unanimously by the Commission.

Memorialization of Appointment of Nominating Committee

Ms. Merighi asked for a motion of recommendation to approve the Nominating Committee of Suzanne Merighi, Sharon Yoshida & Maria Cerda-Moreno. Michael Cagno made a motion to approve the Nominating Committee. The motion was seconded by Olive Doss and approved unanimously by the remainder of the Commission.

Approval of 2022 Slate of C&H Commission Officers

Ms. Merighi presented the following Recommended Slate of Officers for the 2022 Cultural & Heritage Commission: Chair Michael Cagno; Vice Chair Robert Dragotta; Treasurer Olive Doss; and Secretary Sharon Yoshida. A motion to approve the Nominating Committee's Recommended Slate was made by Ms. Cerda-Moreno, seconded by Yogesh Thakur, and approved unanimously by the Commission.

Memorialization of Strategic Plan Approval

Mr. William explained, while this item was already preemptively approved via email, he would still like a motion and a second at the evening's meeting. A motion to formalize the acceptance of the strategic plan was made by Ms. Doss, seconded by Ms. Cerda-Moreno, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Mr. Williams mentioned the strategic plan was currently being reviewed by staff in-house, and by Mary Eileen Fouratt at the New Jersey State Council on the

Arts. Mr. Williams said he would share any additional edits with the Commission made following this final review process by both County staff and Ms. Fouratt.

Memorialization of 2022 Budget Approval

Ms. Merighi asked for another formal motion to memorialize the 2022 Budget as approved. A motion to approve the 2022 Cultural & Heritage Budget as presented was made by Mr. Cagno, seconded by Ms. Yoshida, and passed unanimously by the Commission.

Memorialization of Change of Meeting Time for 2022 Meetings Approval

Ms. Merighi noted it was recently discussed to change the time for upcoming Cultural & Heritage meetings from 4:00p.m. to 3:00p.m. in 2022. A formal motion to approve this time change moving forward was made by Ms. Yoshida, seconded by Ms. Watson, and passed unanimously by the remainder of the Commission.

Approval of 2022 C&H Commission Meeting Dates

Ms. Merighi made mention of the 2022 C&H Commission Meeting Dates included within each Commission member's monthly meeting packet. Ms. Merighi briefly explained meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month, except for November and December, which were annually moved up one week, as to not conflict with Thanksgiving and Christmas, respectively. A motion to accept the 2022 Cultural & Heritage Commission Meeting Dates was made by Ms. Yoshida, seconded by Ms. Watson, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Mr. Williams further explained staff were currently in-process of looking at alternative non-County venues in which to hold in-person meetings for 2022 and was tentatively looking at Gallery 50 for January.

Approval of 2022 Re-grant Award Funding Recommendations

Mr. Williams referred to the Cultural & Heritage Commission Grant Recommendations for 2022 in the monthly meeting packet. Mr. Williams stated there were many returning re-grantees, but there were some first-time applicants, as well, including Hands Up Silent Theatre, Revive South Jersey, The Vineland Historical & Antiquarian Society returning once more, and Downe Township/Union Hall, among others. Mr. Williams briefly explained the process and how staff arrived at each re-grantee's reward allotment. Ms. Merighi said she was very pleased with the numbers the Commission could award to each group this year. Ms. Merighi asked for a motion to approve the Grants Review Panel's Recommendations for Funding. A motion was made by Mr. Cagno, seconded by Mr. Dragotta, and passed unanimously by the Commission.

2022 Cultural & Heritage Commission Liaison Assignment Draw

Mr. Williams explained they would now be doing a virtual 2022 Cultural & Heritage Commission liaison assignment "draw." A number would be drawn for each member corresponding to their assignments located on the Local Arts Programming Grant & N.J. Historical Commission Grant Recommendations chart within their meeting packets. Ms. Riviera proceeded with the drawing: number #1 would be Michael "Mike" Cagno, #2 Yogesh Thakur, #3 Olive Doss, #4 Robert "Bob" Dragotta, #5 Marianne Lods, # 6 Sharon Yoshida, #7 Penny

Watson, #8 Suzanne “Suzi” Merighi, and #9 Maria Cerda-Moreno. Mr. Williams further explained the numbers would correspond with the single-digit numbers within the “2022 Award” column on the aforementioned sheet. Ms. Riviera would follow-up with an email listing each Commission member’s assignments after the night’s meeting.

NEA American Rescue Plan Grant Award Decision

Mr. Williams explained the Commission did not receive the American Rescue Plan Grant Award from the National Endowment for The Arts (NEA.) While it was unfortunate, Mr. Williams said, it would be a good opportunity for him to learn why the application was not sufficient, this information being beneficial in applying for further grants. Mr. Williams stated that the Commission did, however, receive a significant increase from both the Historical Commission and The State Council on the Arts. Ms. Merighi, Mr. Pisarski, and fellow Commission members thanked Mr. Williams for his diligent efforts.

C&H Commissioner Reports

Ms. Merighi said the Vineland Regional Dance Company (VRDC) is currently planning their annual performance of The Nutcracker scheduled for December 18-19, 2021. Ms. Merighi is unable to attend, but both sets of tickets gifted to her from the VRDC had been distributed to fellow Commission members. Ms. Watson stated about half of Clay College’s 700 bricks for their C&H grant-funded project had been carved, decorated, etc. and fired. They would like to have people come in groups, rather than one-by-one and Ms. Watson suggested, maybe, another Cultural & Heritage group could be assembled. Mr. Williams agreed and stated he would do his best to organize another group to visit Clay Collage for additional brick-carving in-between Thanksgiving & Christmas. Ms. Doss explained she had spoken to someone on the committee for the “Seabrook project,” who had said someone who was supposed to be interviewed had recently passed away. Ms. Merighi asked if this was the Helga Merits interview project, while Ms. Doss was unsure, Mr. Williams said it did sound like Ms. Merits’ project.

Planning Department Update

Mr. Pisarski said he had sent an email to the members of the Cultural & Heritage Commission, as well as the Recreation Commission and Tourism Advisory Council inviting them to a combined holiday get-together on December 14, 2021, from 1-4:00p.m. at Eastlyn Golf Course & The Greenview Inn. Mr. Pisarski said it would be an afternoon of food, shared ideas and conversation, and a few brief presentations. He explained each Commission member was entitled to bring a plus one to the event if they so wished. Mr. Pisarski asked that everyone, please, RSVP directly to Wanda Riviera with information for their plus one, as well.

Other Old/New Business

Ms. Watson said the updated Greenwich Historic District National Register nomination was very recently approved by the State Architectural Review Board. Ms. Watson said she would send out a link to her fellow Commission members to view it online. Ms. Doss inquired about a trail that was supposed to go in near Union Lake last year. Mr. Pisarski clarified that the trail is planned near the Sharp St. Extension and construction has not yet begun. He believed construction was

supposed to start in the Fall of 2022 with targeted completion in 2024. Mr. Williams shared that the opening of the planned Venezuelan art show at Clay College had been postponed until Friday, December 3, 2021. Mr. Williams stated there were issues with shipping, framing, etc. and would send out additional information to the Commission. Mr. Pisarski & Ms. Cerda-Moreno both thanked Mr. Williams for his valiant efforts through this painstaking shipping process. Mr. Cagno asked if anyone could think of different performance spaces both in and outside of the County for Hands Up Silent Theatre. Mr. Cagno asked that any traditional/non-traditional performance space suggestions, please be sent to him, via email.

Adjourn

Ms. Merighi thanked those in attendance for their participation in today's meeting and kindly asked for one final motion: a motion to adjourn the night's meeting. A motion to adjourn the November 18, 2021, Cultural & Heritage meeting was made by Ms. Watson, seconded by Mr. Cagno, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Ms. Merighi wished her fellow Commission members a "Happy Thanksgiving!" and looked forward to seeing everyone at the December combined holiday luncheon.