

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE
COMMISSION MINUTES****September 22, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on Thursday, September 22, 2022, at 3:00p.m., via teleconference and/or in-person at The County Administration Building & Potter's Tavern both located in Bridgeton, NJ.

Present: Michael Cagno Suzanne Merighi
Marianne Lods Maria Cerda-Moreno
Penny Watson Yogesh Thakur
Karen Barnett

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

Approval of Minutes – August 25, 2022

Mr. Cagno indicated, following Roll Call, that a quorum was met and would like to entertain a motion to approve the August 25, 2022, Cultural & Heritage (C&H) Commission meeting minutes. A motion to approve the August 25, 2022, meeting minutes was made by Ms. Merighi, seconded by Ms. Lods, and passed unanimously by the Commission.

Discussion of Special Request Grant Program

Mr. Williams said three separate documents were included within the meeting packet starting with the document labeled Special Request Criteria. He said this first document would be for anyone coming before the Commission to receive special request funding. It outlined the specific qualifications the Commission would be asking of them. Mr. Williams said the next document was a Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission Special Request Application for Calendar Year 2022 form. He stated there were recently some questions raised as to how special requests were coming in and this form would help make such requests more uniform when coming before the Commission. The new form would help further explain where the requested funds were intended to go. Mr. Williams said the third form was labeled C&H Special Request Final Report, which would document specific details following the event itself.

Numerous corrections were suggested to update Mr. Williams' County email contact address, as well as adding a brief recap to the final report chronicling exactly how the money was spent. It was suggested that a certification line would be added above the signature line and additionally include some sort of language indicating that this would be a one-time application and next time, they would have to apply under the block grant. It was mentioned to add additional acknowledgement details to the application itself, as well. A motion to approve the Special

Request Grant Program forms presented (with the edits discussed) was made by Ms. Lods, seconded by Ms. Cerda-Moreno, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Mr. Pisarski thanked Mr. Williams for putting these additional materials together.

Discussion of Annual Writing Competition

Mr. Williams said the Annual Writing Competition flyer was included within the meeting packet; although, to date, staff had yet to receive any submissions, unfortunately. Mr. Williams explained the initial submission deadline had been extended from September 28th until October 14th. Mr. Williams stated it would still be fall-themed, the anthology publication date would be slightly pushed back, and staff would try some additional avenues to help get the word out. Ms. Lods asked to be sent the updated flyer to pass it along to someone she knew, and Ms. Merighi suggested getting the information directly to creative writing teachers. Mr. Pisarski added, as a completely new program, it may not launch. He suggested partnering with some of the local County and municipal libraries for similar programming in upcoming years.

Discussion of Annual Music Compilation (The Sounds of Cumberland County)

Mr. Williams said staff had received five submissions (two which were usable) to date based on lyrical content. Artists who were not applicable, had been contacted by staff giving them the opportunity to re-submit something edited or more family-friendly. Although, Mr. Williams said staff did have verbal commitments from roughly 10-12 artists, who showed interest. Facebook & Instagram Boosting with ads had recently been done on social media, as well. Staff were hopeful they would still get in additional submissions for the planned compilation.

Recap of Grant Writing Workshop – September 8

Mr. Williams said the Grant Writing Workshop went really well and he wanted to report back to the Commission. There were three new organizations that had come out, as well as Hands Up Silent Theatre, who attended, gave the information to another organization they knew. Mr. Williams felt as though there would be some new and additional organizations joining the grant program for the 2023 round. Mr. Williams extended his thanks to Mr. Pisarski for an extremely well-done workshop, answering questions, and making sure everyone was as well-prepared as possible. Mr. Williams said the latest Grant Writing Workshop was a success and he looked forward to the next grant round. He explained a follow-up email would be sent to those in attendance ahead of the upcoming October 14th deadline.

Recap of A Day Along The Maurice River (Artists' Day) – September 10

Mr. Williams said Artists' Day had been expanded this year to become A Day Along The Maurice River. Staff had 17 artists in attendance, as well as Gina Martucci, who did chalk drawings, and Clay College with tiles available to paint. Mr. Williams thanked Ms. Lods for coming out and helping work the Tourism booth. Jim Albertson, Steve Byrne, and The Snake Brothers had done a great job performing music. Mr. Williams said it was a larger turnout than last year, due to some of the added events, such as the speaker series, the trail walks, and the architectural house tour. Mr. Williams said they wanted to expand the event even more next years and would be having a wrap-up meeting in the coming weeks to start planning. Mr.

Pisarski said the Historical Society had completely sold out of baked goods and hot dogs. Ms. Lods added she had spoken to one of the artists since, who said the event was spectacular and very well-attended by all. Mr. Williams hoped to make it even bigger and better for 2023!

C& H Commissioner Reports

Mr. Cagno stated All That Dance Studio had a very successful summer program, as well as dance and yoga classes. Mr. Cagno said staff there started their new class last week. Ms. Merighi explained, last weekend, the Langston Hughes program was presented at the Cumberland County Library. She was unable to attend the presentation but said there would be another similarly-minded program held on October 22nd centered around Edgar Allan Poe.

Planning Department Update

Mr. Pisarski said the DRAFT New Jersey Comprehensive Statewide Historic Preservation Plan was included within the meeting packet. As an interested party, he added the Cultural & Heritage Commission was encouraged to provide comments. Mr. Pisarski stated it was a lot and he would give everyone some time to read through it, but if they had any comments, to please send them to him, via email. Mr. Pisarski added he could draft a letter on behalf of the Commission. Mr. Pisarski thought was pretty clear and concise, for what it was. He liked that the different periods were highlighted and categorized. Mr. Pisarski said the general idea was that they wanted to promote, through marketing, the importance of Preservation in the State of New Jersey.

Ms. Watson asked if it was put together by a consultant and if so, did Mr. Pisarski knew who did it. Mr. Pisarski did not know or see who the consultant in question was. Mr. Pisarski said if there were any comments and he did decide to draft a letter, he would provide it to the Commission prior to sending. Mr. Pisarski said, additionally, staff were looking at some Departmental changes and additions happening within the next 30 days. Once public, Mr. Pisarski said he would let the Commission know about this expansion of programming, via email, which would not directly affect the Board, but he felt would be both collaborative and beneficial.

Public Comment

Ms. Lods said she wanted to quickly let the Commission know where they currently stood with the proposed mural on the space within Glasstown Plaza: they had sent out a Request for Proposal (RFP) to about 10 South Jersey-based muralists. They had five who answered back quickly and would like to submit in proposals of their own. Ms. Lods said potential artists would have until October 11th to submit their designs and then, the committee at the Holly City Development Corporation would meet right away to select an artist for the mural.

Mr. Pisarski added, regarding the funding line and the \$80,000.00 recommended for operating expenses as a supplemental award for the eight block grant recipients would likely be approved by the County Commissioners at their meeting the following Tuesday. Following the meeting, staff would be reaching out to each of these eight organizations to let them know about the award(s). Ms. Lods mentioned that upcoming Saturday would be the 10th Anniversary Gala at the Levoy Theatre. She said there would be a show, as well as celebrations, food, and drink. Ms. Lods added Saturday would also be the Plein Air Competition in Millville with 19 artists

currently signed up to participate, as well as the final farm market of the season.

Other Old/New Business

Ms. Watson said Lisa Deline for the National Park Service would be coming to Greenwich the following Tuesday to walk through the town and review the updated National Register of Historic Places listing. Ms. Watson stated Ms. Deline would be examining the nomination Jim Burton had submitted, which they were trying to get on the Register as Nationally Significant. Ms. Watson added Ms. Deline would also be going to the Bayshore Discovery project, as well.

Mr. Pisarski said he and Mr. Williams had met with the interim director of the Bayshore Center, as Brian Keenan had recently resigned. Mr. Pisarski stated the interim director was a board member, who had retired as the executive director from the Independence Seaport Museum in Philadelphia. Mr. Pisarski said he was a great interim director but was not interested in maintaining the position permanently. He explained the Bayshore Center would actively be looking for a new executive director through a search process. Their feeling was that over the summer months, Port Norris does not provide enough foot traffic for the sails of the A.J. Meerwald. Mr. Pisarski said Bayshore staff were looking for a partner port they could set up in over the summer, which would have adequate foot traffic for the Meerwald. Mr. Pisarski had reached out to staff at Cape May and the Delaware River & Bay Authority about porting there.

Ms. Watson asked if the Dallas Landing Skirmish display/oculus had ever been put back in place. Mr. Pisarski said he did not personally know but would have staff go check. Ms. Watson asked where the money had come from for the archaeological investigation and Mr. Pisarski said It had come from a Federal Revolutionary War grant. Ms. Watson mentioned she was currently researching the link between Trench War and the Revolution. Mr. Pisarski said, unfortunately, this would not qualify for that specific funding source, but staff could look for additional funding. He mentioned the Council for The Humanities as a potential funding source.

Correspondence

Mr. Williams indicated Karen Barnett was coming from another meeting and got on a little bit later but wanted to circle back and give her an opportunity to make comments about the Special Request Grant Program documents. Mr. Williams reiterated the areas that had been mentioned by Commission members and would be added onto the documents. Ms. Barnett said, via the TEAMS Chat function, that she was “good” with all of this. Mr. Pisarski added anyone current in a special request, staff would send the Final Report form and new/future applicants would be required to fill out the whole application.

Mr. Williams said the two items of Correspondence this month included 1.) a letter from the Vineland Regional Dance Company (VRDC) inviting County Commissioners and Cultural & Heritage Commissioners to attend their upcoming performance of The Nutcracker ballet and 2.) a newsletter from All That Dance Studio detailing their upcoming programming and performances. Mr. Pisarski recommended first reaching out to the liaison for the VRDC to see if they wanted the tickets.

Adjourn

Mr. Cagno asked for one final motion: a motion to adjourn the September 22, 2022, Cultural & Heritage Commission meeting. A motion to adjourn the September 22, 2022, Cultural & Heritage meeting was made by Ms. Merighi, seconded by Ms. Watson, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Mr. Williams, again, thanked everyone for the attendance.