

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

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

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

Commissioner Donna Pearson, Deputy Director

Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator
Wanda Riviera, Confidential Assistant
Matt Horowitz, Recording Secretary

Approval of Minutes – September 22, 2022

Mr. Cagno indicated, following Roll Call, that a quorum was met and would like to entertain a motion to approve the September 22, 2022, Cultural & Heritage (C&H) Commission meeting minutes. A motion to approve the September 22, 2022, meeting minutes was made by Ms. Barnett, seconded by Ms. Cerda-Moreno, and passed unanimously by the Commission with one minor correction, as made by Ms. Watson and noted for the record.

Discussion of Annual Writing Competition

Mr. Williams said the Annual Writing Competition had, unfortunately, yielded zero (0) submissions even through the extended deadline. Mr. Williams stated it did not seem to capture any interested students' attention, 1.) being so close to the beginning of the school year, 2.) the short duration of ramp-up time, and 3.) having sent it out blindly to all the school districts. Mr. Williams explained he would attempt to do the Writing Competition again next year with a couple minor changes; first, identifying a specific contact person on behalf of each school, extending the amount of time to submit, and giving it to the schools in the spring for their incoming classes in the fall. Ms. Riviera suggested putting out a flyer on the Tourism table at events held over the summer months to help further spread the word.

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

Mr. Cagno said, however, there was good news concerning the Annual Music Compilation. Mr. Williams further explained the artist biographies, information, and CD liner notes were included within the meeting packet. Mr. Williams thanked Matt Horowitz for all his hard work on this

project, as well as a thank you to judge Mike Cagno. Mr. Williams stated the musical genres included everything from Gospel to Folk to Rock to Pop. Mr. Williams hoped staff would get even more variety and more submissions for next year's compilation. Many artists stated they did not feel as though they had enough time to submit material and Mr. Williams said next year, there would be a longer entry period, as well. Mr. Williams added there were 30 submissions in total, 26 of which were usable. Mr. Williams said the compilation would now be a double-disc release on CD with no one being eliminated, aside from those with explicit content.

It was noted most Commission members could not access the music files Mr. Williams sent out, via OneDrive. Mr. Williams, said following the meeting, he would send the link out again. Mr. Williams would give both the Commission members and County Commissioners until the following Monday to listen, review the music, and send in any comments. Mr. Williams said the plan was to release the compilation digitally on Bandcamp.com on Tuesday, November 1, 2022. A double disc-compilation would be produced through Disc Makers with 20 CD's to be given to each artist for distribution. Mr. Williams said the CDs would be distributed and given away for free through the Tourism table at upcoming events, as well. Mr. Williams thanked the Commission for letting the staff try something new and branching out into different arts.

Discussion of 2023 Grant Applications Received

Mr. Williams wanted to make one correction to the list of 2023 Re-grantee Applications, for Arts, there were 27 organizations, rather than 26, now including The Friends of India Society. Mr. Cagno asked when the Grants Review Panel would be meeting. Mr. Williams said this would be taking place on Monday, November 7, 2022, at The Riverfront Renaissance Center for The Arts (RRCA) in Millville. Mr. Williams personally thanked Marianne & Dianne at The RRCA for usage of their space. Mr. Williams said last year, there were 26 Arts and 10 History organizations with new organizations in 2023 including Rair Causes, The Friends of India Society with direct support of The Kite & Color Festival, and Bill Horin's ART-C, who recently hosted the CUT Film Festival. Mr. Cagno asked if any organizations who had put in Special Requests in recent months had applied for Arts/History Re-grantee funding. Mr. Williams explained yes, Friends of India and Vineland African American Community Development Corporation had joined the program. Mr. Williams said the others who asked for Special Request funding had been invited into the program, as well as the Grant-writing Workshop, but those were the only two who had applied.

Appointment of 2023 Budget Sub-committee

Mr. Williams stated he had provided information detailing who was on the 2022 Budget Sub-committee and asked if any of those members would like to return for 2023. Mr. Cagno, Ms. Merighi, and Ms. Lods all volunteered for the 2023 Budget Sub-committee. A motion to approve the proposed slate of Michael Cagno, Suzanne Merighi, and Marianne Lods for the 2023 Budget Sub-committee was made by Ms. Watson, seconded by Ms. Barnett, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Mr. Cagno, Ms. Merighi, and Ms. Lods abstained themselves from the vote.

Appointment of Nominations Committee

Mr. Cagno indicated next up on the meeting agenda was the annual appointment of the

Nominations Committee. Mr. Cagno explained the 2022 Nominations Committee consisted of Sharon Yoshida, Suzanne Merighi, and Maria Cerda-Moreno. Ms. Cerda-Moreno volunteered for the 2023 Nominations Committee, as well as Mr. Thakur and Mr. Cagno. A motion to approve the proposed slate of Maria Cerda-Moreno, Yogesh Thakur, and Michael Cagno for the 2023 Nominations Committee was made by Ms. Lods, seconded by Ms. Merighi. Ms. Cerda-Moreno, Mr. Thakur, and Mr. Cagno abstained themselves from the vote.

C& H Commissioner Reports

Ms. Lods shared, while it was not her appointed liaison organization, she recently attended the Bridgeton Rotary meeting. Ms. Lods said the Rotary was in the midst of planning the ribbon-cutting for the mural the Commission helped fund. Ms. Lods said the Rotary was very thankful for the Commission's support. Mr. Cagno added he thought the mural turned out looking gorgeous. Mr. Williams urged the Commission members to check it out when driving by on Pearl Street approaching Washington Street. The mural could be seen be the righthand side when going south displayed on the side of the CompleteCare building.

County Commissioner Liaison Reports

Commissioner Donna Pearson thanked Mr. Williams to the link for the musical components of The Sounds of Cumberland County Music Compilation. Commissioner Pearson said she looked forward to listening to it with the updated working link. Commissioner Pearson expressed her gratitude towards Mr. Williams, Mr. Pisarski, and the Commissioner members, but said she would defer any additional updates on the County Commissioners' behalf to Mr. Pisarski.

Planning Department Update

Mr. Williams explained Mr. Pisarski was absent, but he would do his absolute best to give a brief update on behalf of Mr. Pisarski and the County Commissioners. Mr. Williams said the County Commissioners had passed a resolution the previous Tuesday night to include 4-H & The Rutgers Extension Service as a division under the Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs. It was approved, in addition to \$350,000.00 for renovations to the 4-H/Extension Service building located in Deerfield Township on Morton Avenue. Mr. Williams said the Planning Department would re-locate to that building once renovations were complete. Mr. Williams said the Commission's meetings would eventually be moved to the 4-H/Extension Service building, as there was currently no set timetable for the completion of renovations. Commissioner Pearson thanked Mr. Williams for his extremely thorough off-the-cuff update on behalf of both Mr. Pisarski and the County Commissioners.

Other Old/New Business

Mr. Williams briefly stated he was able to attend of the Greenwich Tea Burning Chapter of The Daughters of The American Revolution (GTBCOTDOAR)'s program held the previous Saturday afternoon. Mr. Williams said it was excellent and they had an actor portraying Richard Stockton's wife, who spoke about some of the heroines of the American Revolution. He said the actor included known heroines, as well as lesser-known African-American & Native American heroines from throughout the American Revolution. Mr. Williams expressed how impressed he

was the Daughters of the American Revolution's efforts to be inclusive including have a program booklet in both English and Spanish.

Mr. Thakur explained the Diwali/Festival of Lights was currently ongoing and that upcoming Sunday, there was a special event starting at 12 noon, The Friends of India Society would be hosting a series of house visits in honor of the holiday. Mr. Thakur invited the Commission members to the series of seven houses (including his own) and said he would send out the participating addresses and additional event information via email. Mr. Thakur explained snacks and sweets would be offered for a period of 15-20 minutes/house with the festival culminating with a dinner at the last house, as well as an extravagant fireworks display. The Commission members thanked Mr. Thakur.

Adjourn

Mr. Cagno asked for one final motion: a motion to adjourn the October 27, 2022, Cultural & Heritage Commission meeting. A motion to adjourn the October 27, 2022, Cultural & Heritage meeting was made by Ms. Lods, seconded by Ms. Merighi, and passed unanimously by the Commission. Mr. Williams, again, thanked everyone for their continued attendance.