

# CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE COMMISSION MINUTES

February 16, 2010  
3:30 pm

Freeholder meeting room in Bridgeton, NJ 08302

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on Tuesday, February 16, 2010 at 3:30 PM., in the Planning and Economic Development Department Meeting Room in Bridgeton, New Jersey.

**Present:** Marianne Lods  
Roy Kaneshiki  
Suzanne Merighi  
John Garrison  
Ella Boykin  
Flavia Alaya  
Penny Watson

Matthew Pisarski, Principal Planner  
Kim McCann, Recording Secretary  
Jane Jannarone, Freeholder Liaison

Special Guests: Denise Dixon  
Courtney Reece-  
Cumberland County Library

## Approval of Minutes – January 19, 2010

A motion to approve the minutes from January 19, 2010 was made by Flavia Alaya. The motion was seconded by Suzanne Merighi and passed unanimously.

## Cohansey Association of Performing Arts Presentation

Mr. Pisarski introduced Denise Dixon who was representing CAPA (The Cohansey Association of Performing Arts, a new organization). Mr. Pisarski noted everyone has a copy of the letter in their packets with a description of the program and organization.

Ms. Dixon thanked the Commission for having her at today's meeting. She noted CAPA has been a dream of hers for many years and she has been a piano and voice instructor for the past twenty-two years. She said that in recent years she has received phone calls from students stating they have to stop taking lessons

due to financial hardship. Ms. Dixon said what she envisions for CAPA is working together with the public school system as a non-profit, offering scholarships and grant funding to help offset the cost of tuition for students. The program would be set-up as a school and training program and offer performances throughout the year. In the beginning the school would offer piano and voice instruction and as the school grows they would branch out to woodwinds and brass. Ms. Dixon said they have to file for a non-profit status and she is able to put up some of her own money, but lacks the full amount needed to file. She noted she recently met with Ed Bethea and others at Tri-County Community Action and they loved the plan and may possibly have space available at one of their facilities to house CAPA and accept funds on their behalf until they are able to get their own checking account. The start-up funds they need and have just been quoted are: \$750.00 for the filing fee, \$400.00 attorney fee, and \$350.00 for the state. The money would be held by Tri-County until CAPA receives non-profit status.

Flavia Alaya asked Ms. Dixon if Tri-County spoke to her about coming before Bridgeton Main Street Board. Ms. Dixon responded that the suggestion had not been made. Marianne Lods suggested she look for help with the New Jersey Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. The services provided would be at no charge, but filing fees would still have to be paid. An organization that can help with all ADA Compliance issues would be The Cultural Access Network. Ms. Lods said she would e-mail this information to Ms. Dixon. Mr. Pisarski mentioned that once they do receive their 501(c)3 status, they could then apply to the Commission for re-grant funding. Mr. Pisarski also suggested reaching out to Jill Lombardo at the Cumberland County College Foundation Center as she handles 501(c)3 establishment and may be able to provide assistance.

The Commission thanked Ms. Dixon for her presentation.

### **Handicapped Accessible Playground Draft Letter**

Mr. Pisarski provided a copy of the draft letter written to Mayor James Begley. Mr. Pisarski noted Dave Grennon at the Disabled Advisory Council is currently reviewing the letter for comments and edits and consequently the letter may be amended slightly. Mr. Pisarski said if any Commission members have any comments to please e-mail them to him in the next day or so as he would like to have the letter mailed by tomorrow afternoon if everyone is in agreement. This letter is based on comments made at the recent Disabled Advisory Council Dinner regarding Bridgeton not having a barrier free playground.

A motion to forward the letter to Mayor James Begley on behalf of the Commission was made by Marianne Lods. The motion was seconded by John Garrison and passed unanimously.

### **N.J. Historical Commission Members**

Mr. Pisarski noted at last month's meeting the discussion was brought up regarding the Commission not receiving the Historical Commission Grant and he provided the Commission with a copy of the New Jersey Historical Commission members. He said what is interesting about the list is there are no members in Salem or Cumberland County. Flavia Alaya stated she does not believe this list is up to date, because she has recently spoken with Celeste Riley and was told that she had been appointed. Marianne Lods also pointed out that Nina Mitchell Wells is no longer on the Commission. Mr. Pisarski mentioned scheduling a small entourage to visit with Ms. Riley and discuss the Historical Commission and the funding and the issues the Commission has experienced over the years. Freeholder Jane Jannarone noted if there is anything the Freeholder Board could do to help in any way with this issue to please let her know.

### **Newsletter Contract**

Mr. Pisarski provided a quote from Carol Smith. The amount budgeted for the newsletter is \$3,000.00 for 2010. Mr. Pisarski noted the quote is for \$3,900.00 but explained there was a surplus of \$943.00 from the 2008 budget under the newsletter contract. Also, this amount falls below the threshold which would require a public bidding process. Mr. Pisarski's recommendation is to contract with Carol Smith.

A motion to approve the newsletter contract from Prestige Publications was made by Marianne Lods. The motion was seconded by Penny Watson and passed unanimously.

### **Encore Award Selection**

Mr. Pisarski said his understanding from South Jersey Cultural Alliance is they will be having the Encore Award Banquet this year. He noted the Commission does not have to make a decision today, but to start thinking of whom they would like to nominate to receive the award this year.

### **Other Old/New Business**

Mr. Pisarski introduced Courtenay Reece of the Cumberland County Library and said she wanted to discuss a program she is thinking of having this summer. Ms. Reece thanked the Commission for their time and said she handles the Children's Services at the Cumberland County Library and provided a brief letter to the Commission members outlining the program she would like to do.

Ms. Reece said the Cumberland County Library offers a summer library program to the children of the community to encourage them to read during the summer

and to retain their reading skills. This year's theme is "Make a Splash – READ!" As a part of the education through fun the library would like to offer a trip on the A.J. Meerwald. Ms. Reece noted her plan is to take a trip at the end of July or the beginning of August according to the A.J. Meerwald's public sailing schedule. The cost of an educational sail is \$725.00. The schooner is able to accommodate up to 45 people, most of whom would be registered summer reading participants from grades 4 through 12. It will also be necessary to provide transportation to either Atlantic City or Cape May depending on the sail schedule. The cost of a bus will be approximately \$400.00, bringing the total cost up to \$1,150.00.

Marianne Lods mentioned the South Jersey Cultural Alliance School Bus Fund and said this may be a possibility for busing. Flavia Alaya suggested talking to Lisa Calvo from Rutgers University as she offers educational programs through the Sheppard House in Bridgeton that might be tied in with a sail.

Ms. Reece thanked the Commission for allowing her to be here today. Marianne Lods suggested tabling the request until next month's meeting.

Flavia Alaya noted how successful the Thanks for the Memories to Dill's event was. The committee raised almost \$30,000 to be divided between Bridgeton Main Street and Bridgeton PAL.

Mr. Pisarski mentioned he met with Jim Turk for lunch last month and one suggestion made was to get the chairs of both Commissions together for lunch.

Flavia Alaya mentioned the meetings on the RiverFest concept, which would highlight the cultural and ecological significance of the Cohansey River. The idea is to have a weekend event in Bridgeton with satellite venues similar to the way the Winter Eagle Festival is conducted. Ms. Alaya said at the moment the concept is in the initial feasibility stage.

Marianne Lods mentioned that Millville Arts District will be hosting a free concert by the USAF Liberty Jazz Band on Friday, March 5, 2010 at Lakeside Middle School on Sharp Street in Millville.

### **Correspondence**

Mr. Pisarski provided in everyone's packet an article by Jean Jones about the new Commission members for 2010.

Mr. Pisarski provided an article on the two newly-created legislative committees chaired by area Assemblymen. Matt Milam will chair the new Assembly Tourism and Arts Committee.

Mr. Pisarski provided a copy of a letter to Rev. Anthony Scott thanking him for

honoring the Commission at this year's Martin Luther King Day celebrations.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Ella Boykin. The motion was seconded by Suzanne Merighi and unanimously carried.

The next regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission will be held on Tuesday, March 16, 2010, in the Freeholder Meeting Room in Bridgeton, New Jersey.