

CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE COMMISSION MINUTES

May 20, 2008
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, May 20, 2008 at 3:30 PM., in the Freeholder meeting room in Bridgeton, New Jersey.

Present: Jean Jones
Marianne Lods
Penny Watson
John Garrison
Suzanne Merighi
Flavia Alaya
Roy Kaneshiki

Matthew Pisarski, Principal Planner
DeAnn James, Recording Secretary (for Kim McCann)
Kim Wood, Director (^{Dept. of} Planning & Dev.)
Freeholder Jane Christy

Special Guests: Russell Stormes – Laurel Lake
Community Day Committee Chairman

Approval of Minutes –April 16, 2008

A motion to approve the minutes from April 16, 2008 with corrections was made by Flavia Alaya. The motion was seconded by Suzanne Merighi and passed unanimously.

Special Requests – Laurel Lake Community Day

Russell Stormes representative for the Laurel Lake Community Day Organization presented a request for special funding. Mr. Stormes mentioned to the Commission that he is the head of the Laurel Lake Crime Watch and the head of the Laurel Lake Community Day. Last year was the first year for the Laurel Lake Community day, which was funded by the township. This year the township does not have the funding and the community would like to have the event. Mr. Stormes noted they concentrated on arts and crafts for the kids, with over two hundred-fifty kids participating. The majority of the expenses incurred last year were for arts and crafts material, ranging from crayons and coloring books to

bead art. The cost of the arts and crafts was half of what the entire event cost. Mr. Stormes provided a copy of their expenses and inventory sheet from last year. Mr. Stormes mentioned the community is participating in fundraisers and has solicited for donations to various banks and businesses. He noted Laurel Lake Community Day is open to everyone throughout Cumberland County.

Mr. Pisarski asked Mr. Stormes if he has approached the Clay College and Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts as far as they may have extra supplies they could donate free or provide some type of service at no charge. Mr. Stormes replied he had not. Ms. Lods asked the date of the event. Mr. Stormes replied the event would be held on July 19, 2008 from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mr. Kaneshiki asked how many were in attendance at last year's event. Mr. Stormes estimated there were close to five hundred. Ms. Christy noted Downe Township Schools has discontinued their art and music programs and felt this event would benefit the kids who are missing art instruction. Mr. Stormes thanked the Commission for their time. Mr. Pisarski noted that the Laurel Lake Community Day Committee is not currently a 501(c) 3. The Commission can give funds to non- 501(c)3's, but should be careful in doing so. Ms. Watson noted she wants the funding to go to arts and crafts supplies

Flavia Alaya made a motion to approve the special request of \$500.00 to the Laurel Lake Community Day Committee. Roy Kaneshiki seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Teen Arts Festival – Recap and Discussion for 2009

Mr. Pisarski provided a number of press articles on the Teen Arts Festival and they are all extremely positive. The event went very well and the weather was wonderful. Mr. Pisarski noted the evaluation forms are coming back from the students. The students loved the event and are begging for more dance classes. There were close to three hundred students which is a little more than a hundred greater than last year. Mr. Pisarski stated that as far as the budget it was close and may be a little over, but would have the exact figures at next month's meeting. Mr. Pisarski did discuss with Mike Cagno, Carolyne Krull and Carol Nagao the need to review and analyze the way the event responds to the mission of this Commission. The event is fantastic and the students and teachers love the Teen Arts Festival, but the event is not meeting what the Commission wants to achieve by reaching out to the school districts.

Mr. Pisarski contacted Amanda Newman Godfrey at the Council on the Arts who handles arts programming in the school districts. Ms. Godfrey suggested the Commission apply for a Land-o-Lakes Foundation Grant. The Land-o-Lakes has a special interest in arts education in the school districts and rural communities. Mr. Pisarski noted Ms. Lods also suggested the Dodge Foundation. Mr. Pisarski stated he is going to pursue both of the grants with the idea that next year the Commission have the Teen Arts Festival just as in the past, but in addition may

also seek grant funding to do some type of more in depth analysis of what is being offered in the school districts and what the Commission can provide to fill in any gaps due to budget constraints. Mr. Pisarski mentioned what a wonderful job Carol Nagao did as academic ambassador and is looking forward to utilizing her again next year. Ms. Watson asked that Mr. Pisarski follow up to find out why Bridgeton School District did not participate in the Teen Arts Festival.

Encore Awards Dinner – Wednesday, May 21st

Mr. Pisarski mentioned that the Encore Awards dinner would be held on Wednesday May 21, 2008 honoring Jane Christy. Mr. Pisarski noted the Commission has a full table plus two seats. Jim Turk from Salem County and another Commission member will be utilizing the extra two seats.

SHARED Services Update – Joint Session Discussion

Mr. Pisarski mentioned Nancy Moses is working on the phone interviews and will be interviewing the Mark Mappen, Steve Runk, Steve Sweeney, Jeff Van Drew, Lisa Jester, Louis Magazzu and Jane Christy. Ms. Moses has already spoken with the Commission members. Ms. Moses expects to have the draft report completed in July. Mr. Pisarski noted Ms. Moses is requesting that the Commission have a joint meeting in July so she can present the draft findings to both Salem and Cumberland. Mr. Pisarski stated he would be working with Ms. Lods to have that meeting in the Millville Arts District, either at the Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts or possibly the Cumberland County Improvement Authority.

Other Old/New Business

Mr. Pisarski provided in everyone's packet a letter from Lisa Jester from the Millville Airfield Museum thanking the Commission for providing funding for the Aviation Art the Beauty of Flight.

Mr. Pisarski provided a letter from PAX; Program of Academic Exchange in New York talking about exchange students and hosting them.

Mr. Pisarski provided correspondence on the Indian Culture Event that was held recently in Buena Vista.

Mr. Pisarski provided a Biography on Diomedes Matos who is an NEA National Heritage Fellowship recipient and did his fellowship at WheatonArts. Mr. Matos is from Tennessee and is in New Jersey for three weeks. Iveta Pirgova of WheatonArts called Mr. Pisarski and asked if he could reach out to the Commission's Regrantee's in the Puerto Rican Community to find a venue for Mr. Matos to perform. Mr. Pisarski called Sonya Lorenzana at the Festival

Puertoriqueno and asked if they had anything available. Ms. Lorenzana replied they are having a pageant related to the Miss Puerto Rico contest on June 7, 2008 at the North Italy Club and may possibly be interested in hosting Mr. Matos for that event. Mr. Pisarski reached out to Mr. Matos to see if he is available. Ms. Christy mentioned that Maria Laboy holds events also and may possibly be able to help.

Mr. Pisarski provided a newsletter from Art Cox who has been working with Bill Burton to put a photo gallery display of Bridgeton in Burton Plumbing Showroom.

Flavia Alaya discussed the recent discussion of the Scenic Byway. The Bayshore Coalition has become the sponsoring organization. There will be a presentation on the byway on May 21, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. at Cumberland County College. Ms. Alaya mentioned they would be seeking formal declarations of support almost immediately. Ms. Wood mentioned that last week the byways council did a presentation to the Cumberland County Planning Board. Everyone was supportive of the effort and intentions of the project. The concerns at the Planning Board level was they did not want to make a formal action on the project because they wanted to hear from the municipalities involved. Ms. Alaya was disappointed that she had not heard any feedback from the city of Bridgeton.

Ms. Christy asked if a letter should go out to the townships that are not providing art education to the students and perhaps looking into combining some resources with neighboring schools. Mr. Pisarski replied he would like to wait until he accumulated more data.

Ms. Alaya asked if the Commission should wait until after the byway meeting to prepare a letter of endorsement. Mr. Pisarski stated he would draft a resolution for next month's meeting that supports the concept not the specific route.

Mr. Kaneshiki asked Mr. Pisarski if there is a requirement to survey people attending Bay Days. Ms. Wood replied that Ms. Wren could contact Bob Rose or Kim Gauntt at the Tourism Advisory Council at 455-0328.

Ms. Watson mentioned that Nancy Moses has published a book called Lost in the Museum.

Adjournment

There being no further business a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Suzanne Merighi. The motion was seconded by Jean Jones and passed unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission will be held on Wednesday, June 18, 2008 in the Freeholder Meeting Room in Bridgeton, New Jersey.