

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE
COMMISSION MINUTES**

November 26, 2013

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission was held on Tuesday, November 26, 2013 at 3:30 PM., in the Freeholder conference room in Bridgeton, New Jersey.

Present: Suzanne Merighi Roy Kaneshiki
John Garrison

Matthew Pisarski, Principal Planner
Jennifer Morgan, Recording Secretary

Guest: Kim Gauntt, Cumberland County Recreation & Tourism
Nancy Moses

It was noted that quorum was not met and consequently no formal action could be taken.

Approval of Minutes – October 22, 2013

Postponed until next meeting.

DRAFT Long Range Plan Presentation by Nancy Moses

Commission members received a draft of the Long Range Plan in their packet. Ms. Moses said the plan is an extension of the 2007 Long Range Plan. The Commission wants to strengthen organizational fundraising and foster collaboration. Also, the Commission sought to inform itself on the steps needed to develop into a thriving cultural tourism destination. Ms. Moses arranged for the Commission to have meetings with some of the key players who shaped and now lead Philadelphia's profitable cultural sector. The work plan called for two group meetings: leaders of arts and heritage providers, and one with business leaders. The business leaders did not meet as a whole, and instead individual telephone meetings were held. Four factors stand out for the cultural sector:

The Great Recession: Unemployment reached 14.4%. Young people left in search of employment and retirees looking to downsize could not find buyers for their homes.

Philanthropy: In 2012 residents of Cumberland County contributed a total of \$3.36 million in 2008.

Collaboration: Organizational leaders told us about the benefit of learning from other groups and exploring tourism development packages, advertising co-ops, countywide events and shared services.

Growing Disparities: Over the last five years, Cumberland has become a minority/majority County with a growing percentage of young families and children.

Some of the goals are to help arts and heritage organizations achieve long term stability and to build Cumberland County into a culture/eco destination. We suggest that greater gains will be achieved if the tourism package includes both ecological and cultural offerings.

There are several objectives for the Cultural and Heritage Commission:

Consistent offerings and branding – organizations are managed by volunteers and this makes it difficult to achieve consistency.

Effective fundraising - Helping the staff of small organizations to compete more effectively in the highly competitive philanthropic marketplace is neither quick nor easy.

Metrics to make the case – Donors want to know exactly how their contribution helps advance the causes they support.

More diversity on boards of trustees – Board diversity is an issue facing organizations of all sizes and types in virtually every community in the nation.

The Cultural and Heritage Commission has come up with several strategies to assist in overcoming some of the obstacles.

Cultural Coach – It is suggested that the Commission pool the dollars used for consultants and direct it toward a part time hire of a “cultural coach” who can work with groups on a regular basis.

Online Toolbox – The Commission could establish an online portal where its grantees could access current materials in fundraising, marketing and impact assessment from sources throughout the region and nation.

Cultural Hub – A central meeting place needs to be established, this “hub” could house the coach, equipment, research supplies and periodicals.

Regular get-togethers – Having people in the same room on a regular basis could build trust and spark ideas.

Matching grants – Matching grants motivate fundraising professionals and allow donors to effectively double their donations.

Cultural Trust – Some cultural trusts provide such bridge loans that must be repaid in addition to, or instead of grants.

How will the Commission track the impact of its plan? Increase attendance, demonstrate consistency, increase the number of collaborative programs, amount of funds that are secured or matched and increase board members from different ethnic backgrounds.

Mr. Pisarski supports several of the ideas that were brought up but the Commission needs guidance on what is legally feasible. Mr. Pisarski said the State Council of the Arts needs to be at the Commission meeting to see what direction they would like to see. Mr. Garrison suggested pulling back on workshops and getting a cultural coach.

2014 Budget Approval

The budget subcommittee met and proposed a 2014 budget. Mr. Pisarski asked the Commission to look it over and he will email everyone for approval.

There is \$3,010.65 left over in several accounts for 2013 that needs to be encumbered. Mr. Pisarski suggested assigning the money to Keith Wasserman to do several podcasts.

Nominations Subcommittee Appointment

Last year Pat Gale, Roy Kaneshiki and Jean Jones were on the nominations committee. Mr. Pisarski will reach out to Ms. Boykin regarding volunteers.

2014 Re-grant Applications – Grants Review Panel Recommendations

Mr. Pisarski said several panelists could not make the meeting. It was recommended that Cumberland County Library not receive funding because they want to take trips outside of Cumberland County. If the Commission chooses to fund the Cumberland County Library any award would have to be pulled from another organization. Mr. Pisarski will send out an email to everyone asking for suggestions. Mr. Garrison indicated that he supports bus trips out of the county in order to connect local residents, especially children, with regional art institutions and cultural programming that may not be available locally. Mr. Pisarski responded that the mission of the Commission specifies the promotion of “local and county cultural traditions,” which makes the support of bus trips out of the county questionable. Since quorum was not present, the panel recommendations would be distributed via email. Several panelists suggested reducing the content of the application, both to improve the quality of the submitted re-grant applications and to make the review process less burdensome.

Liaison Reports

Ms. Merighi said Gallery 50 will be doing their First Friday on December 6th at 6pm with over 70 artists and crafters represented.

Mr. Garrison attended the History of Jewish Life in Cumberland County open house.

Mr. Kaneshiki went to Second Friday at Bayshore Discovery Project.

Tourism Advisory Council Comments – Kimberly Gauntt

No comments.

Other Old/New Business

No old or new business was reported.

Correspondence

Matthew Pisarski sent a letter to Sara Cureton, NJ Historical Commission to get permission to reallocate funds that were received back from the Jewish Federation by adding two additional podcast sites. Mr. Pisarski has not heard back from the state.

Mr. Pisarski sent a letter to Kristen McMasters, American Battlefield Protection Program. Mr. Pisarski would like the National Park Service to accept the RFP's that Cumberland County has already received for the Battle of Dallas Landing project.

An article was in the Daily Journal regarding the Arbucket house in Vineland. The State Historic Preservation Office is very interested in the house. The state has contacted national experts for this type of project.

Several articles were in papers regarding the History of Jewish Life in Cumberland County, which was a traveling exhibit. Mr. Garrison attended one of the openings.

Sandra Rosen sent in a thank you letter to the Commission thanking them for supporting Disability Awareness Day.

Commission members received a save the date card for the 2014 Winter Eagle Festival that will be held February 8th.

Adjourn

The next regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural and Heritage Commission will be held on Tuesday, December 17, 2013 in the Freeholder Meeting Room in Bridgeton, New Jersey.