

**CUMBERLAND COUNTY
CULTURAL AND HERITAGE
MINUTES
JULY 10, 2001
PERFORMING ARTS CONFERENCE ROOM
CUMBERLAND COUNTY COLLEGE**

Present: Suzanne Merighi
Mel Brody
Jane Christy
Patricia Gale
Jean Jones
Joe Polhamus

Pam Griner, Sr. Planner
Debbie Duffield, Secretary

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission was held on July 10, 2001 at 3:30 p.m. in the Performing Arts Conference Room at the Cumberland County College, Vineland, New Jersey. Vice-Chairperson, Suzanne Merighi called the meeting to order and read the opening statement in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act.

A motion was made to approve the March 13th and May 8th minutes by Joe Polhamus, seconded by Jean Jones, and passed unanimously.

NEW JERSEY STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS - southern Jersey funding report

Pam Griner distributed a packet containing the Secretary of State's findings on the New Jersey State Council on the Arts - South Jersey Funding. The Secretary of State had investigation into this matter as a result of articles that appeared in the Courier Post regarding whether or not South Jersey was in fact receiving it's extra 25% from the New Jersey State Arts Council on the Arts. The article also stated that there may have been some improper dealings as far as the State Council and the Arts members funding their organizations more than others.

The report was presented at the state Cultural and Heritage agencies meeting and it states that South Jersey is receiving it's additional 25%. The report also stated that the manner in which funding is distributed is not improper.

EAST POINT OPEN HOUSE AND ARTISTS' DAY - AUGUST 4

Ms. Griner invited the Commission to attend the East Point Open House and Artists' Day held on August 4, 2001. The East Point Lighthouse have arranged for Jim Albertson to perform between 10:00 a.m. until noon. The Snake Brothers will be performing at the open house off and on between noon and 4:00 p.m. with Steve Byrne. Ms. Patricia Gale along with Ms. Louisa Sharp

will be at the event with the Children's Workshop. Mr. George Perez will be doing character drawings that day. There are seven artists who are participating during the day to do the painting on the beach. Ms. Griner indicated that Gail Robinson suggested they come early and enjoy the day!

AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS CONFERENCE - JULY 28-31, 2001 - NEW YORK CITY

Ms. Griner said thanks to the NJ State Council and the Arts because they provided stipends to all County arts agencies for coordinators to attend. The Council provided \$750.00 to enable Ms. Griner to attend the arts conference. Ms. Griner explained that this is the first time the Americans for the Arts and the State Arts Agencies have combined their conferences together. The conference will be held on Saturday, Sunday, Monday and into Tuesday. There are two concurrent sessions regarding the Lillian Wallace Foundation Grant that the state received. Ms. Griner stated that New Jersey is one of thirteen states to receive the Lillian Wallace Foundation Grant and they will be looking at new innovative ways to include all people in arts and how to do outreach. Ms. Griner will give the Commission an update on what she learns at the conference.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY BOOK - UPDATE

Ms. Griner handed out a memorandum dated July 9, 2001 to the Cultural and Heritage Commission members from Mr. Stephen Kehs in reference to the County History Book which is attached. The members took a moment to read the memorandum.

Ms. Griner explained that the wording used by Cumberland County's Legal Counsel, Richard Geiger, is in order to prevent any claims by Mr. Bruno regarding anything Mrs. Bruno may have stated or written. The wording will also prevent Mr. Bruno from attempting to "stop" publishing once it has started. Ms. Griner also explained that it would provide the Commission with the security it needs to proceed with the book.

Ms. Griner explained that even though the book was contracted to Mrs. Bruno and while she did not do a good job, it's at least a place to start. Ms. Griner explained that Mr. Pisarski is still working on the book per Steve Kehs' instruction, because Mr. Kehs wants to take care of his obligation to have the book updated, edited and to insure the information contained in it is correct and footnoted.

Ms. Suzanne Merighi stated that she would almost prefer to sever the information with the estate and just start from scratch. Ms. Merighi explained that basically the information Mrs. Bruno was rewriting came from the same sources that Mr. Pisarski is using. Joe Polhamus said that Penny Watson would be willing to rewrite the story. Mel Brody said that he would go along with the rest of the commission, but he felt that Mrs. Bruno should not get too much, if any, credit for the book.

Ms. Merighi said the Commission is very disappointed with the work Mrs. Bruno did and she didn't feel it was appropriate for young kids. Ms. Merighi suggested that perhaps Mr. Pisarski could start over using the same sources. Ms. Griner stated that Mr. Kehs' is not going to have Mr. Pisarski completely do the research and then hand it over to Penny Watson to write. Ms. Griner explained that in the meeting minutes from March, Mr. Kehs had stated Mr. Pisarski

would be using the work already produced by Mrs. Bruno. Mr. Pisarski would be researching, editing, attaching footnotes and giving the book back to the Commission. Mr. Pisarski confirmed this to the commission members in attendance.

When Ms. Griner spoke to Mr. Kehs he stated he could not give a member of the staff the job of doing research for the Commission. If that is what the Commission wanted it would have to find somebody else to do the research. Ms. Griner explained that Mr. Kehs was trying to help the Commission in order to get the book done. Ms. Griner informed the members that Mr. Kehs will be at the August meeting and more of the book will be done at that time. Ms. Griner also informed the Commission that they are welcome at any time to come to the office and look at the book. The book will also be available at the August meeting and the actual language can be discussed at that time.

Mr. Kehs has been talking with counsel, specifically with the copywriters. The copywriters' biggest concern is that if anything sounds too much like hers it could create copywrite difficulties. Ms. Griner stated that something like that could leave them open for a lawsuit. Ms. Griner suggested that the commission table this and take care of it at the August meeting when Mr. Kehs can be in attendance to address their concerns.

Mr. Brody thought that prior to that the Commission should inquire whether Penny Watson wants to write the book or whether she wants to do the research. Mel Brody felt that since the research is public knowledge, Ms. Watson could write the book based on that same research. Also, according to Mr. Brody most of the research that had been done by Mrs. Bruno was incorrect. Jean Jones confirmed that by stating that when the Commission was given a first draft every member found errors. Ms. Griner explained that Ms. Watson offered to write the book as long as the research was done for her. However, the County Planning and Development Office can't offer that to the Commission.

Ms. Christy asked if, according to the memo, if Mr. Kehs is under the assumption that any book that is written has to go back to Mrs. Bruno for clarification? Ms. Merighi also stated that the last sentence in the memo seems to say that the book will be the sole possession of Cumberland County. Mr. Brody emphasized that \$5,000 had already been given to Mrs. Bruno for her work and she had not been very cooperative with the Commission. Ms. Griner restated that Mr. Kehs could answer their questions when he attends the August meeting. Ms. Griner also stated that she would reach out to Penny Watson and the Commission could get back to this issue at their next meeting in August.

LONG RANGE PLAN UPDATE

Ms. Christy stated the Commission's Mission statement was fine tuned. The Freeholder Liaison, who was present, stated that the members should be able to attend the Freeholder meetings. That way the Commission can be sure it is in control of it's message.

The grant report being given to the Freeholders at their October meeting will define the Commission's process. Pam Griner stated that Jenny Ayres, Long Range Plan Consultant, will be

having a public meeting with some Arts Organizations. She will also meet several times with the Commission itself to fine tune some specific projects, activities and to discuss some things the Commission could do that it isn't doing now. Also, possibly phasing out other things.

Jean Jones expressed her disappointment with the lack of Freeholder attendance at the Commissions' last meeting. She is also angry that the budget for the Commission was being "raided" and the Freeholders failed to inform the Commission of this. She did not appreciate the fact that the George Winston concert was selected by the Freeholders without any input from the Commission.

NEWSLETTER STORIES

The newsletters are coming out in September and December. Ms. Griner asked the Commission for any suggestions for stories.

Jane Christy informed Ms. Griner that the Deerborn Theatre just received a \$20,000 grant. Ms. Christy also informed Ms. Griner that newly restored Holly Murals were being dedicated on September 7, 2001, Friday at 8:00 PM. The murals will be unveiled and a reception will be held at Holly Farms at the Bryant Parent Center. The contact person for this event is Jane Christy and she can be contacted at the beginning of August. Ms. Christy also informed the Commission that there was a strong possibility that the Holly Society of America could be bringing it's headquarters to Millville.

REMINDER

Per Ms. Griner deadlines for the following grants are as follows:

History Grants are due by July 25, 2001.

Arts Grants are due by August 9, 2001.

If anyone knows of any organization that should or might want to apply may contact Ms. Griner for an application.

OLD BUSINESS

Joe Polhamus asked if any progress had been made in finding a Hispanic person interested in becoming a Commission Board member. Ms. Griner stated that one person had picked up an application but other than that no others have been found.

NEW BUSINESS

The American Revolution is celebrating it's 225th Anniversary. The Historical Commission and the Dept. of State will have a website dedicated to it.

The awards are being announced on the 24th in Trenton.

The next meeting of the Cultural & Heritage Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, August 14, 2001 at 3:30 PM at the County Administration Building.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM. Motion was made by Jean Jones and seconded by Jane Christy. The motion was approved by all present.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Lemmonds
Temporary Secretary