

CUMBERLAND COUNTY CULTURAL AND HERITAGE COMMISSION MINUTES

March 9, 2004
3:30 PM
Freeholder Meeting Room
Bridgeton

Present: Suzanne Merighi Marianne Lods
 Jean Jones Judy Price
 Beverly Hughes Penny Watson

Freeholder Douglas Rainear
Pam Weintraub, Sr. Planner
Kim Wood, Marketing Director
Kris Lemmonds, Secretary

The regular meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission was held on Tuesday, March 9, 2004 at 3:30 PM., in the Freeholder Meeting Room in Bridgeton, New Jersey.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Marianne Lods to approve the minutes from February 10, 2004. Motion was seconded by Penny Watson and passed unanimously.

Ms. Weintraub took a moment to introduce Beverly Hughes to the Cultural and Heritage Commission. Ms. Hughes is a resident of Millville and is an art teacher in the Vineland Public School System. Ms. Hughes thanked everyone for the warm welcome. She also stated what an honor it was to be named to the commission.

Governor's Budget Address

The Governor's proposed budget is as follows:

\$22 Million for Arts
\$720,000 for the Cultural Trust
\$3.8 Million for the NJ Historical Commission

These numbers are subject to change.

Ms. Weintraub suggested that as Arts and History advocates to keep up the good work as far as phone calls and emails to those that make the budget decisions. The final budget will be voted on in June. It is very important that the funds proposed for arts and history funding are not cut

during budget negotiations. The new taxes, in particular, the hotel tax did much better than first expected in generating income than expected. The governor kept his promise to fund arts, history, and tourism projects with these tax revenues.

Cultural Plan Update

Ms. Weintraub handed out the updated outline for the Cumberland County Cultural Plan. Changes suggested at the February 10, 2004 meeting have been incorporated into the updated outline. Ms. Weintraub reported that Steve Kehs and she will meet with Gordon Dahl of the South Jersey Economic Development District on Wed., March 10. The meeting is about the plan outline and the contract bidding timeline.

Hopefully, by this summer the Commission and the SJEDD will be in a position to award the contract to a consultant to begin the work on the Cultural Plan. The planning process should take between 12 and 18 months.

SJ Cultural Alliance

The Aiken awards date has been changed to Thursday, May 13, 2004 at Caesar's in Atlantic City. Ms. Weintraub asked for nominations for this year's recipient. Suzanne Merighi suggested nominating Steve Kehs from the Planning and Development department. In recognition of his commitment to promoting the arts and culture in south jersey (and for the Commission). The consensus of those in attendance all agreed. Jean Jones made a motion to nominate Steve Kehs as this year's recipient. The motion was seconded by Penny Watson and passed unanimously. Ms. Weintraub states that the official invitations would be going out in the mail in April. A head count will be taken in April.

Teen Arts Festival

This year's Teen Arts Festival will be held on Friday, April 23, 2004 at 8:30 am at the Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts in downtown Millville. Weather permitting the registration will take place on the Plaza. The visual arts workshop will be held both inside and outside. Michael Cagno is coordinating the visual arts activities. The Millville Library is also being used. The grand piano will be used for the small vocal and small instrumental performances. The upstairs ballroom of the VFW hall is being used for dance. The downstairs is being used for the large musical, large choral and the theater. The dance coordinator is Helen Horsey, the theater coordinator is Lisa Chappius, the music coordinator is Charlotte Chroniger and Michael Cagno is coordinating all other activities.

The Teen Arts Reception will be held on Third Friday at the Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts on May 21, 2004.

Multicultural Event

Ms. Weintraub informed the Commission that Cumberland County College is available on October 16, 2004 at the Fine Performing Arts Center. There was a discussion about the format of the evening. The possibility of having food was discussed. Director Rainear stated that a food festival is held at Bridgeton High School by the cultural groups.

Old Business

Ms. Weintraub inquired who would be interested in having tickets for the Blind Boys of Alabama on April 16, 2004.

Suzanne Merighi - 2
Jean Jones - 1

Penny Watson - 2
Freeholder Director Douglas M. Rainear -2

Ms. Weintraub inquired who would be interested in having tickets for the Natalie MacMaster performance on Friday, May 7, 2004.

Freeholder Director Douglas M. Rainear - 2

The State Historic Preservation has designated the Indian burial ground and there was the right of way as requested. The burial ground is now officially on the registry.

Ms. Weintraub passed around the digital photograph that Ken Browne had taken of the County Record Book. A motion to authorize Ken Browne, from the Planning Department, to digitally photograph the County Record Book was made by Marianne Lods. The motion was seconded by Judy Price and passed unanimously.

New Business

Janet Sheridan and Reverend Mary Louise Hawken from the Willingboro Presbyterian Church spoke before the Commission representing the Western South Jersey Presbytery. The Old Stone Church on Fairton and Cedarville Road is in need of preservation. The building was built in 1780. The original congregation started about 100 years before. The first capital project is to replace the current slate roof.

The Presbytery is interested in establishing a friends group made up of local residents to care for and use the building. They are looking for uses for the building. Some of their leads are; having small concerts, historic fairs; or events in South Jersey. Suzanne suggested partnering with existing local groups and use that at the site for a performance venue, such as with the Bay Atlantic Symphony. Perhaps they could contact the local schools.

Ms. Weintraub suggested selling the slate roof as a fundraiser. Artists use the slate as a painting canvas. Beverly Hughes suggested advertising in the Philadelphia paper Art Matters.

Janet Sheridan will be submitting an application to designate the church as a historical site. A letter of support is needed with the application. Ms. Sheridan asked if the Commission could provide them a letter of support. A motion to write a letter of support from the Commission was made by Penny Watson. The motion was seconded by Beverly Hughes and passed unanimously.

New Business

Penny Watson informed the Commission that the NJ Historic Trust has announced a new round of grants. One level is for Site Management that range from \$5,000.00 - \$50,000.00, two levels of Capital Grants ranging from \$5,000.00 - \$50,000.00 or \$50,000.00 - \$750,000.00. Applications are due by 5/3/04.

The next regular meeting will be on Tuesday, April 13, 2004 in County Freeholders Conference Room in Bridgeton, NJ. A motion to adjourn was made by Jean Jones. Motion was seconded by Judy Price and passed unanimously.