

CUMBERLAND COUNTY  
CULTURAL AND HERITAGE  
MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2001  
CUMBERLAND COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Present: Penny Watson, Chairman  
Mel Brody  
Patricia Gale  
Austin Gould  
Jean Jones  
Suzanne Merighi  
Joseph Polhamus  
Freeholder Douglas Fisher, Cultural & Heritage Liaison  
Pam Griner, Coordinator  
Kim Wood, Director of Marketing  
Steve Kehs, Planning & Development Executive Director  
Matt Pisarski, Senior Planner  
Judy Bonato, Temporary Secretary

A meeting of the Cumberland County Cultural & Heritage Commission was held on September 11, 2001 at 3:30 p.m. at the County Administration Building, Route 49, Bridgeton. Chairperson Penny Watson called the meeting to order and read the opening statement in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act. Minutes from August 14 and August 28 were reviewed and minor corrections were made. A motion to approve the August 14 minutes was made by Austin Gould and seconded by Joseph Polhamus. The motion was approved by all. A motion to approve the minutes from August 28 was made by Joseph Polhamus and seconded by Suzanne Merighi. The motion was approved by all.

**Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Indian Tribe**

There were several guests attending. Pam introduced the first guest - Earl Evans of the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Indian Tribe. Mr. Evans is applying for an oral history grant to present the history of the Nanticoke Indians in the school system. The purpose is to document and preserve this history. The plan is to record the history on audio tape and video tape. The Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Indian Tribe is asking for the commission's support and is requesting a letter of support. Mr. Evans brought a sample letter for the board to consider. After reading his sample letter, a motion was made by Suzanne Merighi to support this valuable proposal. It was seconded by Mel Brody. The motion was approved by all present. The letter will be typed on Cultural and Heritage Commission letterhead and forwarded to Mr. Evans after it has been signed by Penny Watson, Chairman.

## **Cumberland County College**

Pam introduced the second guest, Greg Hambleton of Cumberland County College. Mr. Hambleton explained how he had come before the Commission in March to ask for support for a dance program at the college. Mr. Hambleton was pleased to announce to the Commission that the discretionary grant of \$25,000 had been awarded.

A dance program with the Liz Lerman Dancers was set for Spring 2002. The program will consist of 2 parts: professional dance workshops and a dance performance. The performance will use up to 80 people from the community in the dance. The goal is to pair at risk youth with older citizens for inter-generational communication. The total cost for the program is \$35,000. Mr. Hambleton explained that he did not ask NJSCA to fund the whole project because this is not a grant. The funds from this project came from a pool of fund called the discretionary fund.

Mr. Hambleton is asking for support of this project. When asking for support he is not only asking for financial support, but more importantly, support by spreading the word about the dance program. Mr. Hambleton explained that this type of program is new for the South Jersey region and his goal is to improve communication with the community. Suggestions were made to put information in the newsletter as this will be a family event.

Mr. Hambleton further explained that when the theater was renovated last year, the floor was redone and was perfect for dance repertoire groups like Ballet Hispanico and Liz Lerman. Mr. Hambleton selected the Liz Lerman dancers because of primary levels for workshops and cost. Mr. Hambleton said that the Cultural & Heritage Commission will be equally credited with the College on the project. The project could use financial support from the Cultural and Heritage Commission. However, he doesn't need an answer for 2-3 months about financial support. Kim Wood explained that money can be requested now.

## **Cumberland County Book Update**

Steve Kehs briefed commission members on the history of the Cumberland County History Book. Mr. Kehs explained how the original text came to the commission and the need to complete the project. Mr. Kehs also explained how Matt Pisarski began working on the book because the original author took ill and passed away. Mr. Pisarski has taken the previous work and edited it, bringing into a form with which the commission will be more comfortable with. Mr. Pisarski stated that he went through the text and made 97 citations. He also "lightly edited" the text. There are four sources cited in the book. Mr. Pisarski also created a new table of contents. The book goes through Indian history to the Civil War period.

Mr. Kehs added that it is still Barbara Bruno's work and she needs to be given credit. Mr. Kehs reminded the commission of the statement presented to them at the July meeting. Suzanne Merighi asked who the audience would be for the end product. She stated that if it was intended to be used by 4th grade students, the current form was unreadable for 4th graders.

Mel Brody stated that the commission realizes that we need a new place to start as facts were wrong and text was unreadable. Mr. Kehs said that the work Mr. Pisarski has produced is something new for all to read, digest and rewrite if members are aware of any true facts.

Members stated that any written history is needed at the 4th grade level for the current curriculum of studying New Jersey. Penny Watson suggested to use Julie Fletcher to create pictures for the end product. Mr. Pisarski gave an electronic version of the draft to Pam.

### **Long Range Plan Update**

Pam distributed copies of the survey results for the long range plan. Also included were preliminary goals from the retreat and surveys. Pam asked commission members to read the information in the next week. She asked that if anyone saw any glaring issues to please call her. Pam stated that she would be meeting with the consultant and receiving a draft of the long range plan next week. All commission members will receive the draft by the end of next week. Jennie Ayres would like to schedule a meeting to review the plan with the commission. Ms. Ayres needs 1 1/2-2 hours. Pam asked that the next regular Cultural and Heritage Commission meeting be devoted to the long range plan. All members agreed to make the October meeting a long range plan work session.

### **Fall Concert Update**

Pam introduced the last guest, Lee Tofanelli of Tofanelli and Associates. Mr. Tofanelli spoke of ticket sales for the Larry Carlton Concert, which will be on Saturday, September 29. Currently 90 tickets have been pulled and on September 12 forty more will be pulled to be used internally. In comparison to last year, everything is ahead of schedule.

Mr. Lee Tofanelli reported that there is paid advertising in Philadelphia papers and radio advertisements at WRTI-Jazz station at Temple. Larry Carlton will give interviews - these are setup with The Press of Atlantic City, WGLS-Rowan College Radio, WRTI, WVLT, and SJ Weekender with a feature story. Mr. Tofanelli is working on the Daily Journal and the Courier Post for articles in the entertainment insert. It was also reported that Carlton has agreed to do an educational seminar (prior to the concert) with music students at Rowan and Cumberland County Colleges. Students from local high schools: Millville, Vineland, and Bridgeton, were invited also. The theater can handle 400 students, but this is at the schools' expenses. Kim Wood suggested to contact South Jersey Cultural Alliance if busing is needed. SJCA has a bus grant available - \$500 per school is allotted.

Mr. Tofanelli has contacted the Harlem Boys Choir and they are happy to come and sing at Cumberland County College in 2002. Mr. Tofanelli suggested to consider a featured singer with them, i.e. Bishop Morton, Shirley Caesar, Sissy Houston. Mr. Tofanelli stated that the choir could not support a 2 hour program. Austin Gould saw them at Stockton College and said it was a strong program. It was suggested that the choir perform on a weekday and possibly have children from county schools attend concert. Suzanne Merighi saw the Newark Boys Choir perform. A local church group from Union Baptist Temple was the opening act. She stated that

this was good draw for attendance. Mr. Tofanelli suggested to schedule the Harlem Boys Choir at least 90 days in advance, the sooner the better.

### **Calendar Review**

The calendar of the upcoming years events was distributed at the August 28 meeting. Pam asked if everyone had a chance to review the calendar. She noted that this schedule has the annual concert in the fall, but not in spring. Kim Wood explained that the annual concert had begun as an Earth Day Concert. There was a suggestion that it could be an Earth Day concert this year. Mr. Hambleton added that the Saturday closest to Earth Day was reserved for the Cultural and Heritage Commission. Members discussed that Earth Day would be close to Mother's Day.

There was discussion regarding the Harlem Boys Choir concert being the fall concert in addition to a spring concert. Pam explained that it would require a great deal of fundraising by the Commission to support two large concerts. After much discussion, the Commission decided to release the 2002 Earth Day concert date at CCC. They asked Mr. Hambleton to advise on available dates for the Harlem Boys Choir to perform in December or late Fall.

### **Budget Review**

Pam discussed sources of funding: 1) Cultural Funding-\$45,000 to be used strictly for programming in Vineland. The cultural grant runs from 7/1/01 to 6/30/02. 2) Block Grant - 2 categories: \$94,000 for re-grant program and \$56,320 for operating expenses and programs for county. This runs on calendar year-1/1/02 to 12/31/02. 3) Trust Account - ticket revenues placed in a county account. This account can be used for expenses that are ineligible for grant funds. 4) Departmental Account- County provides matching grant, around \$8,000 cash, for activities. In addition the County provides in kind services for the Commission. Questions asked if amount could be increased and Steve suggested to come forward soon because departmental budget needs to be in by 10/01. Requests should be specific.

### **Budget Review for 2002**

Pam spoke about this review on cultural funding and operational funding for block grant. Papers were reviewed and it was realized that a special meeting was needed for go over this budget. An extension was discussed and Steve said everyone will have long range plan draft as a reference.. Suzanne Merighi made a motion to have a special meeting for this budget review on 9/25, noting Pam to send a letter requesting an extension to the Arts Council. This was seconded by Jean Jones. The motion was approved by all present.

### **Ballet Hispanico Presentation**

Mel Brody distributed information about Ballet Hispanico to the group. A tape player was available to review the troupe, but in the interest of time this will be done at a future meeting. Mr. Hambleton is familiar with the dance group and discussed the possibility of having them perform at the college. He also stated that three years ago their fee was \$40,000, which was out

of range for the College. It was asked if the Cultural and Heritage Commission could partner with college and use discretionary funds for future project, possibly Spring 2003. The Commission asked Mr. Hambleton to pursue current fees. Mr. Hambleton stated that the College could apply for discretionary funds again, , but he noted to keep in mind that this would be the second request for moneys (the first being Liz Lerman). Kim Wood stated that cultural funding would continue to keep special projects available. Mr. Hambleton suggested another way to pursue funding would be through the Community Arts Collaboration Category, which requires matching moneys.

### **Old Business:**

#### County on Canvas Budget

Pam said the County on Canvas is asking for \$1,000. The Recreation Commission fund has \$1,800 in other money. This was also funded the year before last.

George Winston - is asking \$5,000. Commission discussed moneys in trust account and general operating account. Commission feels it is good to keep moneys in trust account, which is very important. Kim Wood summarized and said we need to know what is left in general operating budget so we know if we can afford to do anything; also, what we have left in the year we have to fund before the new funding cycle starts. P. Watson said they will be meeting in two weeks. S. Merighi made a motion to table for today, to see how much is left in the budget. It was seconded by P. Watson. More discussion was on ticket sales (not on sale yet) and ticket price. Greg said the ticket print cost was charged to the CC budget.

#### George Winston Budget

Meeting was adjourned at 5:55 P.M. Motion made by Joseph Polhamus and seconded by Patricia Gale. The motion was approved by all present.