

**PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION**  
**SEPTEMBER 16, 2009**  
**MINUTES**

A meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission was held on September 16, 2009 in the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Board Room of the State Museum, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The following Commissioners were present: Wayne Spilove, Rhonda Cohen, Laura Fisher, Janet Klein via conference call, Cheryl McClenney-Brooker via conference call, Dr. Brian Mitchell, Kathleen Pavelko, Representative Scott Petri, Representative Rick Taylor and Clare Zales. The following staff were present: Barbara Franco, Jean Cutler, Beth Hager, Jason Gerard, Rhonda Newton, Jack Leighow, David Haury, Tom Leonard, Howard Pollman, Steve Miller and Kirk Wilson. Andrea Bowman, from the Office of General Counsel was present as PHMC Counsel.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Spilove called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 17, 2009 MEETING**

Chairman Spilove called for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 17, 2009 meeting. On motion by Ms. Pavelko, seconded by Ms. Fisher the minutes were approved.

**III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Spilove reported that staff continues to work with the Governor's Office and potential partners at our historic sites regarding the budget. Chairman Spilove commended all Commission staff for their dedication and hard work.

Ms. Cohen proposed the Commission pass a resolution in appreciation of Commission staff who have been furloughed due to the financial situation and to those staff who are picking up the pieces and doing more with less.

#### **IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Franco reported that in August, the Office of Administration instructed PHMC to act on proposed furloughs to meet the Governor's proposed budget. Ms. Franco thanked Tom Leonard, Director of Management Services for his hard work understanding the Commission's complex budget and for working with the Office of the Budget.

The majority of the General Operating Fund goes toward fixed costs that include salaries and utilities which means there is no discretionary funding that can be shifted to cover cuts. We are also looking at the possibility of temporarily or permanently losing the Keystone Fund. About \$3 million annually of that fund goes towards recurring costs to maintain the historic sites and museums. The elimination of the fund would mean shifting even more fixed expenses to our General Operating Fund. The Preservation Fund includes admission fees from the State Museum of Pennsylvania and our historic sites and museums and also supports annual costs. It is clear that the impact of the budget will be devastating to the operation of the Commission and public programs.

Moving forward we are looking at the goals identified in our Strategic Plan 2009 - 2011; a progress report was distributed to the Commission. We are looking at this organization being a different agency as a result of diminished resources. Moving forward we need to look at what the agency is going to be because it cannot continue as it has been in the past with a 40% reduction in resources.

Ms. Franco shared with the Commissioners an article written by Allen Friedman “Tactics for Leading Through a Financial Crisis”. If we continue to makes cuts and not think about investing in the future it will be very hard to come out of this downturn.

Two upcoming projects the Commission will hear about later in the meeting are: the installation of the Mastodon at the State Museum and the Civil War 150<sup>th</sup> project our partnership with the Pennsylvania Heritage Society.

Representative Petri provided an update on two public meetings regarding the visitor’s center at Washington Crossing. Both meetings were held after the June meeting and both very positive. The first meeting talked about what work needed to be completed and the second meeting was held as a work session or “cleanup”.

The Commission is using annual themes as a way to combine all bureaus and how they relate to one overall theme. This year’s theme is Energy: Innovation, Exploitation and Conservation have provided new content for the magazine. Ms. Franco has received an increase of requests from outside organization asking what our upcoming themes are.

Increased revenue is one of the responses to a financial crisis. The Commission is looking at how to seek additional funding for what we do. Currently, the publications division is working on promotion of the PA Bookstore and increasing online sales. Ted Walke, Chief of Publication and Sales is working on low cost ways of providing public programming with lunchtime presentations. Some events have been filmed by Pennsylvania Cable Network and aired on television.

Chairman Spilove introduced Matthew Baum, citizen of Pennsylvania. Mr. Baum came to the meeting to voice his concern over a gas pipeline project over his property that could damage a rock formation that is about 550 million years old.

## **V. ACTION ITEMS**

### a) Resolution for Landis Valley Museum Name Change

Mr. Miller reported that on August 11, 2009 the board of directors of the Landis Valley Associates, unanimously passed a motion to change the name of Landis Valley Museum to Landis Valley Village and Farm Museum.

Chairman Spilove called for a motion to approve the changing of the name of the Landis Valley Museum to the Landis Valley Village and Farm Museum. On motion by Representative Petri, seconded by Ms. Fisher the motion was approved to change the name of the Landis Valley Museum. (SEE ATTACHMENT A)

### b) Approval of Historic Marker Resubmissions

Ms. Cutler reported on the following Historical Markers that are being resubmitted for approval: Mollie Woods Hare, Wayne Natatorium and Bellefonte's UGRR Legacy. The Historical Marker panel recently met and recommended both the Mollie Wood Hare and Wayne Natatorium markers be approved. The Bellefonte's UGRR Legacy was not recommended for approval.

Chairman Spilove call for a motion to approve the Mollie Woods Hare and Wayne Natatorium Historical Markers. On motion by Ms. Fisher seconded by Ms. Pavelko the Historical Marker Resubmissions for Mollie Woods Hare and Wayne Natatorium were approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT B)

## **VI. COURTESY RESOLUTIONS**

Mr. Haury reported that Judie A. Marcus retired on August 28, 2009 after more than 45 years of service to the Commonwealth. Judie was known for her friendliness to visitors at the State Archives.

Chairman Spilove called for a motion to approve the Courtesy Resolution for Judie Marcus. On motion by Ms. Pavelko seconded by Ms. Cohen, the Courtesy Resolution for Judie Marcus was approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT C)

Mr. Leighow reported that Ruth M. Arnold, Chief of Museum Education retired on July 17, 2009. Ruth provided 35 years of service to the Commonwealth.

Chairman Spilove called for a motion to approve the Courtesy Resolution for Ruth Arnold. On motion by Ms. Pavelko, seconded by Ms. Cohen the Courtesy Resolution for Ruth Arnold was approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT D)

## **VII. OTHER REPORTS**

### a) Historic Site Management Agreements

Mr. Miller gave the Commission an update on the six sites that are undergoing transition due to the budget. Brandywine Battlefield has reopened on a part time basis by the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates and operating under an extension of the 08/09 Program Agreement. Bushy Run Battlefield Park is being operated by the Bushy Run Battlefield Park Heritage Society through an extension of the 08/09 Program Agreement. Conrad Weiser Homestead is closed except for special events which are being conducted under an extension of the 08/09 friends of Conrad Weiser Homestead Program Agreement. Joseph Priestley House is closed to visitation but discussions continue with the Friends of Joseph Priestley House. The Fort Pitt Museum is open for special events and is planned to be open for some special events through a temporary Facilities Use Agreement with the Heinz History Center. The long term Management Agreement between the Heinz History Center and PHMC is almost completed. The Flagship Niagara sailed a full season out of the home port of Erie and multiple ports in

the U.S. and Canada with support from the Niagara League. The Niagara League has raised almost \$300,000 for the ship's operation. A new management agreement for next year is in process.

b) Mastodon Project Update

Jack Leighow reported that the mastodon is the largest project the State Museum has undertaken in 30 years. The Marshalls Creek Mastodon was first un-earthed in 1968 in Monroe County, PA. The mastodon is the most complete skeleton of its kind ever discovered in Pennsylvania. Nearly 20 feet long (from rear to tip of tusks) and 9 feet high, the creature weighed 4 to 5 tons. About 90 percent of its bones were recovered.

The Friends of the State Museum is launching a Buy-A-Bone campaign as part of a 12-month year effort to raise funds to reconstruct the mastodon. All donors will receive a certificate commemorating their purchase signed by the curator.

The new gallery on the museum's top floor will be comprised of four rooms and a series of dioramas with interactive tools for visitors.

c) Civil War 150<sup>th</sup> Web Site

Jim Pickman gave an update on the Civil War 150<sup>th</sup> commemoration events, Pennsylvania Civil War Road Show, K-12 Civil War Education, Publication and special Media Initiatives, Product Development and previewed the new website [www.PACivilWar150.com](http://www.PACivilWar150.com).

d) RTKL Update

David Haury coordinator of our Right to Know Law suggested that the Commission post electronic versions of Commission minutes on the PHMC website after they are approved and become public documents to facilitate future requests for

information about Commission action. This year we have received 23 requests compared to six the previous year. Sixteen requests were answered within the 5 days, seven requests required extensions for legal review.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

**IX. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business to discuss at this time.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Spilove adjourned the meeting at 11:39am.