

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
MARCH 17, 2010
MINUTES

A meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission was held on March 17, 2010 in the 5th Floor Board Room of the State Museum, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The following Commissioners were present: Flora Becker, Michele Bortner, Rhonda Cohen, Laura Fisher, Janet Klein, Cheryl McClenney-Brooker participated by conference call, Dave Myers for Dr. Brian Mitchell, Kathleen Pavelko, Representative Scott Petri, Representative Rick Taylor and Alice Lubrecht for Clare Zales. The following staff were present: Barbara Franco, Jean Cutler, Beth Hager, Jack Leighow, David Haury, Tom Leonard, Howard Pollman, Steve Miller and Kirk Wilson. Tammy Snyder, from the Office of General Counsel was present as PHMC Counsel.

I. CALL TO ORDER

In Chairman's Spilove's absence, Rhonda Cohen chaired the meeting. Ms. Cohen called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 20, 2009

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to approve the minutes from November 20, 2009 meeting. On motion by Ms. Pavelko, seconded by Ms. Fisher, the minutes were approved.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Ms. Cohen read a report sent in by Chairman Spilove of programs/meetings his attended this past quarter.

- Met with the visiting committee from the American Association of Museums reaccridation of the State Museum of Pennsylvania to discuss governance issues and support.
- Sent a letter to legislators inviting them to participate in the Buy a Bone Campaign.
- Met with key members of the Governor's Office to discuss the status of PHMC funding.

- Attended a meeting in Philadelphia of consulting parties for the American Revolution Center and National Park Service land transfer.
- Involved in discussions with the Governor's Office and the Department of Environmental Protection regarding the National Register Listing for Dutch Corner.
- Impact of Dunning Mountain wind energy project.
- Responded to a follow up letter on the proposed the Quilt Exhibition.
- Appealed an inquiry from the National Constitution Center on the continuing interest in determining whether or not a copy of the Bill of Rights permanently held by the New York Public Library is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's copy.
- Participated in an event honoring Nancy Kolb at the Doylestown Historical Society.
- Chairman Spilove, Janet Klein and Kathleen Pavelko were reappointed to the Commission.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Franco reported on the success of the Tusks exhibit opening at the State Museum and invited Commissioners to see the Mastodon. Attendance at the State Museum has increased as a result of the recent media coverage.

The General Assembly contributed money towards the cost of keeping the museum open on Mondays for the spring 2010 school group tours.

Ms. Franco is working closely with the National Park Service as part of the Section 106 review for the land transfer between NPS and the American Revolution Center.

The 2010 PHMC theme is Communities in Common: African American History in Pennsylvania.

The Governor released his budget proposal for 2010- 2011 includes \$19.3 million for GGO and \$8 million for Keystone which will allow PHMC to maintain our current level of services.

V. ACTION ITEMS

a) State Museum of Pennsylvania Admission Fee Changes

Mr. Leighow reported on the proposed admission fee changes for the State Museum. We are looking to increase the general admission fee to include admission to the Curiosity Connection to better meet the needs and expectations of our visitors and stay within our budget. Additional fees generated will help pay for staff in the spring of the year to address volume of the 1,000 plus students per day who visit the museum in the spring. A State Museum Affiliate Membership is now available through the Pennsylvania Heritage Society.

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to approve the proposed admission fee changes for the State Museum. On motion by Representative Petri, seconded by Ms. Klein the proposed admission fee changes for the State Museum were approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT A)

b) Approval of Incoming and Reappointed Historic Preservation Board Members

Ms. Cutler reported that there are three new proposed members for the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board: Margaret Newman, Bucks County; Martin J. Rosenblum, AIA , Philadelphia and Steven Gimber, West Chester.

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to approve the proposed incoming members for the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board. On motion by Ms. Klein, seconded by Ms. Fisher the proposed incoming members for the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board were approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT B)

Ms. Cutler reported that there are five current Historic Preservation Board members recommended for re-appointment. Re-appointments (2nd term): Gerry Kuncio,

Pittsburgh, PA and Re-appointments (3rd term): Patricia Gible, Mount Gretna, PA; Scott Heberling, Pittsburgh, PA; Janet Irons, Lock Haven, PA and Bruce Thomas, Bethlehem, PA

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to approve the recommendations for reappointment of Historic Preservation Board Members. On motion by Ms. Fisher, seconded by Ms. Klein the recommendations for reappointment of the Historic Preservation Board Members were approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT C)

c) Certified Local Government Grants

Ms. Cutler reported that the CLG grants are based on funding from the National Park Service. There were a total of 17 applications, 9 applications will be awarded.

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to approve the Certified Local Government Grants. On motion by Ms. Pavelko, seconded by Ms. Fisher the Certified Local Government Grants were approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT D)

d) Preserve America Grants

Ms. Cutler reported on the PHMC Preserve America Black History Grant Program. Due to the reduction of our grant program the amount of the awards were reduced by 20%. A total of \$95,000 will be distributed to organizations for projects relating to African Americans in Pennsylvania.

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to approve the Preserve America Grants as submitted. On motion by Ms. Pavelko, seconded by Ms. Klein the Preserve America Grants were approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT E)

e) Historical Marker Nominations

Ms. Cutler reported on the 2010 Historic Marker Review Panel Meeting that was held on February 26, 2010. There was a reduced number of marker nominations this year. We attribute the reduction of nominations to the fact that we are not able to match the local

communities commitment towards the marker with reduced or eliminated funding for grants. It can be a financial burden for the community or organization to pay for both the marker and the installation. Normally we receive 95 to 125 marker nominations for the program. The installation cost of a marker is about \$1,500.

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to approve the Historic Marker nominations. On motion by Representative Petri, seconded by Ms. Pavelko the Historic Marker nominations were approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT F)

f) Approval of SHRAB Members

Mr. Haury reported there are six nominees for appointment to the State Historical Records Advisory Board. The reappointments are necessary to ensure continuity in implementing the Board's Strategic Plan, while the nominees for new appointments are to replace departing SHRAB members Annita Andrick, Michael Gabriel, and Lee Stout.

The SHRAB serves as the central advisory body for historical records planning and seeks to facilitate cooperation among historical records repositories within the state. SHRAB members who are professional archivists also review grant applications submitted to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission from Pennsylvania institutions.

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to approve the nominations of the SHRAB Members. On motion by Representative Petri, seconded by Ms. Pavelko the nominations of the SHRAB Members were approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT G)

VI. COURTESY RESOLUTIONS

a) Outgoing Historic Preservation Board Members

Ms. Cutler reported that there are three outgoing Historic Preservation Board Members: Sandra Rosenberg, Emanuel Kelly and Charles Hardy.

b) Chris Yanich Retirement Resolution

Mr. Leighow reported that Christine Yanick, Museum Education for the State Museum of Pennsylvania announced her retirement after 35 years of service

c) John Clark Retirement Resolution

Mr. Haury reported that John Clark retired on December 4, 2009 and recognizes him for more than 50 years of services to the Commonwealth.

d) Retirement Resolutions for Bruce Bazelon, Ann Clements, Nadine Steinmetz, William Leech and Charles Thomforde

Mr. Miller reported that Bruce Bazelon, Western Division Chief of the Bureau of Historic Sites and museums announced his retirement from the Commission after 38 years of service.

Ann Clements, Custodial Guide Supervisor and Volunteer Coordinator at Pennsbury Manor announced her retirement effective March 27, 2010 from the Commission after 30 years of service.

Nadine Steinmetz, Division Chief for both the Eastern and Central Divisions of the Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums announced her retirement from the Commission effective January 16, 2010 after 33 years of service.

William Leech, Historic Site Administrator at Pennsylvania Military Museum announced his retirement effective April 23, 2010 from the Commission after 31 years of service.

Charles Thomforde, Historic Horticulturist at Pennsbury Manor announced his retirement from the Commission effective December 2009 after 27 years of service.

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to approve all Courtesy Resolutions. On motion by Ms. Klein, seconded by Ms. Fisher all Courtesy Resolutions were approved. (SEE ATTACHMENT H)

VII. OTHER REPORTS

a) Public Affairs Committee

Ms. Pavelko reported that the Public Affairs Committee met earlier this morning and on February 22, 2010. Members of the committee include Chairman Spilove, Janet Klein, Laura Fisher, Representative Rick Taylor, Dave Myers, and Michele Bortner with staff support from Barbara Franco and Howard Pollman. In our initial meeting our strategy is to hold the budget proposal as presented by the Governor; \$19.3 million in GGO funds and \$8 million in the keystone funds. The Commission took a huge hit in fiscal year 2010 and in fairness and the needs of the Commonwealth historic structures it requires that the funding be held at current level.

The Pennsylvania History Bill of Rights is a series of statements about what the Citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania can and should expect from the Commonwealth in the preservation of their history. During Charter Day, March 14, 2010 visitors to Pennsylvania historic sites and museums viewed the draft Pennsylvania History Bill of Rights and ranked its six provisions which include:

- Students in Pennsylvania schools understand Pennsylvania's history in the context of local, national and world events. (284 votes -3rd)
- Pennsylvania maintains a competitive position as a premier tourism destination for heritage travelers. (113 votes – 6th)

- Pennsylvania citizens have access to the current records of government and the permanently valuable documents which tell the history of the Commonwealth. (166 votes – 5th)
- Current and future generations are assured that Pennsylvania’s historical resources are preserved for their enjoyment and use. (359 votes – 1st)
- Pennsylvania’s museums, historical societies and historic sites receive adequate public and private support to maintain high standards of stewardship and public access. (323 votes – 2nd)
- Pennsylvania’s communities retain the historic character and distinctiveness that are essential to attracting and retaining residents, businesses and visitors. (252 votes – 4th)

The committee’s intention is for the Commission to adopt the Pennsylvania History Bill of Rights as a set of principals that the Commission endorses. We propose to append to the resolution of adoption a request to every member of the general assembly that the budget request as presented from the Governor’s office be preserved.

We would like to have the Pennsylvania History Bill of Rights adopted by as many external partners as we can identify. The more groups that adopt the History Bill of rights the stronger the case we can make that this is a citizen issue not just a PHMC issue.

We will introduce the Pennsylvania History Bill of Rights to the History Caucus on Wednesday, March 24 2010.

Looking ahead to 2012 the Public Affairs Committee wants to make sure all gubernatorial candidates for governor are thoroughly briefed on issues related to PHMC. We will be creating a briefing book that will be given to the candidates for governor to make sure they have the basic information regarding our agency.

The committee will seek to schedule meetings with the candidates for governor and the Chair of our Commission and one other commissioner member who familiar with that candidate.

It is important to convene key leaders in the history and museum community broadly defined with the purpose of developing a white paper on history, museums, heritage going forward.

Ms. Cohen called for a motion to adopt the Pennsylvania History Bill of Rights. On motion by Ms. Fisher, seconded by Mr. Myers the Pennsylvania History Bill of Rights was adopted.

b) PHMC – Historic Sites Agreements

Mr. Miller provided a brief update on the management agreements for the following sites that are in transition of ownership: Old Economy Village, Fort Pitt Museum, Flagship Niagara, Bushy Run Battlefield, Somerset Historical Center, Brandywine Battlefield, Washington Crossing Historic Park, Conrad Weiser Homestead, Joseph Priestley House, Hope Lodge, Graeme Park and Daniel Boone Homestead.

c) Deaccession Items

Mr. Leighow reported on the deaccession auction that occurred a few weeks ago. This was the 5th auction the Commission held. The purpose is to remove items not appropriate for the collection and dispose of them. There were over 1600 objects from eight of the historic sites and museums that generated about \$33,000. The money can only be used to acquire new objects for the collection or to conserve existing objects in the collection.

d) Museum Assistance Grant Allocation

Ms. Cutler reported that the grant program was reduced this year. We've decided to provide general operating support for museums and statewide organizations that we've supported in the past. The total amount awarded was \$1,601,000.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

IX. OLD BUSINSS

There was no old business to discuss at this time.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Rhonda Cohen adjourned the meeting at 11:28 a.m.