

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
JUNE 16, 2010
MINUTES

A meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission was held on June 16, 2010 in the 5th Floor Board Room of the State Museum, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The following Commissioners were present: Chairman Wayne Spilove, Flora Becker, Michele Sellitto, Rhonda Cohen, Senator Jim Ferlo, Laura Fisher participated via conference call, Janet Klein, Cheryl McClenney-Brooker participated via conference call, Kathleen Pavelko, Representative Scott Petri and Alice Lubrecht for Clare Zales. The following staff were present: Barbara Franco, Jean Cutler, Beth Hager, Bill Sisson, David Dunn, 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 asked everyone in the room to introduce themselves. Chairman Spilove then called to order at 9:30am.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 17, 2010

Chairman Spilove called for a motion to approve the minutes from March 17, 2010. On motion by Representative Petri, seconded by Senator Ferlo, the minutes were approved.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Spilove gave a summary of programs/meetings he attended this past quarter:

- HR Consolidation
- Historic Preservation Issues
- Washington Crossing Historic Park

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Franco reported that she recently testified in Washington, D.C. before the Congressional Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on behalf of AASLH in support for funding for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

The Commission's Human Resources office will be consolidated and handled by the Office of Administration. Mr. Leonard is working with Dave Seitz, Human Resources Director for the Office of Administration for a smooth transition.

V. ACTION ITEMS

a) Lower Merion Township Act 167 Certification Application

Chairman Spilove called for a motion to approve the request for certification by Lower Merion Township. On motion by Ms. Klein, seconded by Ms. Pavelko the request for certification by Lower Merion Township was approved.

b) PHMC Commission Meetings for FY 2010 – 2011

Chairman Spilove called for a motion to approve the dates for the upcoming Commission Meetings for the FY 10-11. On motion by Ms. Pavelko, seconded by Ms. Sellitto the dates for the upcoming Commission Meetings are approved as follows with the possibility of adjusting the September 15th meeting to accommodate a retreat/meeting: September 15, 2010; November 17, 2010; March 16, 2011 and June 15, 2011.

VI. COURTESY RESOLUTIONS

Chairman Spilove called for a motion to approve retirement resolutions for William "Bill" Sisson, Jack Leighow and the Volunteer of the Year Award Nominations for 2009. On motion by Ms. Pavelko, seconded by Senator Ferlo the courtesy resolutions were approved.

VII. OTHER REPORTS

a) Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums Update

Mr. Miller reported that the Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums has administrative jurisdiction over 40 properties. Another 18 properties have been transferred to other management arrangements. Currently we have 40 sites and museums in the bureau approximately 17 of those are in administrative transition and 23 are in active administration. We are currently in the process of updating the license and managements agreements.

Mr. Miller reported that the capital project at Washington Crossing Historic Park is close to bid.

Ms. Franco stated that Washington Crossing Historic Park is one of the most important historic sites in the United States and a major tourism destination for Bucks County. Because of the importance of Washington Crossing Historic Park the Commission invited groups and individuals to the Commission Meeting who have stepped forward over the past year that have expressed interest in helping PHMC to fulfill its stewardship and educational responsibilities to the people of Pennsylvania.

A number of people attending today's meeting voiced their concerns for the site by addressing the commission with their comments and suggestions for the Washington Crossing Historic Park: John Touhey (Thompson Neely House Auxiliary), Peggy Kennedy (Washington Crossing Legacy), Bob Van Wagner (Citizen), Guy Polhemus (Washington Crossing Legacy), Bill McDowell (Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve), Miles Arnott (Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve), Thomas Grundman (Washington Crossing 2026), Ellen Petri (Friends of Washington Crossing Historic Park), Jerry Lepping (Bucks County

Convention and Visitors Bureau) and Bill Haas (Friends of Washington Crossing Historic Park).

Each participant presented their perspective and the goals of their organization. Commissioners discussed the options of leasing verses transfer for the Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve property. Senator Ferlo is opposed to a transfer of ownership. Ms. Sellitto asked the groups who care so much for the park why they can't work together. PHMC hopes to hire a permanent site administrator at Washington Crossing Historic Park. Chairman Spilove asked the groups to work together and develop a plan to maintain the site and bring back to the Commission.

b) Public Affairs Committee

Chairman Spilove thanked Ms. Pavelko for chairing the Public Affairs Committee. Ms. Pavleko said work is being done by Ms. Franco, members of the staff and constituents. Since the last Commission meeting a number of meetings have been held with constituent and colleague historical organizations and members of the legislature. The purpose of the meetings are to receive support for PHMC regarding the budget. We would like the legislature to agree to the administration's budget which is the level of funding for general operations for PHMC and retention of keystone fund funding.

We are making good use of the Pennsylvania Heritage Society and our friends groups using email networks to alert constituents about issues and contact with their legislators.

Chairman Spilove read the following letter from Dr. Brian Mitchell, President of Bucknell University:

Dear Wayne:

As you know my service as the 16th President of Bucknell University will conclude on June 30, 2010. At this time Mary Jane and I will be relocating to a new home that we've purchased in Massachusetts leaving Pennsylvania after 20 years of residence here. To that end I write now to officially resign as Commissioner of The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. I've greatly enjoyed my service with PHMC and watched with pride its many accomplishments throughout my time. In recent years I've trusted Dave Myers has added to the conversation when I was unavailable due to the press of Bucknell business. I wish my colleagues on the Commission and PHMC staff well in the future. It was a deep honor and rare privilege to have served side by side with all of you and service to the Commonwealth. Best wishes. Yours truly. Brian Mitchell, President, Bucknell University.

c) Strategic Planning

Ms. Franco reported that Laura Fisher has agreed to Chair the Strategic Planning Committee. Ms. Franco suggested holding listening and fact finding sessions now through September with a discussion at the next Commission Meeting. Ms. Franco suggested a two day retreat/meeting as a joint strategic planning session with the Pennsylvania Heritage Society Board and Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission board members. Ms. Pavelko offered to use the location of WITF for the meeting location. Ms. Franco will notify everyone on the final date and location of the strategic planning session/commission meeting.

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

Chairman Spilove adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.