

**PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 22, 2012
MINUTES**

A meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission was held on February 22, 2012 in the 5th Floor Board Room of the State Museum, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The following Commissioners were present: John A. Barbour, Andrew E. Masich, Karen Dougherty Buchholz, Senator Jim Ferlo, William V. Lewis, Representative Robert Matzie participated via conference call, Jean Craige Pepper participated via conference call, Fredrick C. Powell, Richard Sand, Katie Eckhart represented Senator Joseph Scarnati and Alice Lubrecht represented Clare Zales. Andrea Bowman, from the Office of General Counsel was present as PHMC Counsel.

The following staff was present: Ann Barnett, Jean Cutler, David Dunn, David Haury, Tom Leonard, Howard Pollman, Steve Miller, Rhonda Newton and John Seitter. Mickey Rowley represented the Pennsylvania Heritage Society.

I. WELCOME

Chairman Masich called the meeting to order at 9am and introduced himself as the Chairman of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and asked Commissioners and staff in the room to introduce their self.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 24, 2011 AND NOVEMBER 18, 2011 MEETING

Chairman Masich called for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 24, 2011 and November 18, 2011 meeting. On motion by Ms. Buchholz, seconded by Mr. Powell the October 24, 2011 minutes were approved as presented. Chairman Masich called for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 18, 2011 meeting. On motion by Senator Ferlo, seconded by Ms. Buchholz the November 18, 2011 minutes were approved as presented.

III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS

A) CIVIL WAR 150TH ROAD SHOW

Ms. Buchholz thanked the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for funding the lease of the Road Show for 2012. The exhibit was open for the Pennsylvania State Farm Show and Auto Show in January. Total attendance at the Pennsylvania Farm Show was over 500,000 people with 10,000 visiting the exhibit. An additional 4,500 people visited during the Pennsylvania Auto Show.

The committee continues to aggressively seek sponsors for the 2012 tour season. Sponsorship is critical; each stop costs approximately \$20,000. Any assistance in providing leads to potential sponsors would be appreciated. We are looking at our top critical stops such as Kutztown Fair, Penn State and Greater Allentown Fair for specific sponsorships.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for March 1st. Major focus of the meeting is fundraising with a total of five sub-committees working on new programs, celebrity and project endorsement and site selection for the Road Show.

PA Civil War 150 is invited to two conferences this year to make presentations on the Road Show. John Seitter will attend the 2012 IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) WebWise conference in Baltimore as a project demonstrator. Jim Vaughan will moderate a conference session titled *When History Hits the Road* in October for the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) conference in Salt Lake City.

The committee is applying to AASLH for a Leadership in History Award for the Road Show as an exhibit and tool for civic engagement.

The John Heinz History Center is about to launch its new traveling exhibit, *The Civil War in Pennsylvania*, in late March. Over the next 4 years it is expected that 40 historical organizations will host the exhibit free of charge in their communities.

The Heinz History Center is coordinating the publication of two books *The Civil War in Pennsylvania: A Photographic History* and *The Civil War in Pennsylvania: The African American Experience* and with PHMC and the Pennsylvania Historical Society to publish a joint magazine in 2013.

PA Civil War 150 has created a line of branded merchandise to be sold at tourism and cultural venues throughout the state. Merchandise has generated over \$28,000 at the wholesale level and 20 locations throughout the Commonwealth.

Recently www.pacivilwar150.com was added as a resource by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's website for Standards Aligned Resources.

B) HISTORIC MARKER COMMITTEE

Mr. Lewis reported that the Historic Marker Committee recently met and reviewed a total of 59 Historic Marker Applications. The Historic marker Committee will recommend at the April 23, 2012 Commission Meeting, the approval of 15 application, preliminary approval of 3 applications and disapproval of 41 applications.

C) APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Masich reported on the following committee appointments: PA Civil War 150th - Karen Buchholz; Historic Marker Committee - Bill Lewis; Pennsylvania Heritage Society - Ann Moran, Bill Lewis, and Karen Buchholz.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A) CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT APPLICATIONS

Ms. Cutler reported on the Certified Local Government Applications. A total number of 16 applications were received and a total of 11 applications are being recommended for approval. The recommended total award amount is based on funding from the National Park Service's Historic Preservation Fund Grant to Pennsylvania for the operation of the State Historic Preservation Office, which requires that at least 10% of the grant is passed-through to Certified Local Governments.

10% minimum pass-through amount for FFY 2012 is \$118,074. Total recommended award amount is \$120,000. The total amount requested by the applicants exceeds the limited Federal funding available.

B) VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEES

Mr. Miller reported that this year's awards ceremony and luncheon is scheduled to be held Saturday, April 21st at the State Museum of Pennsylvania in Harrisburg. The following nominees will receive a 2011 Volunteer of the Year Award:

Vivian Cleveland – Anthracite Heritage Museum and Iron Furnaces Associates
Joe Barnett – Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates
John Brenkus – Bushy Run Battlefield Heritage Society
Joyce Bucci – Friends of Conrad Weiser Homestead
Irvin Muritz – Friends of Cornwall Iron Furnace
Lydia Rieger – The Friends of the Daniel Boone Homestead
Lorraine Ownsby – Friends of Drake Well, Inc.
Karen Esak – Eckley Miners' Village Associates
Reverend John Oliphant – Ephrata Cloister Associates
Lance Barclay – Flagship Niagara League
Barbara and Bruce Johnson – The Friends of Joseph Priestley House
Floyd Ruhl – Landis Valley Associates
Ann Sevcik – Friends of Old Economy Village
Carole Cunliffe – The Pennsbury Society
Bill Roberts – Pennsylvania Lumber Museum Associates
Bryant T. Mesick – Friends of the Pennsylvania Military Museum
Robert J. Lawrence – Friends of the Railroad Museum
Cindy Wickham – Historical and Genealogical Society of Somerset County
Beverly Lichkus – The Friends of The State Museum
Nancy Heyrick – Friends of Washington Crossing Park

Outstanding Service Awards:

Edith Reisler – Pennsylvania Lumber Museum Associates
Clair Garman – Landis Valley Associates

Chairman Masich called for a motion to approve the 2011 Volunteer of the Year Award Nominations. On motion by Mr. Powell, seconded by Mr. Barbour the Volunteer of the Year Award Nominations were approved.

C) COLLECTIONS PROJECTS

Mr. Vaughan, Executive Director would like to digitize our collections and eventually have them accessible online. The pilot history collections project would include the fine arts collections and the collections at one of our sites.

With recent staff reductions, Mr. Dunn, Director of the State Museum of Pennsylvania is looking outside of the agency through our contract with the Conservation Center for Fine Arts in Philadelphia for assistance with this pilot project. The scope of work is to get a team leader to guide three teams of two to review our collections, compare the card catalogue with what is in the inventory. In addition, teams would photograph the collection and update the catalogue cards. The idea is to have computerized records of everything in the Fine Arts Section with information we could then use to put on our website. Unfortunately the two vendors we approached are not willing to work on the project. We are still pursuing a vendor to get on contract.

D) BUDGET

Mr. Leonard, Director of Management Services gave a brief budget report to the Commission. The Governor's Budget for next year is \$27.1 billion dollars which is roughly the same as last year's budget. The General Government Operations (GGO) for Fiscal Year 2011-12 is \$17.5 million, midyear it was reduced to down to \$17 million. Next year's budget Fiscal Year 2012-13 is \$16.6 million in General Government Operations (GGO). On a positive note, the Keystone Fund was funded \$6 million. Our head count which is currently approved at 217 people will be reduced to 209 people. We are going through a process in the next few months looking at the efficiencies we can gain going into next year and will formulate our decisions based on what our priorities are looking at the strategic plan.

V. PENNSYLVANIA HERITAGE SOCIETY

Mr. Rowley, President of the Pennsylvania Heritage Society reported that he would like to support the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's strategic plan.

VI. STRATEGIC PLANNING

A) RECAP OF RETREAT

Mr. Vaughan reported that since the Strategic Planning Retreat held December 19, 2011 he regularly meets with staff at all levels of the organization

The planning is based on the assumption of a minimum of level funding going forward but a substantial re-allocation of how we use the state capital and keystone funds and greatly enhanced private fundraising. Overall it provides an opportunity to do more and better work for the people of Pennsylvania without requesting major new operating support.

Over the past five years we have spent from Capital funds: \$15.4 million on new exhibitions at 4 sites; \$8.3 million on HVAC Systems at 3 sites; \$7.6 million on visitor centers at 2 sites; \$3.6 million on water and sewer at 2 sites but only \$3 million on restoration of historic structures and \$1.6 million on collections storage at all of our sites. There have been no capital funds spent for the State Museum or the State Archives. Most of our Keystone money has been used for restoration and maintenance projects. Underfunded are collections care, digitization, deaccessioning and upgrading of the State Museum and State Archives.

Going forward, our biggest needs are improving our collections and improving our care of historic structures.

Mr. Vaughan asked staff to think about the way museums and historic sites will operate in the year 2020. By 2020 the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission will have a strong non-profit partner operating each of our historic sites. Our role at all of these sites will be limited to stewardship of buildings, grounds and collections owned by the Commonwealth.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has been transitioning its historic sites from sites fully owned and operated by the Commission to models that have greater local control. Under the current placed properties program ten are fully managed by local partners with no Commission staff on site and no operational funding from the Commission. The Commission's responsibility is limited to long term maintenance.

Moving forward it is the Commission's goal to continue to move most historic sites from an actively administered group to a placed properties group. As we build the capacity of our partners we will clarify and limit the role of the Commission to the long term stewardship of buildings and grounds and turn daily operation over to our local partner.

We also want to reduce our financial obligation at sites by seeking private partners to invest in our buildings or lease them. Our goal is to convert as many as 30 to 40 structures that we now maintain, but do not contribute to our mission, into income generating properties. Income generated will be restricted for long term maintenance of the properties. A number of the buildings are good candidates for a resident curatorship program in which private individuals invest their money in the restoration of the building in exchange for long term residency. All these steps will reduce our costs and allow us to maintain our historical assets at a much higher level.

Mr. Vaughan recognizes the need for product differentiation between historic sites that are place-based and tell of events that occurred at a single place and history museums that are subject based and tell a statewide story. We are looking to rebrand six subject based museums that are central to the history of the commonwealth such as Railroad Museum of PA, Anthracite Heritage Museum, PA Lumber Museum, Landis Valley Farm Museum, PA Military Museum and possibly Drake Well Museum as State Museums.

As we reduce staff at PHMC historic sites we will be able to increase our role in assisting a much larger range of sites statewide. The Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums will reestablish PHMC's traditional statewide role with sites and museums around the state. This will parallel the

present statewide services offered by the Bureau for Historic Preservation and Pennsylvania State Archives. When funding permits we will reestablish the state-wide PHMC grant program that provided critical funding to many historic sites and museums.

An Affiliates Program would be established similar to those provided regionally by the Heinz History Center and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. We would not compete with, but rather compliment, these programs by serving all of the state that is not within their regions.

We are proposing to expand the Pennsylvania Trails of History program to selected non-PHMC historic sites and museums and exploring a Pennsylvania Passport Program (modeled on the National Parks Passport) linking PHMC sites and Pennsylvania National Parks.

By 2020 Pennsylvania Heritage should raise sufficient private, foundation, corporate, membership and sales revenues to offset the reduced state funding of recent years. Several steps must be accomplished by 2015 to achieve this goal. The first step is to build the brand of our various bureaus rather than the brand of PHMC. In this model each of our separate brands offer a related, but limited range of services and the title is fairly self-defining for example: Pennsylvania State Museums - Pennsylvania State Archives.

We also need to improve co-branding with our partner organizations and to develop a mutually beneficial joint membership program with each site, museum and bureau. Effective fundraising will also require that we enhance the capabilities of all our local partners and friends groups. Most critical will be building the capacities of the Pennsylvania Heritage Society. We may wish to rebrand this partner Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation to clearly reflect its mission. Mr. Vaughan will discuss this later at the Pennsylvania Heritage Society board meeting.

In 2020 we will have excellent to adequate storage facilities for a range of collections that have been culled, refined and made more accessible in many ways. On-line, open storage, deaccession or loans to other museums.

At the heart of our responsibilities is the obligation to gather and preserve the natural, cultural and historic treasures of Pennsylvania and we have many remarkable artifacts, manuscripts, buildings, landscapes and natural history specimens. We do not have the resources to take care of all of this. We do not have adequate intellectual or physical control over some collections and in many cases we have substandard storage facilities. The problem is complex involving the need for a better balance between staff, stuff and storage.

In Paleontology/Geology we have excellent storage/work facilities with plenty of room for growth, but for 19 years there has been only one staff member using this space designed for a large staff. The same is true for Natural Sciences. Archaeology has excellent storage for its 4.5 million artifacts but will need to expand within 10 years.

We need to build a new State Archive or renovate and expand existing facilities within the next few years. At the anticipated rate of collections growth the archives will be out of space within 6 years.

We must gain control of our collections through an inventory and digitization program. We anticipate that we could deaccession 20% or more of our history collections which may be more appropriate for another museum or which duplicates other items in the collection. To streamline the deaccessioning process we may need to amend the history code to provide an alternate process to the state's current surplus property process which is slow, expensive and inappropriate for museum collections. We will need to devote staff and money to this process but will save substantial state money in the future.

We are evaluating two proposals from private organizations (Family Search and Ancestry.com) to fully digitize our birth and death records at no charge to the Commission.

Our 2020 vision sees a Commission that better serves a larger number of affiliated museums and sites throughout the state, limits our involvement at PHMC-owned sites to stewardship of state property and management of leased properties, and expands the State Museum of Pennsylvania to

seven locations throughout the state. We envision a more focused and better cared for collection that is made fully accessible online to the public and other museums via digitization.

Next we will focus more attention on the other three bureaus and on a new vision for our exhibitions and programs that will be more exciting, more flexible and more economical than the traditional path we have been pursuing. Much of the vision can be accomplished by reallocating the existing levels of capital and keystone funds. We are also looking to partnerships with other state agencies to improve efficiencies and strengthen programs. There will be a need for additional private and state investment to accomplish some of these goals.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Cutler gave a brief report to the Commission on the National Register Nomination that were recently reviewed at the February 7, 2012 Historic Preservation Board Meeting.

Mr. Craig Caba, private citizen noted that Commission is on the right track and volunteered his services to assist the Commission.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Masich adjourned the meeting at 11:22am.