

**PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION**  
**MARCH 3, 2021**  
**MINUTES**

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission met on March 3, 2021 via Skype for Business. The following Commissioners were present: Nancy Moses – Chair, Christi Martone represented Senator Michele Brooks, Ophelia Chambliss, William Lewis, Andrew Masich, Representative Robert Matzie, Fred Powell, Robert Savakinas, Kenneth Turner, Representative Parke Wentling, Philip Zimmerman and Glenn Miller (Department of Education).

The following staff were present: Andrea Lowery, David Bohanick, David Carmicheal, Beth Hager, Andrea MacDonald, Brenda Reigle, Charlie Fox, Howard Pollman, Scott Doyle. Rodney Akers and Gerard Leone served as legal counsel. Glenn Holliman represented the Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation.

I. CALL TO ORDER

PHMC Chairwoman, Nancy Moses called the meeting to order at 10am. At this time, she asked everyone on the call to introduce themselves.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairwoman Nancy Moses called for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 2, 2020 meeting. MOTION: (Lewis/Turner) Motion to accept the minutes as presented from the December 2, 2020 meeting was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

III. CHAIRWOMAN'S REMARKS

Chairwoman Nancy Moses welcomed Senator Michele Brooks, a new PHMC commissioner. Senator Brooks could not attend today's meeting and is represented by Christi Martone. Nancy commended Brenda Reigle, Director of Historic Sites and Museums. Brenda is retiring from the

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission the end of March 2021. Chairwoman Nancy

Moses read the following retirement resolution:

**WHEREAS** Brenda Reigle prepared herself for a career in the museum profession by obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science and history from Lebanon Valley College, followed by a Master of Arts degree in museum studies from the acclaimed Cooperstown Graduate Program at the State University of New York;

**WHEREAS** Brenda began her museum career at the Division of Historic Preservation of Fairfax County Park Authority, overseeing collections management activities and produced historic furnishing plans;

**WHEREAS** Brenda joined the PHMC in 1985 as the Site Administrator at Hope Lodge, Mather Mill, and Graeme Park, directing all operations of these important 18<sup>th</sup> century properties.

**WHEREAS** in 1993 Brenda became the Eastern Regional Curator of the Commission, managing collections-related projects at thirteen historic sites and museums; coordinating MAP II surveys of twenty-three properties, and co-coordinating disaster plans for the Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums;

**WHEREAS** in 1999 Brenda became the Chief of Collections Care, overseeing curatorial care for the Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums and managing all capital improvements to exhibits;

**WHEREAS** in 2010 Brenda continued her service as the Western Division Chief of the Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums. In this role she oversaw five PHMC properties: Erie Maritime Museum, Drake Well Museum, Pennsylvania Lumber Museum, Pennsylvania Military Museum, and Old Economy Village;

**WHEREAS** in 2013 Brenda was appointed Bureau Director of the Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums, responsible for the entire bureau, including supervising staff, managing collections, coordinating bureau activities, developing and implementing the sites and museums standards program. Notably, Brenda spearheaded the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Museums initiative to ensure relevance to visitors and engagement with new audiences;

**WHEREAS** Brenda was instrumental to the development and management of two recent grants from the Institute of Museum and Library Services—a National Leadership grant award for “Accessibility Excellence” and an IMLS CARES award for “PA History to Go”;

**WHEREAS** Brenda, through her dedication, winning temperament, innovation, and festive holiday hair color and headgear, has earned the respect and friendship of her colleagues and museum volunteers. She will long be remembered for her positive influence on the lives of visitors, school students, and interns.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** in recognition of her remarkable thirty-five years of service to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission commends Brenda J. Reigle for her professionalism on the occasion of her retirement from the Commission, extends its heartfelt appreciation for his accomplishments on behalf of the

Commission and Commonwealth, and extends to her congratulations and best wishes for a long, happy, and rewarding retirement.

Chairwoman Nancy Moses thanked the staff members of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for their work over the past year despite many restrictions to advance our work. The individual bureau reports have shown creativity in producing winning programs, digitizing collections, and new systems to expedite services. She extended a special thanks to all essential staff who continue to protect and maintain our historic sites and museums while our buildings remain closed.

#### **IV. REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS**

**STATE ARCHIVES** – David Carmicheal reported that staff at the State Records Center continues to safely provide records to state agencies throughout the pandemic.

Staff continue to hold Community History Dialogues to encourage underrepresented groups in the archives to begin collecting and preserving their own records.

Lessons learned from the pandemic: digital records allowed staff to respond to many requests and the need to spend more time with friends and build those friendships more.

**Historical and Archival Records Care Grants** – Grants improve the preservation and accessibility of historically significant records maintained by local governments, historical societies, and academic institutions. Projects may include initiatives such as: digitization; arranging, describing, and rehousing collections into appropriate formats, containers, and environments; collection assessment; records surveys; and disaster planning. All grants must concern the care of historical records.

The grants are administered on a competitive basis. Funding for the awards spans two years. Grants \$5,001 and above must include matching funds.

Awards have been determined based on review by a sub-committee of State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB). Panelists scored their assigned applications, which were ranked in an electronic system. Quality of the application, significance of outcomes, feasibility of projects, and funding availability were primary considerations. Final rankings were discussed among panelists. Certain projects were recommended for reduced funding due to ineligible expenses or to promote greater geographic distribution across the commonwealth as well as among varied types of repositories and collections, particularly those documenting diverse communities.

Funding Summary:

Number of Eligible Applications Received – 61  
Total Dollars Requested - \$399,047.33  
Total Dollars Available - \$197,952.09  
Number of HARC Funded Projects – 31  
Percentage of Total Dollar Requests Funded – 50%  
Percentage of Total Applications Funded – 51%

MOTION: (Chambliss/Turner) Motion to approve the Historical and Archival Records Care Grant as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention. Robert Savakinus abstained from voting.

**STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE** - Andrea MacDonald provided a brief update on the work of the State Historic Preservation Office. The routine workload of the State Historic Preservation Office continued this past year with minimal change other than modifying the work processes. The number of Federal and State Tax Credit Applications, National Register Nominations, Environmental Reviews received did not slow during the pandemic.

PA-SHARE, Pennsylvania's new online GIS-based project management system for working with cultural resources in the Keystone State, is now online. It provides one place to access all PA SHPO data, research, and programs, as well as tools and user dashboard, our new platform can

transform project planning and bring real benefits to developers, consultants, agencies, municipalities, and individuals alike.

**Historical Markers** – The Historic Marker Review Panel met on February 10, 2021 to review new nominations to the Historic Marker Program. A total of 39 nominations were received, 23 nominations are recommended for approval and 16 nominations were not approved. The unapproved nominations may be submitted with the same subject up to three years in a row.

MOTION: (Lewis/Zimmerman) Motion to approve the recommended Historic Marker Nominations was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

**Retirement Resolution for Karen Galle** – William Lewis thanked Karen Galle for her work and dedication with the Historic Marker Program and wishes her well during her retirement. He read the following retirement resolution:

WHEREAS, Karen Galle, has served faithfully as a member of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission since 1995, and

WHEREAS, Karen Galle, after serving ten years with the Capitol Preservation Committee, was the Office Manager at the Commonwealth Conservation Center with Division of Architecture and Preservation from 1986 through 2005, and

WHEREAS, Karen transferred to the Bureau for Historic Preservation in 2005, now the State Historic Preservation Office, following her service with the Bureau for Historic Sites and Museums, and

WHEREAS, Karen has served as the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's Historical Marker Program Coordinator from 2005 to 2021;

WHEREAS, Karen has helped local sponsors dedicate 491 PHMC markers - almost 20% of the entire PHMC inventory of 2510 markers and plaques over the 107 year history of the program, and

WHEREAS, Karen was a regular contributor to *Pennsylvania Heritage* magazine, writing the Marking Time column with 30 articles, and

WHEREAS, Karen has worked continuously to improve and expand the reach of the marker program to an ever-growing audience who love Pennsylvania History, and

WHEREAS, Karen has developed an enhanced search engine for the marker website section to increase public access to marker records, and

WHEREAS, Karen has conducted a comprehensive evaluation and prioritization of every marker that may contain outdated or insensitive cultural references, and

WHEREAS, Karen has helped developed a retirement and revision policy for the evaluation of existing markers, and

WHEREAS, Karen has coordinated and improved the marker maintenance program with annual maintenance of over 200 markers, and

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved, that on the occasion of Karen Galle's retirement from Commonwealth service, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission expresses its thanks for her 26 years of service and for her extraordinary contribution to historical marker program, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission wishes Karen Galle good fortune and success during her retirement as she travels the byways and highways of Pennsylvania in search of the next historical marker.

MOTION: (Turner/Masich) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Karen Galle was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

**HISTORIC SITES AND MUSEUMS** – Brenda Reigle reported that site staff have acquired new skills in video production and editing. This work has enhanced and provided more variety in our digital public offerings, increased our geographic spread, and allowed staff to reach many more visitors than just on-site visitation.

Historic Sites and Museums continues its advancement of DEIA initiatives including two IMLS grant projects: “Accessibility Excellence” and “Pennsylvania History To Go”. These projects will continue for about 18 months.

**STATE MUSEUM** – Beth Hager reported that the State Museum is planning an on-line version of Art of the State and is slated to open September 2021. If we can be certain by June 2021 that the State Museum would be open to the public and permitted gatherings, we would reconsider and make arrangements to have an in-person show.

The State Museum launched a weekly Learn at Lunchtime series of online live shows via Zoom featuring staff offering a variety of topics for all ages. The series run every Friday at 12:15pm and will continue throughout 2021. When the museum re-opens to the public, these programs will convert to on-site, in person offerings. The February programs have ranged in live viewership from

83 – 165 participants. A list of upcoming programs with links to registration (free) can be found at <http://statemuseumpa.org/learnatlunchtime>.

## **EXECUTIVE OFFICE**

**Executive Director Report** – Andrea Lowery reported that the proposed Governor’s Budget FY 2021-22 was issued on Wednesday, February 3, 2021. PHMC’s General Government Operations (GGO) funding was reduced slightly from last year. The appropriation is \$20,677,000. This reflects a \$473,000 decrease over the current year’s GGO appropriation to support current program and personnel. We can accommodate the slight reduction with current vacancies.

Andrea Lowery and Howard Pollman will meet with House and Senate Appropriations Committee members to advocate for the PHMC budget and explain the work of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Staff have begun implementing the new Strategic Plan, the focus this quarter is to share the plan with staff, working towards greater access with virtual engagements. Staff continue to add entries in Argus an online catalog that provides records accessible to the public.

Andrea noted that Charter Day will be held virtually this year due to the pandemic. The Bureau of Management Services and IT are working to begin reorganizing our internal digital holdings in a more sustainable, cost effective way. Andrea Lowery and David Carmichael continue to work with the Office of Administration/IT on creating a digital archive. Dave Bohanick is working on the agency telework plan. Staff is also preparing for reopening of historic sites and museums hopefully later this spring.

Andrea thanked both Brenda Reigle and Karen Galle for their work with the commission and congratulated them on their retirements. At the next PHMC Commission, there will be a presentation from the consultants working on the Master Plan for the State Museum.

**Legislative Report** – Howard Pollman reported that he is following two amendments to the Pennsylvania History Code: HB 284 and SB 116. Howard Pollman and Andrea Lowery have virtual meetings scheduled with House and Senate Appropriations Committee members. He is working with PA Museums and Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill; Senator Phillips-Hill would like to introduce an update to the Pennsylvania History Code that deals with abandoned property for museums.

Howard and his staff are working with the State Museum of PA to coordinate marketing strategies for upcoming programs. The commission will celebrate the commonwealth's 340<sup>th</sup> birthday on Charter Day, Sunday, March 7, with a virtual display of William Penn's original 1681 charter. In addition, they can "tour" the Violet Oakley murals of William Penn that are featured in the Governor's Reception Room at the Capitol. Historic sites and museums will also offer online program throughout the week.

**Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation** – Glenn Holliman is pleased by the service provided by Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation (PHF) staff: Mary Hull and Jodi Dodson. PHF is here to support PHMC and its projects. Membership is down due to the historic sites and museums being closed and is expected to recover when sites reopen. The PHF board will call hold a retreat in the spring to review the past year and to come up with ways to better support the commission. The foundation wants to do all it can to develop and share the resources so that we may continue in our very important effort to share the history of the commonwealth with everyone.

At this time, Andrea Lowery reported on what we can anticipate at the June 2021 Commission Meeting. If guidelines permit, PHMC commissioners will have the option of meeting in person or virtually. PHMC staff will meet virtually.

## **V. INTELLECTURAL DESSERT**

Tyler Stump, Archivist at the PA State Archives provided a presentation on the 1918 Spanish Influenza in Pennsylvania.



**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

PHMC Chairwoman, Nancy Moses adjourned the meeting at 11:50am.

## SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

**2021033\_1** MOTION: (Lewis/Turner) Motion to accept the minutes as presented from the December 2, 2020 meeting was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

**2021033\_2** MOTION: (Chambliss/Turner) Motion to approve the Historical and Archival Records Care Grant as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention. Robert Savakinus abstained from voting.

**2021033\_3** MOTION: (Lewis/Zimmerman) Motion to approve the recommended Historic Marker Nominations was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

**2021033\_4** MOTION: (Turner/Masich) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Karen Galle was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.