

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
JUNE 2, 2021
MINUTES

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission met on June 2, 2021, in person and via Zoom. The following Commissioners were present: Nancy Moses – Chair, Christi Martone represented Senator Michele Brooks, Ophelia Chambliss, Senator Tim Kearney, William Lewis, Andrew Masich, Fred Powell, Philip Zimmerman, Representative Robert Matzie, Ken Turner and Alice Battles represented Representative Park Wentling.

The following staff were present: Andrea Lowery, David Bohanick, David Carmicheal, Beth Hager, Andrea MacDonald, Charlie Fox, Howard Pollman and Brad Smith. Rodney Akers and Gerard Leone served as legal counsel. Nicole Marrone, Office of General Counsel Extern. 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 commissioners and staff to introduce themselves.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairwoman Nancy Moses called for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 3, 2021 meeting. MOTION: (Powell/Turner) Motion to accept the minutes as presented from the March 3, 2021 meeting was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

III. CHAIRWOMAN'S REMARKS

Chairwoman Nancy Moses welcomed everyone to today's meeting and introduced Senator Tim Kearney, a new PHMC commissioner.

IV. REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE – Andrea MacDonald reported that PHMC is looking for new panelists for the Historical Marker Review Panel. This group of historical experts from across the commonwealth will review historical marker nominations and make recommendations for approval to the Commission. Andrea MacDonald encouraged commissioners to send recommendations to her or Scott Doyle. The Commission will review and approve these nominations at the September 2021 meeting.

Keystone Historic Preservation Grants – The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission received 92 applications for the Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program with request of \$4.3 million for the fiscal year of 2020-2021. PHMC received applications in both construction and planning categories. The applications were considered separately by three external peer review panels. The ratio of applications between the two categories is based on their respective grant requests. There were more applicants requesting support for construction activities, so there were more recommended awards in that category. Recommendations are organized and ranked within the two categories. Out of the 54 applications we have funding to support 28 construction projects and 26 planning projects.

MOTION: (Powell/Chambliss) Motion to approve the Keystone Historic Preservation Grants as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

Historic Preservation Board – Resolutions – Andrea MacDonald recognized the following outgoing Historic Preservation Board members for their contributions and assistance in promoting historic preservation throughout Pennsylvania: Sue Hannegan, Jane Sheffield and John Conti.

MOTION: (Lewis, Zimmerman) Motion to approve the resolutions for the outgoing Historic Preservation Board members as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

Historic Preservation Board – New Members - Andrea MacDonald recommended the following individuals to serve on the Historic Preservation Board Members: Matthew Falcone, President of Preservation Pittsburgh; Jennifer Robinson, Program Coordinator at the Preservation Alliance For Greater Philadelphia; Brian Black, Head, Division of Arts and Humanities at Pennsylvania State University, Altoona; Derrick Tillman, President and CEO of Bridging the Gap Development; and John Evans, registered architect in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

MOTION: (Masich, Powell) Motion to approve the Historic Preservation Board Recommendations as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

HISTORIC SITES AND MUSEUMS – Charlie Fox reported that his biggest challenge as acting director has been the reopening of the sites and museums. We have seen a successful reopening of our sites and museums where we welcomed visitors in person again on April 30th. Staff morale is high and most importantly with the gradual reopening that staff, visitors, and volunteers feel safe and welcome. We continue to evaluate mitigation requirements from the CDC and PA Department of Health and hope to expand our operations July 1st.

During the pandemic, museum education and collections staff developed digital online programs. The challenge for us is to maintain those programs as sites and museums return to in person interpretation.

Retirement Resolution for Jeff Becker – Charlie Fox announced the retirement of Jeff Becker who worked for 40 years at the Daniel Boone Homestead. Charlie thanked Mr. Becker for his service to the commonwealth and asked the commission for approval of the following retirement resolution:

Whereas, Jeffrey Becker has worked 40 years for the PHMC at the Daniel Boone Homestead beginning in May 1981, and whereas he began work as an interpreter, transferred to the maintenance department by 1984, and eventually became site Building Maintenance Foreman and

Whereas, Mr. Becker has overseen, coordinated, and participated in the care and maintenance of the 579-acre Daniel Boone Homestead to the highest standards and

Whereas, this site includes over 30 structures, including important 18th century buildings; mowed lawns, meadows, crop land, woodlands, wetlands, an orchard, a five-acre lake and dam breast, 2 miles of paved roads, over 10 miles of walking and bridle trails, 7 miles of split rail fencing, its own wastewater treatment plant, and 4 water systems fed by on-site wells and

Whereas, Mr. Becker has overseen millions of dollars' worth of contracted projects on site including Capital projects, Major Maintenance Projects, Site Preservation projects and in-house projects through which he coordinated efforts of PHMC staff, DGS staff, site staff, consultants, and contractors to ensure the effective completion of the projects with minimal impact on site operations and

Whereas, Mr. Becker has maintained his own state licensing as a wastewater treatment operator and as a pesticide applicator in order to most effectively perform his duties at the Daniel Boone Homestead and

Whereas, in the course of maintaining the Daniel Boone Homestead Mr. Becker recruited, developed, and supervised a diverse work force which included permanent, limited-term and seasonal State staff, various community-based work programs, and volunteers, as well as coordinated projects with site-based Pennsylvania Conservation Corps crews for over 20 years and oversaw the implementation of in-kind services with Exeter Township and

Whereas, Mr. Becker has maintained a professional and courteous demeanor with staff, contractors, and the public, providing exemplary customer service to all he interacted with and having shared his historical and site knowledge with visitors through tours, demonstrations, and daily interactions to enhance their experience and

Whereas, Mr. Becker exercised his extensive knowledge of Pennsylvania flora and fauna to manage, in a sensitive manner site meadows, grasslands, woodlands and wetlands to maximize the procreation of native wildflowers, trees, and animal habitat, in addition to occasionally leading nature walks for visitors and

Whereas, Mr. Becker took an active role in helping guide the restoration of the on-site Bertolet Sawmill, a period water powered reciprocating sawmill moved to the site from the nearby Oley Valley; learned the operation of a water powered mill from the staff of Old Sturbridge Village; and has demonstrated the operation of the mill to the public for over 20 years— one of only a handful of operating water powered sawmills in North America and

Whereas, Mr. Becker took on added administrative responsibilities and an enhanced site leadership role since 2010 when the Daniel Boone Homestead ceased to be a fully administered site and became enrolled in the agency's managed property program and

Whereas, Mr. Becker has provided leadership through his exemplary work ethic, taking an active and full participatory part in all site activities as well as offering his extensive knowledge, expertise and advise to other maintenance personnel throughout the agency and

Therefore, the PHMC recognizes the extraordinary service rendered to the Commonwealth by Jeffrey Becker upon his retirement from State service.

MOTION: (Kearney, Zimmerman) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Jeff Becker as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention

STATE ARCHIVES – David Carmicheal announced the retirement of Audrey Trussell, Administrative Assistant for the State Archives and asked the commission for approval of the following retirement resolution:

WHEREAS, Audrey Trussell has served the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission with distinction since joining its staff in January 2015; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Trussell began her career with the Commonwealth’s Department of Corrections, Office of Professional Responsibility and earned promotions to the position of Administrative Officer 2; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Trussell took a voluntary demotion to accept her position as an Administrative Assistant in the State Archives; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Trussell, as an attendee of New York’s Fashion Institute of Technology, brought to the Archives a much-needed sense of haute couture (though, as an avid supporter of the FIT Tigers, she lamented their failure to field a football team); and

WHEREAS, the always cheerful Audrey has a no-nonsense alter ego named ‘Eva’, whose rare appearances—whenever the boss became overly demanding and unreasonable—will be greatly missed; and

WHEREAS, Audrey will now be able to indulge her favorite pastime of visiting local stores to ‘pet fabric’ and plan her next sewing projects which, most recently, included masks for those who needed them during the COVID pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the new building will not include the Waterford crystal chandelier that Audrey had envisioned for her desk area, because the gesture would be empty without an Audrey to light the space beneath it; and

WHEREAS, Audrey brought the tradition of Pay Day Pizza to the Archives and, with it, increased camaraderie and collegiality among the staff; and

WHEREAS, Audrey treated every visitor and vendor and employee with genuine warmth, dignity and respect, and was a consistent model of PHMC’s core values and behaviors; and

WHEREAS, Audrey's genuine love and good humor will be sorely missed by all her co-workers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission duly notes and records for posterity some of the accomplishments and achievements of Audrey Trussell and extends to her its congratulations and best wishes for a long, happy, and fruitful retirement.

MOTION: (Turner, Chambliss) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Audrey Trussell as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention

David provided a brief overview of the Pennsylvania State Archives. The purpose of the archives is to identify, collect and preserve records that must be kept permanently. These records include William Penn's original charter from 1681, records of state government, birth and death records. There are approximately 250 million documents currently stored in the archives and there are 19 million of our records now available online through our own website. Starting June 30th, the State Archives will be open by appointment only.

Staff are currently developing a digital archive to preserve the electronic records that must be kept for hundreds of years. Construction of the new State Archives Building continues and hope to open in the Fall of 2022.

STATE MUSEUM – Beth Hager reported that the State Museum re-opened to the public Wednesday through Sunday on Friday, April 30th. The museum's hours are shorted to close early each day so that frontline staff have time for extra cleaning protocols and preparations needed during the pandemic. The following features will remain closed through Labor Day to avoid close contact: Curiosity Connection, Planetarium and the Auditorium.

Live digital programming continues with Learn at Lunchtime programs via Zoom each Friday at 12:15pm and in lieu of school tours in Spring 2021, State Museum Educators offered four live virtual programs by reservation for grades 3 – 6.

The final dates for artists to submit art works for Art of the State 2021 was May 28, 2021. We received 600 applicants who submitted 2,200 pieces of art. The Art of the State 2021 exhibit will open at the State Museum on Sunday, September 26th.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Executive Director Report – Andrea Lowery provided a brief update on the Independent Fiscal Office Performance-Based Budgeting Review. Andrea and the bureau directors continue to work on the development of activities and performance measures to review PHMC's performance. The program examines how appropriated funding is expended, and it benchmarks our work against similar activities in other states. The resulting report will be an evaluation of how effectively PHMC uses its funding to achieve meaningful outcomes for taxpayers along with recommendations for improvements. PHMC's review will be in April 2022.

The proposed budget for FY 2021-22 is still pending. PHMC's proposed budget is \$20,677,000 which is a \$473,000 decrease (-2.4%) over the current year's GGO appropriation to support current programs and personnel. With our current vacancies we are carrying, this slight reduction in our budget is something we can accommodate.

Although a hiring freeze remains in place, PHMC has received permission to fill some of our strategic hires including Brenda Reigle's position. Andrea and Charlie continue to interview candidates and hope to have selected a candidate hired by the end of July.

Andrea continues to work with the Office of Administration regarding a long-term permanent telework plan for PHMC.

Next month, Andrea will work on solicitation for a re use study for the current State Archives building on how to use the facility once it has been vacated. In addition, we are doing some collection stewardship by taking a better look at our collections by deaccessioning items that are duplicate or items that are not mission related.

Legislative Report – Howard Pollman reported that he and Andrea have met with legislators or their staff to update them on PHMC’s activities and advocate in support of the Governor’s proposed budget. Legislators and staff, we met with expect to have the budget passed prior to June 30th. Howard continues to monitor House Bill 284/SB 116 – Amendments to the Pennsylvania History Code.

At this time, Chairwoman Nancy Moses reported that PHMC is planning to hold the September 2021 meeting at the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum. Andrea Lowery reported that the 9/11 exhibit at the State Museum will open September 9th.

Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation – Glenn Holliman reported on the activities of the Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation (PHF) and how PHF will continue to support PHMC programs, projects, and exhibits. PHF applied for a loan from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to offset the decrease in membership and program income cause by the closing of PHMC’s public buildings, programs, and projects.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Ophelia Chambliss shared photos of her recent visit to Graeme Park. Graeme Park is in Horsham, Pennsylvania, Montgomery County.

VI. STATE MUSEUM MASTER PLAN

Andrea Lowery introduced and welcomed Brad Smith, Project Coordinator, Philip Chen and Steven Gerrard from Ann Beha Architects; and Meghan Lehnar and Gregg Matty from Gallagher and Associates to the meeting. The master plan will meet the expectations of today’s visitors and deliver high quality exhibits that are relevant and engaging.

Brad Smith reviewed stakeholder feedback from PHMC Commissioners, State Museum Staff, Harrisburg Community and Tourism Leaders, Pennsylvania Museum Professionals,

Pennsylvania Teachers and State Museum Members. At this time, the consultants provided an overview of the comprehensive plan for the State Museum of Pennsylvania.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

PHMC Chairwoman, Nancy Moses adjourned the meeting at 12:20pm.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

2021062_1 MOTION: (Powell/Turner) Motion to accept the minutes as presented from the March 3, 2021 meeting was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention

2021062_2 MOTION: (Powell/Chambliss) Motion to approve the Keystone Historic Preservation Grants as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

2021062_3 MOTION: (Lewis, Zimmerman) Motion to approve the resolutions for the outgoing Historic Preservation Board members as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

2021062_4 MOTION: (Masich, Powell) Motion to approve the Historic Preservation Board Recommendations as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

2021062_5 MOTION: (Kearney, Zimmerman) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Jeff Becker as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention

2021062_6 MOTION: (Turner, Chambliss) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Audrey Trussell as presented was approved. 11 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention