

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
JUNE 7, 2023
MINUTES

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission met on June 7, 2023, in person and via ZOOM. The following Commissioners were present: Nancy Moses – Chair, Fredrick Powell – Vice Chair, Ophelia Chambliss, Senator Tim Kearney, William Lewis, Andrew Masich, Robert Savakinas, Philip Zimmerman, Jacob Bausher represented Representative Parke Wentling, Representative Robert Matzie, Adam Gingrich represented Senator Michele Brooks, and Susan Banks.

The following staff was present: Andrea Lowery, David Bohanick, David Carmicheal, Angelica Docog, Andrea MacDonald, Melissa Mann, Howard Pollman. Amber Sizemore and Gerard Leone served as legal counsel.

Donna Fisher represented the PA Heritage Foundation.

I. INTRODUCTIONS

At the request of Chairwoman Nancy Moses, Vice Chair Fred Powell presided over the meeting. He called the meeting to order at 10 am and asked the commissioners and staff to introduce themselves.

II. CHAIR REMARKS

Chairwoman Nancy Moses welcomed everyone to the meeting. She remarked that commissioners are from different parts of Pennsylvania with different interests and political affiliations but when everyone sits around the table, we represent all past, present, and future Pennsylvanians. There much that can divide us but it's the interest of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the PA Historical and Museum Commission that brings us together.

III. ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes – Vice Chair Fred Powell called to hear a motion to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2023, meeting. Nancy Moses requested that the public comments regarding Bushy Run Battlefield from the people who attended the March 1, 2023 meeting be included in the minutes.

Vice Chair Fred Powell called for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2023 meeting to include the public comments regarding Bushy Run Battlefield from the people who attended. MOTION: (Lewis/Chambliss) Motion to accept the minutes from the March 1, 2023 meeting as amended to include public comments was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program FY 2022-2023 – Andrea MacDonald reported the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission received 101 applications for the Keystone Historic Preservation (KHP) Grant Program with requests of \$5,695,564 for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. PHMC received applications in both the construction and planning categories. These applications were considered separately by three external peer review panels. The ratio of applications recommended for approval between the two categories is based on their respective total requests. There were more applicants requesting support for construction activities, therefore more awards are recommended in that category.

The SHPO office recommends funding in the amount of \$2,579,191.50 for 48 projects (31 construction projects and 17 planning projects).

Vice Chair Fred Powell called for a motion to approve the applications recommended for the Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program FY 2022-2021. MOTION: (Masich/Savakinus)

Motion to approve the recommended applications for the Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program were approved as presented. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

Certified Local Government Grant Awards – The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is responsible for administering the Certified Local Government Grant (CLG) program. The SHPO receives annual funding from the National Park Service’s Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) for their operation, and they are required to pass-through no less than ten percent (10%) of that funding to Certified Local Governments as subgrants. For FFY 2023, the PA SHPO anticipates an award of \$1,514,473. PHMC also sets aside CLG funding for mini-grants, scholarships, and training.

Vice Chair Fred Powell called for a motion to approve the Certified Local Government Grant Awards as presented. MOTION: (Lewis/Zimmerman) Motion to approve the recommended Certified Local Government Grant Award were approved as presented. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

Retirement Resolutions – Andrea Lowery reported on the retirement of Janet Johnson who served as a curator in the Section of Archaeology at the State Museum of Pennsylvania since 1993. Janet helped create an organized storage system that includes an electronic inventory of over 11 million artifacts. She was devoted to public outreach and education, traveling statewide to speak with the public at various conferences and public events including the Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Vice Chair Fred Powell called for a motion to approve the retirement resolution for Janet Johnson as presented. MOTION: (Chambliss/Masich) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Janet Johnson was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

IV. REPORTS

Executive Director Report – Andrea Lowery reported on Governor Shapiro’s proposed budget, PHMC’s General Government Operation (GGO) appropriation for SFY 2023-24 is \$23.5 million reflects a cost-to-carry budget only. This represents a 7.4% increase from last year’s

budget. This increase is attributed to the new PA State Archives building operating costs of \$390,000 for utilities, specialized services and for maintenance.

Andrea Lowery and Howard Pollman continue to meet with legislators and/or their staff to discuss the proposed budget, and address any questions they may have for PHMC, and discuss pending legislation impacting PHMC or its constituents.

Andrea Lowery welcomed Angelica Docog, the new Director of the State Museum of PA. Angelica has outstanding experience in community partnership and a wealth of knowledge in increasing visitation, revenue generation and fund raising.

Andrea provided a tour of the State Museum of PA to Governor Josh Shapiro and his Administration highlighting the Civil Rights exhibit *A Place for All: Three Stories of Integration in Pennsylvania*. The Commission is also assisting staff at the Governor's Residence with exhibits and display of artifacts.

The Commission is currently undergoing professional selection of an architect for upgrades to the State Museum and PHMC Tower.

State Historic Preservation Office – Andrea MacDonald reported that the SHPO office recently announced the 2022 Community Initiative Award Winners. Over 50 candidates were considered from different communities across the commonwealth. The winners included the Blairsville Area Underground Railroad, Indiana County; Concord Township and the Preservation of Spring Valley AME Church, Delaware County; the Friends of Sheepford Road Bridge/West Shore Historical Society, Cumberland and York County; and the Hay Creek Valley Historical Association, Berks County. A press release was issued last month during Preservation Month to honor the awardees. Awardees receive a certificate, and a time capsule to collect artifacts that tell preservation success stories of today.

Historic Sites and Museums – Melissa Mann announced that BHSM sites have returned to in season hours of operations. She will report on visitation numbers in the Fall 2023.

Ephrata Cloister was reaccredited by the American Alliance of Museums. This is the site's fourth time receiving this recognition, an honor held by only 202 other museums.

Eckley Miners' Village was awarded a \$48,400 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to create an interdisciplinary research and learning center at the site. The center will be housed in the restored home of Eckley cofounder Asa Foster and will provide classroom, laboratory, conference, and office space for place-based scholarship.

Melissa encouraged commissioners to visit the historic sites and museums and highlighted a few exhibit openings. In April, the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum opened a new exhibit celebrating the 90th anniversary of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Pennsbury Manor opened a sound installation by Indigenous artist Nathan Young. The installation showcases sound as a powerful art form and uses modern technology to add meaning to Pennsbury Manor. The Erie Maritime Museum unveiled *Snip...to Black Ice* exhibit that tells the store of ice boating on Lake Erie.

State Archives – David Carmicheal reported that the new State Archives Building is waiting to receive Certificate of Occupancy. The collection move will take approximately 3 – 4 months. The non-collection move is scheduled to begin on June 14, 2023.

The State Archives completed digitizing 23,360 postcards from the postcard collection. The images were uploaded into the *Power Library: PA Photos and Documents* site. Archives staff completed the reboxing of 93,500 lantern slides.

State Museum of PA – Angelica Docog reported that the State Museum continues to be busy with an increased number of school groups during the spring school season. This school year, the museum welcomed nearly 25,000 students, staff and chaperones with approximately 17,500 of

those visiting between March and early June. On Saturday, May 5, 2023, the State Museum welcome approximately 400 students, staff and chaperons for the Mechanicsburg Area High School Prom.

The State Museum staff continue to work with the Governor and First Lady Shapiro's staff on exhibits at the Governor's Residence. The State Museum curated three exhibitions, installed a map, removed loaned work as requested and led a docent training.

Art of the State art exhibition is now in the judging process with 1,915 entries. Once the review is complete, artists will be notified of their inclusion. The awards ceremony and opening reception is scheduled for Sunday, September 10, 2023.

Legislative Report – Howard Pollman reported that he and Andrea Lowery continue to meet with legislators during the budget season, and updated commissioners on HB 99 - amend the Right-to-Know Law, and HB 724 - amend the Tax Reform Code. Howard continues to work with legislative staff to draft legislative language for the transfer of ownership of Peace Church, New Freedom Theatre, and Curtin Village.

PA Heritage Foundation – Donna Fisher, President of the PA Heritage Foundation updated commissioners on the PHF activities. The Board of Directors is currently made up of 16 members and 2 PHMC Commissioners. At the May 31, 2023, Annual Board meeting, new officers were voted in for the next fiscal year. The board continues to search for new members and welcomes any new suggestions. PHF currently has two employees. The PHF Board will announce a major change in the structure and personnel of the staff in the next few weeks.

PHF held their second Sip & Savor Fundraiser on April 23, 2023, at Armstrong Valley Vineyard and Winery in Halifax, PA. Tickets for 71 people were purchased for the event and the proceeds were approximately \$6,000.

PHMC Chairwoman Nancy Moses thanked Donna Fisher for her work and support of the PHF.

V. OLD BUSINESS

PHMC Chairwoman Nancy Moses provided an update on the PHMC Living History Safety Committee. The members of the committee are PHMC Commissioners Nancy Moses, Andy Masich, and Senator Michael Brooks; PHMC Staff Andrea Lowery, and Melissa Mann are assisting with this committee. The committee will meet next week to discuss policy around living history with a focus on battlefield reenactments. PHMC will hold two public meetings in the next few weeks. The committee hopes to formulate a draft policy to be brought to the Commission at a special meeting the end of July 2023 for review and vote.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Michael Norris, President of Carpenter's Hall provided background information on the 250th anniversary of the Pennsylvania Provincial Conference in 2026. Mr. Norris would like to collaborate with PHMC, America250PA and other partners to plan a meaningful commemoration for this turning point in Pennsylvania history.

After discussion about the 250th anniversary and the commission's role in the celebration PHMC Chairwoman Nancy Moses suggested a taskforce of commissioners and staff be created. The taskforce would develop a plan that focuses on 2 – 3 top priorities of the 250th anniversary.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

PHMC Vice Chair Fred Powell adjourned the meeting at 11:45 am.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

20230607_1 MOTION:(Lewis/Chambliss) Motion to accept the minutes from the March 1, 2023 meeting as amended to include public comments was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

20230607_2 MOTION: (Masich/Savakinus) Motion to accept the recommended applications for the Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program were approved as presented. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

20230607_3 MOTION: (Lewis/Zimmerman) Motion to accept the recommended Certified Local Government Grant Award was approved as presented. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

20230607_4 MOTION: (Chambliss/Masich) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Janet Johnson was approved. 12 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.