

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
JULY 31, 2023
MINUTES

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission met on July 31, 2023, via ZOOM. The following Commissioners were present: Nancy Moses – Chair, Fredrick Powell – Vice Chair, Ophelia Chambliss, Senator Tim Kearney (by proxy), William Lewis, Andrew Masich, Philip Zimmerman, Representative Parke Wentling, Representative Robert Matzie, Senator Michele Brooks.

The following staff was present: Andrea Lowery, Melissa Mann, and Howard Pollman. Amber Sizemore served as legal counsel.

The following members of the public also participated in the July 31, 2023, meeting: Robert DeJesus, Bonnie Ramus, Rob Malley, Kevin Horan, Susan Miller, and Adam Gingrich – Chief of Staff, Senator Michele Brook's office.

I. INTRODUCTIONS

At this time Chairwoman Nancy Moses called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. She asked commissioners, staff, and members of the public to introduce themselves.

II. CHAIR REMARKS

Chairwoman Nancy Moses welcomed everyone to the meeting. PHMC commissioners are from different parts of Pennsylvania with different interests and political affiliations but when everyone sits around the table, we focus on the mission of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. The purpose of today's special meeting is to consider the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Living History Safety Policy. The policy was driven by the Living History Safety Policy taskforce members Chairwoman Nancy Moses, Senator Michele Brooks, and Andrew Masich. Adam Gingrich – Chief of Staff to Senator Michele Brooks; Andrea Lowery – PHMC

Executive Director; Melissa Mann – Director of Historic Sites and Museums; Howard Pollman – Director of External Affairs; and Amber Sizemore – Chief Counsel assisted the members of the Living History Safety Policy.

The committee held two public comment sessions on June 29, 2023, and July 20, 2023, via ZOOM regarding the Living History Safety Policy. Members of the public were invited to send their comments electronically. Chairwoman Nancy Moses reported that PHMC received many thoughtful, and helpful comments that helped shape the policy PHMC Commissioners are considering at today's meeting. Comments from the public included clarifying terminology, reframing some of the statements and the addition of an introduction that speaks to the educational value of battle reenactments and other forms of living history.

III. ACTION ITEMS

Living History Safety Policy – Chairwoman Nancy Moses read the following policy:

“Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Living History Safety Policy – Living history encompasses a variety of activities in which individuals recreate ways of life and re-enact historical events, including battles. It is an especially popular and effective way to educate the public about history and the connections between past and present. PHMC's Living History Safety Policy guides all living history activities, including battle reenactments, at its Historic Sites and Museums that demonstrate historic weapons. Its purpose is to ensure the safety of all – volunteers, participants, staff, and visitors.

Permitted Activities

All living history programs at PHMC Historic Sites and Museums must reflect the mission of the site. Historic weapons demonstrations, tactical exercises, and "force on force" reenactments depicting combat between opposing forces are allowed. Those who oversee or participate in events

and programs featuring historic weapons must comply with all governing PHMC associate or management agreements and the PHMC's Safety Manual for Historic Weapons Programs (January 2018). All changes to the Safety Manual must be approved by the Commission.”

Chairwoman Nancy Moses called to hear a motion regarding the PHMC Living History Safety Policy. Andrew Masich agreed that there was a positive discussion, feedback from the members of the public, and thoughtful consideration by the commission.

Senator Michele Brooks also agreed with Andrew Masich that there was a great deal of discussion regarding the PHMC Living History Safety Policy, and the importance of the reenactments. Senator Brooks thanked participants for sharing their thoughts and opinions. She hopes that policy will serve as a guiding document to protect participants, staff, and visitors; and embrace reenactments and everything the historic sites and museums have to offer.

Chairwoman Nancy Moses called for a motion to approve the PHMC Living History Safety Policy. MOTION: (Masich/Chambliss) Motion to approve the PHMC Living History Safety Policy as presented was approved. 10 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

IV. COMMISSIONER REMARKS

Chairwoman Nancy Moses asked if any departing commissioners would like to provide brief remarks regarding their time as PHMC commissioner.

Ophelia Chambliss stated that she has had an amazing experience as a commissioner and is appreciative and thankful to have worked with many PHMC staff. Serving as commissioner allowed her to take a deep dive into what Pennsylvania's history represents and to have an impact going forward so that all Pennsylvanians can enjoy its history.

Vice Chair Fred Powell recognized Chairwoman Nancy Moses for her leadership over the past eight years and PHMC staff. He thanked commissioners who served on the Executive Director Search Committee in hiring Andrea Lowery as PHMC Executive Director.

Philip Zimmerman remarked that the past eight years have been remarkable and enriching. He credits Nancy's leadership and each commissioner's aspiration to do something for Pennsylvania. He believes others will see that PHMC has moved forward in many ways in the past eight years.

Senator Michele Brooks thanked Chairwoman Nancy Moses for her leadership, commitment to the Commission for preserving history, and her openness to hearing everyone's view.

William Lewis also thanked his colleagues for their work on the commission, and for Chairwoman Nancy Moses' leadership by creating a collaborative experience for everyone.

Andrew Masich thanked Chairwoman Nancy Moses for her leadership and believes PHMC has had a stellar commission over the last eight years. He is looking forward to the new opening of the State Archives building.

Chairwoman Nancy Moses commented that she is inspired by everyone she met during her tenure on the commission. She learned so much from commissioners, staff, and members of the public who are committed to preserving and sharing the history of Pennsylvania. She hopes that the new group of commissioners will find the experience as rich and rewarding as she has.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:51 p.m.