

**PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION
DECEMBER 7, 2023
MINUTES**

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission met on December 7, 2023, in person and via Microsoft Teams. The following Commissioners were present: Hayley Haldeman – Chairwoman, William Lewis – Vice Chair, Robert Malley, Andrew Masich, Representative Parke Wentling, Ken Weinstein, Randell Spackman, Caleb Pifer, Representative Robert Matzie, Allison Dorsey, Susan Banks, C. Kim Bracey, and Senator Tim Kearney. Adam Gingrich represented Senator Michele Brooks.

The following staff were present: Andrea Lowery, Melissa Mann, Andrea MacDonald, David Bohanick, David Carmicheal, Angelica Docog, and Howard Pollman. Catherine Lantzy served as legal counsel, and Rusty Baker represented PA Museums.

Members of the public included John McGee representing Anthracite Region Vintage Base Ball Organization.

I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman asked commissioners if there were any changes, or comments to the July 31, 2023, PHMC Commission meeting minutes.

MOTION: (Lewis/Pifer) Motion to accept the minutes from the July 31, 2023, PHMC meeting as presented was approved. 14 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman asked commissioners if there were any changes, or comments to the September 13, 2023, PHMC Commission meeting minutes.

MOTION: (Lewis/Kearney) Motion to accept the minutes from the September 13, 2023, PHMC meeting as presented was approved. 14 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

III. INTRODUCTIONS

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman welcomed everyone to the new PA State Archives building and asked commissioners and staff to introduce themselves.

IV. CHAIRWOMAN'S REMARKS

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman is excited to learn more about the commission. She meets with PHMC Executive Director Andrea Lowery weekly and is planning to start individual meetings with PHMC Commissioners. Fall 2023 was a busy time for Historical Marker dedications. She thanked PHMC Commissioners who attended these events and encouraged commissioners who have not already participated in the Historical Marker dedications to do so.

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman announced meeting dates for 2024: March 21, 2024, in Harrisburg; June 13, 2024, at the PA Lumber Museum; September 19, 2024, in Harrisburg; and November 21, 2024, in Harrisburg. Starting in January 2024, Andrea Lowery will send a monthly update of commission activities to PHMC Commissioners.

At the end of today's commission meeting, there will be an Executive Session to discuss the annual review of PHMC Executive Director. Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman is working to identify and refine high-level goals for 2024/2025.

PHMC's current Strategic Plan covers 2021 through 2024. Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman discussed the plan with Andrea Lowery and believes many of the goals are still relevant; recognizing there are new members on the commission she would like to extend the current plan through the end of 2025. Andrea Lowery will recirculate the plan to commissioners for their review and provide feedback. Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman, William Lewis, Andrea Lowery, and her team will review the plan and update some of the goals as needed. The goal is to review the Strategic Plan at the next

commission meeting and approval by the commission either at the March 2024 or June 2024 PHMC commission meeting.

Andrea Lowery will provide an update on PHMC activities relating to America250PA at each commission meeting. Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman would like the commission to review and evaluate the Historic Sites and Museums under PHMC. The review will include what the criteria is for PHMC to manage a site, the scope of that role, and what will best serve the people of Pennsylvania.

Executive Director Report – Andrea Lowery and senior staff met with the Office of the Budget to present two Program Revision Requests (PRR) for additional complement. The first PRR is to add 13 positions for the Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums, and the second PRR is for seven positions at the State Historic Preservation Office to address increased environmental reviews.

The Archives Ribbon Cutting ceremony is scheduled for December 8, 2023. Andrea is working with the Governor’s Office and expects about 50 people to attend the ceremony in addition to the archives staff.

On December 5, 2023, PHMC organized a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) tabletop exercise for staff. This exercise was based on a Malware event scenario. The Office of Administration IT staff also participated in the exercise.

Andrea reported that the PA Heritage Foundation anticipates holding a reception at the new archives building around March 14, 2024. The archives’ historical marker will be rededicated at that time.

Andrea reported that she attended the following events: State Historical Administrators Meeting in Tacoma, Washington where administrators discussed America250 initiatives, historical markers, facility rentals, and staff retention. Andrea served as a panelist at the PA Arts and Humanities - A Statewide Convening at Lehigh University organized by United States Senator Bob Casey’s office. Andrea is participating in a task force with the National Conference of State Historic Preservation

Officers (NCSHPO). The purpose of the task force is to review the Secretary of Interior Standards application. PHMC participated in the launch of the Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) announcement to award the Appalachian Regional Commission Area Planning Grant to develop the promotion of the Commonwealth's Indigenous Heritage.

V. ACTION ITEMS

Retirement Resolutions – Melissa Mann reported on the retirement resolution for Charles Fox. PHMC recognizes Charles for his 26 ½ years of commonwealth service. He started his career in 1992 as a Seasonal Program Coordinator at Curtin Village. During his tenure with PHMC, Charles served as Historic Site Administrator at Curtin Village, Somerset Historical Center, and the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania and finished his career as the Western Division Chief. During his tenure, he also held multiple acting tours of duty including Director of the Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums and Director of the State Museum of Pennsylvania.

Charles spent more than two decades developing, professionalizing, and advocating for professional standards related to historic weapons demonstrations for historical interpreters, resulting in the publishing of PHMC's Historic Weapons Safety Manual. Melissa extends heartfelt thanks to Charles and best wishes for a long, happy, and fruitful retirement.

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman called for a motion to approve a retirement resolution for Charles Fox.

MOTION: (Pifer/Masich) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Charles Fox as presented was approved. 14 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

Cultural and Historical Support Grants – Rusty Baker, Executive Director of PA Museums provided an overview of the Cultural and Historical Support Grants program. The purpose of the program is to provide general operating support to Pennsylvania museums and official county historical societies that are not directly supported by other state agency operating support programs.

PHMC received 164 applications. Finding six ineligible applications, grant awards will go to 158 organizations. Fifty-eight (58) counties are represented in the program. Grants are awarded on a formula based on a percentage of the organization's annual operating budget with a maximum grant of \$44,945 and a minimum grant of \$4,000 based on the following criteria. Allocated funding for the program remained level with \$1,900,0000 in grant awards.

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman asked if there were any commissioners with conflicts. The following PHMC Commissioners reported recusals:

Andrew Masich – Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania in Alleghany and Washington counties.

William Lewis – Wyoming Historical and Geological Society

Hayley Haldeman – Holocaust Center in Pittsburgh and Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

Caleb Pifer – Erie County Historical Society

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman called for a motion to approve the Cultural and Historical Support Grants as presented except for the following organizations: Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Alleghany County; Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Washington County; Wyoming Historical and Geological Society; Holocaust Center in Pittsburgh; Children's Museum of Pittsburgh; and Erie County Historical Society.

MOTION: (Kearney/Lewis) Motion to approve the Cultural and Historical Support Grants as presented except: Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Alleghany County; Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Washington County; Wyoming Historical and Geological Society; Holocaust Center in Pittsburgh; Childrens Museum of Pittsburgh; and Erie County Historical Society was approved. 14 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman called for a motion to approve the Erie County Historical Society Cultural and Historical Support Grant. MOTION: (Lewis/Masich) Motion to approve the Erie County Historical Society Cultural and Historical Support Grant was approved. 13 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (Pifer).

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman called for a motion to approve the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society Cultural and Historical Support Grant. MOTION: (Kearney/Bracey) Motion to approve the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society Cultural and Historical Support Grant was approved. 13 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (Lewis).

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman called for a motion to approve the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania in Alleghany and Washington Counties Cultural and Historical Support Grant. MOTION: (Kearney/ Bracey) Motion to approve the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania in Alleghany and Washington Counties Cultural and Historical Support Grant was approved. 13 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (Masich).

William Lewis called for a motion to approve the Childrens Museum in Pittsburgh and Holocaust Center in Pittsburgh Cultural and Historical Support Grant. MOTION: (Kearney/Malley) Motion to approve the Children’s Museum in Pittsburgh and the Holocaust Center in Pittsburgh Cultural and Historical Support Grant was approved. 13 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (Haldeman).

VI. REPORTS

State Historic Preservation Office – Andrea MacDonald reported that her office started the process to update Pennsylvania’s Statewide Historic Preservation Plan and is currently seeking input from Pennsylvanians to ensure the final plans reflect current preservation needs. Additional information was provided in meeting packets along with a link to the survey. Andrea MacDonald encouraged PHMC Commissioners to share the survey with their community. Ken Weinstein agreed to serve as the Historic Preservation Plan liaison. Periodic updates will be provided to the commission as the planning process evolves. Approval by the commission will take place in 2024.

Andrea MacDonald announced her office is currently seeking recommendations for new Preservation Board members. The Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Board serves as an advisory

committee to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for preservation policy in the Commonwealth. The board's fifteen members are nominated by the Commission with the approval of the Governor's Office and include individuals with expertise in history and pre-history, architecture, historic preservation, landscape history, architectural history, and related disciplines. Recommendations can be sent to Elizabeth Rairigh, PA SHPO's National Register Coordinator, at erairigh@pa.gov.

The SHPO is also seeking letters of interest and resumes for potential Historical Marker Review Panel candidates. The Historical Marker Review Panel serves as an advisory body to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for approving new historical markers in the commonwealth. Recommendations can be sent to Alli Davis, Historical Marker Program Coordinator, at alldavis@pa.gov.

Andrea MacDonald reported that Keystone Historic Preservation Planning Grant applications must be completed by March 1, 2024, on the Department of Community and Economic Development's Electronic Single Application for Assistance. Upcoming webinars will be available on PHMC YouTube Channel – Keystone Historic Preservation Planning Grant (January 18, 2024) and Keystone Historic Preservation Construction (January 19, 2024).

Historic Sites and Museums – Melissa Mann reported that admission throughout the fall increased at historic sites and museums. School tour numbers for fall 2023 increased 33% over last fall's total. She encouraged commissioners to attend events at historic sites and museums. Events can be found on the Events Calendar located on PHMC's website (<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Pages/Events-Calendar-.aspx>).

In September 2023, Old Economy Village celebrated the reopening of its Visitor Center with the opening of a new temporary exhibit *Strange, Odd and Unusual: Objects from Old Economy's Collection*. The Visitor Center had been closed to the public since December 2022 due to major water damage.

The Pennsylvania Military Museum is preparing for its upcoming capital project which will address building envelope issues. Staff have successfully relocated the site's 10,000-piece collection from Boalsburg, PA to the agency's collections storage warehouse in Mechanicsburg, PA.

In September, Landis Valley Village and Farm Museum celebrated the completion of a 3+ year preservation project with the grand re-opening of the Brick House. The oldest building at Landis Valley, the Brick House provides visitors with a glimpse of homestead life.

Over the winter, BHSM is looking to fill vacancies to assist in keeping fully administered sites open 5 days a week.

State Archives – David Carmicheal reported that the new archives building will open to the public at 9 am on Wednesday, December 13, 2023. The new State Records Center manager will manage the physical State Records Center building and the Digital Records Center.

State Museum of PA – Angelica Docog reported that as the school year is underway, the Education and Outreach staff are working with staff and other agencies and organizations on developing and implementing a variety of programs for teachers; schools; life-long learners; and the public. Staff are exploring ways to support different learning styles such as autism and visually challenged.

Museum educators led a teacher training for 50 teachers, aids, and administrators from Harrisburg's soon-to-open Catherine Hershey School. The museum is working with administrators to build a partnership where Catherine Hershey School students would visit the museum and museum educators would in turn visit the local centers.

Angelica reported that *Art of the State 2023* closes on January 5, 2024, and invited commissioners if they haven't already to view the exhibit. This exhibit provides an opportunity for both established and emerging Pennsylvania artists to exhibit their art and receive statewide recognition.

Approximately 40 paintings from the State Museum's fine art collection are on display at the Governor's Residence: *Power of Place – Painting Pennsylvania* and *Franklin and Pennsylvania – 300 Years*. Museum staff are working to upgrade the interpretation of Indian Village in coordination with federally recognized tribes, and curatorial staff worked with scenic painter Sean Murtha to modify background scenes to better reflect current scholarship and recommendations made by representatives of federally recognized tribes.

State Museum staff attended professional development programs this past Spring/Fall 2023 including the Pennsylvania Historical Association Annual Meeting and the Urban History Conference in Pittsburgh. Museum staff are preparing for the State Museum AAM Reaccreditation.

Angelica announced that she was invited to speak to students at the National Museum of the American Latino in Washington, D.C.

Andrea Lowery reported on upgrades to the State Museum. A kickoff meeting with Vitetta Architects, Annum Architects, and PHMC staff was held recently to discuss the design process. Museum upgrades will include a new elevator, restrooms, a new conference facility on the 5th floor, and a large artifact storage area on the ground floor. Andrea is in the process of writing a scope of work for the ground-floor exhibit. Staff are developing a new interpretive plan as part of the reaccreditation process. During the renovations, staff will work to keep the museum open to the public. The renovation project is expected to finish in 2027.

Legislative Report – Howard Pollman reported that SB829 was signed by Governor Shapiro. This bill authorizes DGS, with approval of PHMC and the Governor to grant and convey certain easements through and across lands in the Township of Manheim, Lancaster County, for purposes of a road realignment project (Landis Valley Village and Farm Museum).

HB1518 was recently considered at a hearing of the committee held on October 31, 2023. This bill authorizes PHMC, with the approval of the Governor, to grant and convey certain land

improvements situate in the 47th Ward of the City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, to New Freedom Theatre.

Semiquincentennial/America 250PA – Andrea Lowery reported that at the State Historical Administrators meeting, there were conversations regarding America250. She believes that America250 does not sound like it will be driving content but rather serve as a marketing arm and is looking to individual states to develop content around the anniversary.

PHMC is involved with America250PA. America250PA is the official statewide commission dedicated to developing and organizing a statewide celebration for Pennsylvania around the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. Andrea Lowery and the staff have discussed how this commemoration would be marked at PHMC. Staff have discussed internal agency-wide initiatives and the need to improve civics understanding. PHMC and the Department of Education have discussed creating a collaborative website that identifies resources related to America250. Other internal initiatives include a historic marker trail and programs at historic sites and museums: the State Archives will host an online program relating to Philadelphia’s non-violent resistance to the 1773 Tea Tax.

PHMC is working with the Department of Community and Economic Development through an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Grant. The grant provides critical funding for the Tourism Office to convene with American Indian Studies scholars and tribal representatives chosen by the federally recognized Indigenous Tribes originally from Pennsylvania.

PA Heritage Foundation – Sam Sweet, Executive Director, brings over 20 years of experience in the non-profit sector. He has extensive experience in fundraising and building organizational capacity.

PHF's Annual Year-End Appeal was mailed before Thanksgiving. The PA Heritage Foundation and the State Museum of PA launched a 20% off membership sale on November 27, 2023, and will run through December 31, 2023.

PHF is working with David Carmicheal to plan an archives event in late February or March to kick off a fundraising campaign to fund programming for the Digital Gateway at the new Archives Building. PHF is working with Chris Stokum, Project Manager at Eckley Miners' Village to secure additional grant money to match a NEH grant.

Sam reported that PHF will hold its Annual Sip & Savor event on April 14, 2024. Location to be determined shortly.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business to discuss at this time.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

John McGee, Anthracite Region Vintage Base Ball Organization would like to organize a vintage baseball program at Eckley Miner's Village. Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman requested that commission staff set up a time to meet with John McGee to discuss the issue.

Susan Banks, Office of Commonwealth Libraries reported that the State Library is also involved with the America250 planning. A soft reopening of the State Library at the Forum Building will take place on January 9, 2024. The grand reopening is scheduled for April 26, 2024.

The Office of Commonwealth Libraries and PA Humanities Council is part of a national leadership planning grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to help communities observe with their library partners the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Pennsylvania libraries will have training facilitators convene community conversations around the Declaration of Independence and the America250 celebration.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chairwoman Hayley Haldeman adjourned the meeting at 1:29 pm.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

20231207_1 MOTION: (Lewis/Pifer) Motion to accept the minutes from the July 31, 2023, PHMC meeting as presented was approved. 14 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

20231207_2 MOTION: (Lewis/Kearney) Motion to accept the minutes from the September 13, 2023, PHMC meeting as presented was approved. 14 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

20231207_3 MOTION: (Pifer/Masich) Motion to approve the retirement resolution for Charles Fox as presented was approved. 14 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

20231207_4 MOTION: (Kearney/Lewis) Motion to approve the Cultural and Historical Support Grants as presented except: Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Alleghany County; Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, Washington County; Wyoming Historical and Geological Society; Holocaust Center in Pittsburgh; Children's Museum of Pittsburgh; and Erie County Historical Society was approved. 14 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

20231207_5 MOTION: (Lewis/Masich) Motion to approve the Erie County Historical Society Cultural and Historical Support Grant was approved. 13 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (Pifer).

20231207_6 MOTION: (Kearney/Bracey) Motion to approve the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society Cultural and Historical Support Grant was approved. 13 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (Lewis).

20231207_7 MOTION: (Kearney/Bracey) Motion to approve the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania in Alleghany and Washington Counties Cultural and Historical Support Grant was approved. 13 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (Masich).

20231207_8 MOTION: (Kearney/Malley) Motion to approve the Children's Museum in Pittsburgh and the Holocaust Center in Pittsburgh Cultural and Historical Support Grant was approved. 13 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (Haldeman).