

NEW JERSEY HISTORIC TRUST

NJHT Board of Trustees Meeting Wednesday, March 16, 2016 Department of Community Affairs Building Trenton, Mercer County

Call to Order

Ms. Omogbai called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Open Public Meetings Act

Ms. Guzzo notified the Board that notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act.

Roll Call

Ms. Guzzo called the roll and confirmed the meeting had a quorum.

Trustees present: Carolann Clynes, Janet Foster, Deborah Kelly, Peter Lindsay, Kenneth Miller, Katherine Ng, Meme Omogbai, Chris Perks, Patricia Anne Salvatore, Daniel Saunders, and Sean Thompson.

NJHT Staff present: Dorothy Guzzo, Judith Adams, Glenn Ceponis, and Catherine Goulet.

Also present: Cameryn Hinton – Deputy Attorney General (DAG).

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Omogbai asked for minor revisions to pages 7, 8 and 9 of the meeting minutes to provide added clarity to its meaning, primarily focusing on changing “alternative” sources of funding to “additional” sources of funding. Ms. Omogbai asked if other Board members had additional comments. There being no additional comments Ms. Omogbai moved to approve the revised meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Clynes. The motion passed with no opposition.

Ms. Omogbai asked if there were any comments on the meeting minutes for the Special Board Meeting held on February 1, 2016. Hearing no comments Mr. Miller made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Lindsay. The motion passed with Mr. Saunders abstaining from the vote.

Public Comment

Ms. Omogbai welcomed Ms. Hinton, the new Trust DAG, to the Board meeting, noting that Ms. Stern had retired. Ms. Omogbai stated that she looked forward to working with Ms. Hinton in the future.

Communications

Ms. Omogbai referenced the articles and letters in the board packet. She particularly noted a letter from Assemblyman Nicholas Chiaravalloti of Hudson County who took the initiative to thank the Trust for sending him our annual report.

Reports of Officers

Chair:

Ms. Omogbai thanked the staff for dealing with the current grant round situation, specifically having to explain the hold up to applicants as well as having to deal with uncertainty within the office regarding moving forward. Ms. Omogbai optimistically said that it will get better. Ms. Omogbai also thanked Board members for their efforts. Ms. Omogbai encouraged Board members to contribute to the upcoming history and historic preservation conference.

Vice Chair

Ms. Foster reported on the NJ delegation participating in Preservation Advocacy Week in Washington D.C. Participants spent a day meeting with NJ congressional staff. It is important work to promote preservation nationally and to give visibility to preservation. Ms. Foster stated that we need to provide a lot of education to our constituents regarding what federal funding does and does not do for us both directly and indirectly in New Jersey. Ms. Foster stressed that it is part of our mission to educate people on the value of preservation as a public activity, government activity and through the private sector. Ms. Foster also thanked Mr. Saunders' office for providing packets that explained what is being done in individuals' districts and across the state.

Treasurer:

Mr. Miller referenced the Treasurer's report in the board packet. Mr. Miller stated that the Trust is around 7 to 8 percent below budgeted amounts for the fiscal year. There are no significant deviation up or down with the budget. There are two pots of money that could be used for programing 1) license plate fund – approximately \$7,000 available 2) the 2009 GSPT account has approximately \$2.2 million; however, the administration has this account currently on hold. Mr. Miller also reviewed the '08, '09 and '10 accounts for undrawn funds. Mr. Miller suggested that we push these grantees some to draw down the grants. The Grants and Loans Committee will monitor these grants to make sure there are no serious issues with the grantees or projects.

Ms. Guzzo reported that the 1772 Foundation provided the Trust \$11,000 for administering the 2015-2016 grant program, an increase of \$1,000. It was mentioned that we should invite the 1772 Foundation to the conference and reception. It was also brought up that the Board should be listed as a sponsor of the conference

Secretary:

No report.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Guzzo referenced the Executive Director's and the staff reports in the board packet. Ms. Guzzo notified the Board that the Senate passed legislation dedicating funds for Historic Preservation, Green Acres, Farmland, and Blue Acres (S969), but there is no companion bill in the Assembly yet (*subsequently A780 was passed, the bill passed both houses on April 7, 2016*). It is not clear if the Governor will sign the bill, especially since he pocket vetoed the same bill at the end of the last legislative session.

Ms. Guzzo reported that the Governor's budget included a line item for the Historic Trust. The CBT projection is less than last year, approximately \$37 million total. The Trust's 3% portion would be about \$1.1 million. If we were able to combine this with last year's amount the Trust would have available approximately \$2.2 million. The Trust has not received permission to allocate the remaining funds from the 2009 referendum. Ms. Omogbai asked if we have been receiving any reaction from our grantees/applicants. Ms. Guzzo responded that staff field questions from our grantees all the time checking on the status of funding. We explain the situation, but there is nothing we can do until July because we don't know if the Legislature will remove us from the budget again this year.

Ms. Omogbai also asked if our constituents or an organization such as Keep It Green were making any game plan to address this situation. Ms. Guzzo and Ms. Kelly each responded that they were not aware of any plans. Ms. Omogbai inquired because we have a statutory obligation to react to anything that can affect the Trust. Ms. Foster added that we need to keep on the radar screen and even if it does not result in anything immediately it needs to be part of a long term approach. Mr. Lindsay reminded the Board that we are one piece of the preservation community; there is also Green Acres, Farmland, and Blue Acres. We need to make sure we are not drowned out by them and make clear that our needs are just as important. We need to show up this year, next year and so on, so that we are not forgotten in the minds of the legislators. Our constituents tend not to attend these hearing as much as some of these other groups. Discussion of the situation with CBT funding continued and included an understanding that there are many misconceptions and a general lack of facts regarding the situation and NJHT funding. Ms. Omogbai suggested that Board members reach out to applicants and grantees in their region and encourage them to invite their legislators to their sites and events to show them firsthand the benefits of preservation as well as the preservation needs that still exist at their sites. It is more effective if the message is coming from their constituents.

There was further discussion that unfortunately historic preservation does not have the same types of friends groups as, for example, the arts community and others where there is paid staff to advocate for the cause. PNJ and the Advocates for NJ History are all volunteer groups and it is difficult for them to organize groups of people and be as effective. Ms. Omogbai reiterated that it is important to get our grantees to engage with their legislators, to keep plugging away at it and hopefully move the needle a little bit more in historic preservation's favor.

Ms. Guzzo then provided an update on the Trust replacing its outdated display exhibit and provided the Board with drafts of the three rollup displays we are having produced. In addition to staff involvement the Trust received graphic design assistance from the DCA graphic designer.

Report of the Department of Community Affairs

No report.

Report of the Department of Environmental Protection

Mr. Saunders reported that the HPO continues to be challenged. Currently they are down three positions and that they have been given permission to fill two of those positions.

Mr. Saunders reported that he attended the Paterson Business Project in Paterson. The two day meeting focused on a developer's plans for housing near the Great Falls. Of interest, Congressman Pascrell attended the first day and stayed for two and a half hours and his staff attended both days demonstrating his commitment and that he is deeply involved.

Mr. Saunders spoke about how the HPO has three basic areas in the office: National Register, project and survey reviews, and CLGs. He stated that the Sandy related projects are moving along and that the National Register group has gotten through most of its backlog. From the CLG side, HPO is about to award about \$110,000 in CLG grants. On the survey side, HPO staff has led survey efforts in Cumberland County. Following Hurricane Sandy most recovery efforts focused on the shore. Cumberland County and the Bay Shore were left behind. HPO has been able to use some of the federal disaster money to survey these areas. The resources being discovered are different than what you typically see in other parts of the state so it's been very interesting.

Report of the Department of Treasury

No report.

Report of the Executive Committee

No Report

Report of the Grants & Loans Standing Committee

Ms. Kelly referenced the Grants & Loans Committee Report in the Board packet.

The Grants & Loans Committee met on February 29, 2016. Ms. Kelly reviewed the Committee's recommendation for the following request for extension:

Grantee: Raritan Borough

Project: General Frelinghuysen House (Raritan Library)

Grant Award No.: 2008.2134

Grant Award: \$ 264,075

Drawdown: 74%

Municipality: Raritan

County: Somerset

The Committee recommends an extension to the grant agreement until July 31, 2016 in order to complete construction and submit final report documents.

With no conflicts indicated from Board members and no questions Ms. Kelly made a motion to extend the grant agreement as recommended by the Grants & Loans Committee, seconded by Ms. Foster. The motion passed with no objections.

Open Grants

Mr. Ceponis reported that the East Point Lighthouse project completed its prequalification process and was currently out to bid. Bids are due on March 29th.

Ms. Kelly referenced 2009 open grants and 2010 open grants. Mr. Ceponis summarized the Essex County Jail and the Newark Public Schools projects for the Board.

Sandy Recovery Grants

Ms. Guzzo explained that some additional appropriations were awarded to a few existing projects to address additional work. Both DEP and the NPS reviewed and approved the additional project funding. The funding comes from unexpended funds from the original NPS allocation to the State.

FY 16 CBT Grant Round

Ms. Kelly reported that there has not been any movement in the FY 16 grant round.

1772 Foundation 2015 Grant Round

Ms. Kelly reported that the Historic Trust evaluated fifty applications requesting \$616,499 for the 2015 1772 grant round. The Grants and Loans Committee is recommending to the Board funding for twenty-five projects totaling \$290,000. The following Board members left the room during discussion and voting for the following projects: Mr. Miller – MacCulloch Hall; Ms. Foster – Acorn Hall, Twin Oakes, Parker Homestead, and MacCulloch Hall; and Ms. Salvatore – Historic Cold Spring Village. Historic Trust staff presented each of the twenty-five projects to the Board.

Following the presentation Ms. Kelly made a motion to approve all the recommended projects with the exception of MacColloch Hall and Historic Cold Spring Village, seconded by Mr. Lindsay (Ms. Foster recused herself), the motion passed. Ms. Kelly then made a motion to approve the Committee's recommendation on MacCulloch Hall, seconded by Ms. Clynes (Ms. Foster and Mr. Miller recused themselves), the motion passed. Ms. Kelly made a final motion to approve the funding of Historic Cold Spring Village, seconded by Mr. Perks (Ms. Salvatore recused herself), the motion passed.

Discover New Jersey History License Plate Fund

Ms. Kelly reported that \$7,880.50 is available out of this fund for award before June 30, 2016.

Ms. Kelly reported that the Trust received three applications with requests totaling \$15,000. The

Grants and Loans Committee recommends awarding \$5,000 to South Mountain Theater Works & Television Products for its project *Drive By History*. Ms. Kelly provided a summary of their grant proposal. Ms. Kelly made a motion to approve the funding for this project, seconded by Mr. Thompson, the motion passed. Ms. Omogbai asked if the Board could view a preview of the final product. Ms. Kelly said she would look into it. The Committee does not recommend either of the other two applications at this time. Ms. Kelly informed the Board that only a few thousand dollars remained in the account until the next Fiscal Year.

Report of the Easements and Acquisitions Standing Committee

Mr. Miller referenced the meeting minutes from the February 1st Special Meeting.

Report of the Combined Strategic Planning and Legislation and Policy Standing Committees. Mr. Miller referenced the draft of the white paper included in the Board packet prepared by Ms. Guzzo with input from Allen Kratz and edited by Mr. Miller outlining the history of the Trust's financing. Mr. Miller said that this document will be converted into a shorter document for legislators and Trust advocates. Mr. Miller stressed that we need to put it into a format that condenses the Trust's needs into a one page document for dissemination.

Ms. Omogbai stated that the current document gets us closer to where we need to be. She continued that we have at least one meeting with a legislator scheduled and hopefully more to follow.

Ms. Kelly reported that she and Ms. Guzzo met with Sen. Barnes' office regarding a couple pieces of heritage tourism legislation. Sen. Barnes is a member of both the committee on historic preservation and the Budget Committee. The first piece of legislation would require the Office of Travel & Tourism to consider historic sites when they conduct their annual economic survey of tourism. The second would require car dealers who sell new cars to tell the purchaser about the specialty plates available and how to get one if they are interested. Ms. Kelly stated that they have seen and commented on each piece of draft legislation. She expects each bill to be introduced soon. While these are both small pieces of legislation it is still a good thing for heritage tourism.

Report of the Education and Outreach Committee

Ms. Salvatore referenced the Committee's report included in the Board packet. Ms. Salvatore reported that the Trust contracted with the firm Spitball to design the Heritage Tourism website. She also informed the Board that on April 5th there will be a Heritage Tourism Workshop cosponsored by Crossroads of the American Revolution and the National Park Service as well as a Best Practices Workshop on utilizing social media.

Ms. Salvatore also stressed the importance of messaging – getting the word out and looking at ways to promote and get people excited about historic preservation. One idea was to bring back and update the article “New Jersey: A State of Ruins” to discuss the current and changing issues affecting historic preservation.

Ms. Salvatore reported that she spoke with Colleen Karr at the Office of Tourism to see if the Trust could apply for grants from that office. Mr. Minick, the Executive Director of the Tourism office indicated that the Trust could not apply and also said that the Trust could not provide links to the Office of Tourism website. Ms. Salvatore indicated that she will continue the discussion and that the topic was not closed. Ms. Kelly suggested having a meeting with Mr. Minick and Ms. Salvatore agreed that the Trust should meet with him.

Ms. Kelly suggested reaching out directly to counties since they all have historic sites. Ms. Salvatore commented that county tourism numbers can be skewed depending on how the questions are asked. It was also mentioned that we need to remember that the Office of Travel and Tourism is small. The focus seems to be driven by the Travel Industry Association, and that focus is on business not historic or cultural sites. Ms. Omogbai suggested that we ask them what they need from us and how can we help rather than what can they do for us. Ms. Salvatore spoke about the annual conference on Travel and Tourism held in Atlantic City. It used to be a chance to connect with people, but recent conferences no longer included sessions that appeal to history organizations and nonprofits – heritage tourism has not been included. It was suggested that Colleen Karr be contacted and see if sessions on heritage tourism could be included in the next conference. It was also mentioned that if Sen. Barnes introduces his bill on heritage tourism it would give us a reason to meet with Travel and Tourism as well as the Travel Industry Association. Ms. Kelly mentioned the importance of getting local legislators to cosponsor these bills once they are introduced.

Mr. Lindsay summarized his meeting with representatives from the Warren County Cultural and Heritage Office and the Office of Land Preservation. Mr. Lindsay reported that the county representatives said they could not do anything for the Trust. Mr. Lindsay tried to explain that he was looking for ways for the Trust to partner and help the county. Overall the meeting was disappointing. Mr. Lindsay hopes to be able to meet with some of the citizen members of the open space committee to see if there are needs of the county that the Trust can address.

Ms. Guzzo stated that the Trust is working on its budget over the summer so we need to think about what we want to do over the next year so that the Trust can budget appropriately.

New business

Ms. Omogbai suggested that the Board pick a date for a Board retreat, suggesting a date around October so that the budget outcome would be known.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Adjournment

There being no additional business, Ms. Omogbai asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Kelly moved to close the meeting, seconded by Mr. Miller. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 12:05.