

**WARREN COUNTY BICENTENNIAL
CULTURAL & HERITAGE ADVISORY BOARD**

500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue
Oxford, NJ 07863

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
February 15, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Tierney opened the meeting at 5:06 p.m. and read the Open Public Meeting Notice and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Laurie Rapisardi, Charles Fineran (signed off at 6:22), Jane Primerano, Nancy Miller (in at 5:05)

Richard Gardner

Staff Present: Corey Tierney, Gina Rosseland, Dennis Austin, Jennifer Correa-Kruegel

Minutes: The January 18, 2022 minutes were reviewed. Ms. Miller motioned to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Gardner seconded. Minutes approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT- none

CORRESPONDENCE- none

OLD BUSINESS

Bicentennial Commemoration

Book –

Ms. Primerano and Ms. Iurato went through the list of items that they would like each municipality to talk about. She wanted to run the categories by the board to make comments on them. She will compile comments and resend out the list prior to the next meeting.

The categories include:

- **Education:** Ms. Primerano emphasized that they are not going all the way back more than 100 years however the one-room school houses were probably consolidated to public schools. We could ask the municipalities about consolidation and regionalization and if any historic school buildings were still there.
 - **Ms. Miller:** One in Asbury (is a home now, original one-room SH)
 - **Ms. Primerano:** One in Blairstown and even if they were converted, they may have an interesting story; earliest consolidation is Roxbury Twp. (1903); Jefferson (1940)
- **Civil Rights:** Might be more county than township but unsure how to deal with it
 - **Mr. Gardner:** trying to contact Ina Walls but will try to find a different method of contact (trying via churches in Mansfield, but it is not working) because she knows a great deal of African American history in Warren County.
 - **Ms. Miller:** offered to try contacting if Rick cannot (maybe speak to a woman)
 - **Ms. Primerano:** that would be great because my only contact in Anderson is Mary Hays who had the choir at Baptist Church.

- **Environmental:** that came in more recent history but unsure how in depth we want to go to talk to people about rain gardens and cleanups which Mr. Fineran knows about and a note on Centenary's Earth Day so if anyone has any other suggestions she would be happy to hear them.
 - **Mr. Fineran:** suggested Merrill Creek created for Delaware River at a certain level so the tidal waters wouldn't interfere with the south Jersey aquifers that helps the state and county.
 - **Ms. Rosseland:** what about garden clubs that have the Butterfly Garden at Memorial School dedicated their garden to a teacher who past away from cancer. She believes Diana Dove is still heavily involved.
 - **Ms. Primerano:** agreed because the garden and other clubs are meant to beautify towns.
- **Disasters:** Ms. Primerano feels we need to talk about the impacts of hurricanes Connie and Diane in the 50's and Super Storm Sandy; also some of the more local disasters like in Mansfield the Rockport Train Crash; a huge fire in Washington Boro (1962) and the Oxford Crash that killed most of Matlock family which she believes all the negatives were destroyed from that crash. Ms. Primerano feels we should approach each town and ask about the things we might not know about.
 - **Ms. Rosseland:** said don't forget about the Oxwall fire in 2007
 - **Mr. Gardner:** mentioned the Williams & Hibler fire which was the same day as Rockport
 - **Ms. Primerano:** Steamtown talks about the Rockport crash
- **Entertainment and Attractions:** Of course, Land of Make Believe and local festivals like the Chocolate Fest in Hackettstown. We should ask each individual town what they do. Belvidere has Victorian Days (but the name has changed); Hope's Christmas Craft weekend;
 - **Mr. Fineran** pointed out that they might want to keep in mind the because they built a new wing and the Centenary Theatre Programming has been going on for years.
- **Religious Institutions:** Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center is a big deal since the Dalai Lama has been there many times; ethnic churches like St. Nicholas' Ukrainian Catholic, and Saint Peter and Paul
 - **Mr. Fineran:** recommended the Blue Army Shrine
 - **Mr. Gardner:** Mother Teresa visited the Blue Army Shrine and people walked from his farm to get there. He remembered in 1980 brought statue in by helicopter
 - **Ms. Primerano:** Remember when it was brought to planning board in Washington Township. We will keep thinking about it. There is one in Blairstown that she could not remember but is hoping the Blairstown people will cover it.
- **Prohibition:** Ms. Primerano was unsure if they kept records of stills and speakeasies.
 - **Ms. Rosseland:** has information about a book in her office about Bootleggers of Montana Mt.
 - **Ms. Miller:** the stills she saw on TV look like limekilns. Were they using the lime kilns as stills? Mr. Gardner did not think so unless it was hollowed out.
 - **Mr. Gardner:** had an Uncle who was a state trooper who would be sent to bust up the stills.
 - **Mr. Fineran:** recalled the place in Blairstown where actors and actresses went to rehab, Alina Lodge. Might be something worth looking into.
- **Social groups & clubs:** Granges were important in heyday, American Legion, VFW, Masonic Lodges, Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis; 4-H, scout groups (notable projects); FFAs from the schools for farmland preservation but that might fall under environment.
- **Law Enforcement:** would like to look into when various towns got police departments and how the state police coverage was, or the change of mission in the Sheriff's department. Ms. Primerano is open to any suggestions.
 - **Mr. Gardner:** one thing to note was that Troopers used to have call boxes to call station; placed at farmers' residence since they had to go from farm to farm. The ag community worked with police was important.

- **Mr. Fineran:** moved troopers around a lot and often got lost so farmers were very helpful.

Ms. Rapisardi inquired if Ms. Primerano had a written list that she can share with us. Ms. Primerano said she will type it up and send it out for the next meeting. Right now she is writing in notebook and is going to type everything up after input from group and send it out to everyone.

- **Emergency Management** (fire department, squads); Washington Township has volunteers. She is unsure when different squads and fire departments were formed. Ms. Primerano feels we should talk to each of the towns about it.
 - **Mr. Fineran:** pointed out that Allamuchy is still a volunteer fire department and first aid.
 - **Mr. Gardner:** feels that while we have maintained the status quo, we don't have as many volunteers as we used to have; if trend continues, it will force tax money to pay for paid squads. Some towns do have paid squads. Hours of training is unmanageable for some young people
 - **Mr. Fineran:** Other problem—young people have to get certified and have to leave to get a better paid job
- **Medical:** would like to know when was the first hospital established; medical centers/groups; whoever does Washington asked that they not to cover controversies between Dr. Burtland and the other doctor and building the Washington Medical Center that spilled into the library as it was a bit of a soap opera; We should also look into how far people had to travel for medical care. We should look into Hackettstown Hospital which isn't that old and find out more about Warren Hospital.
 - **Mr. Gardner:** believes the new Warren Hospital was built in 1960s because he was built off Purcell Street in Phillipsburg so the new one was around 1959-1960.
 - **Ms. Primerano:** remembers her father complaining about the traffic on Hackettstown Mountain because it was only two lanes and they had the bucket guys getting money to donate for Hackettstown Hospital.
 - **Ms. Rapisardi** said that the Hackettstown Hospital was built in the 1970's because she was born in the late 60's in Dover because there was no Hackettstown yet.
- **Cemeteries:** More than 100 years old; work done on them; customs changed—funeral homes changed, neighbors let Shetland pony to maintain the property
- **Libraries:** Development of the County-system
[[Connectivity issue]]
- **Historical groups, State & National Registry**
- **Local Government when towns formed:**
 - Pahaquarry incorporated into Hardwick;
 - **Mr. Fineran** mentioned Tocks Island to National Rec Area
 - **Ms. Primerano** explained that Pahaquarry was down to 6 people in town
 - **Mr. Fineran** Courthouses were interesting—in 1970s in Warren and Sussex County, courthouses in interesting buildings, either on top of buildings or in the middle of nowhere do not too long ago we were small
 - **Ms. Primerano** remembers when Liberty Twp municipal offices were in the town school; Hope's was in DPW; colorful local government things
- **Ms. Primerano suggested that we ask each town “what's your biggest story—when did your town make headlines?**
 - In Frelinghuysen a State Trooper, Lester Pagano, was shot in a hotel.
 - Frelinghuysen and Hope had the Cubans practicing for Bay of Pigs
 - **Mr. Fineran:** Allamuchy opened Panther Valley was one of largest gated communities in US opening early on; confined modernization (farmland, woodland, etc.).
- **Notable Residents** or famous people who live or have lived in Warren County.
- **Military**

Ms. Rapisardi complimented Ms. Primerano on the list of categories for the book. Ms. Primerano will add up the comments and report for the next meeting via email.

Mr. Gardner felt it was a very complete list and will give each town the opportunity to showcase themselves well because there are so many great stories throughout the county that need to be told.

Website

Ms. Rosseland updated all the officers and members of the advisory board who were elected with their expiration dates on the website. Otherwise no other major changes on the website.

Ms. Rapisardi inquired if there was a way to go into the website and tell the activity level.

Ms. Rosseland does not have access to that and has asked Art if they could put trackers on the Warren 200 page and he said that he was going to check and he thought they would have it but they were having issues.

Ms. Rapisardi thought it would be interesting to see the peaks and valleys and the progress as we get closer to the Bicentennial

Ms. Rosseland believes that Mr. Charlton was trying to connect with google analytics but has been out so she will follow up on that.

Historic Marker

Ms. Rosseland sent out the updated application that she worked on and took all the suggestions into consideration. Mr. Tierney pulled up the application Ms. Rosseland had made with the changes. There were a couple things that she had highlighted that she wanted to run by everybody.

Mr. Tierney and Ms. Rosseland discussed getting the applications out this year for the towns and setting a 6 month time period with a 6 month extension. Ms. Rosseland added on to the guidelines to the cemeteries, farms, etc and added categories.

Ms. Rosseland said that we need to set dates as to when they are due but some townships might not be due around the same time but understandably that some of the towns are going to be ready to pay for signs or towns that want to do it or a history group to organize it.

Ms. Rosseland that replacing signs is ok, but they cannot be for signs that are already installed. They have to be put in within the timeframe of the application. Photos or site visits will be conducted before the money is issued. She needs to amend the title added events, person or persons to the list of categories. Mr. Fineran mentioned that Mountain Villa in Allamuchy was a historic site turned into a school and might warrant a historic marker. Ms. Miller said that most schools have corner stones with the date on them. Mr. Tierney feels the application is fine as is and the purpose of the board is to review the applications and make sure what their proposing makes sense. Ms. Rosseland added for the school "any note-worthy individual who attended it."

Ms. Rosseland wants to make sure what she is writing is a reflection of what the board wants for this grant. She inquired with the board if they wanted to set individual due dates per group or 1 due date with everyone. Mr. Tierney feels there should be one deadline for the round so if we can get the first round out by March or April, then it would be due by September or October. It would then be reviewed by the board and if all goes well it can be awarded by the end of the year or January 2023. The application should be sent before the purchase of signage.

Ms. Rosseland asked the board to look over the application and email her with anything they feel she should expand on or take out.

Business (Cultural and Heritage Reports):

Report from Shippen Manor:

Ms. Rosseland sent out the narrative summaries for the 5 applicants we have for Round 1 of the CHPP grant. If you had a chance to look at it then she would like to vote to approve or not approve so it can then go to the county commissioners for resolution for payment so they can get their first payments.

Ms. Rapisardi requested that the summaries be shared on the screen for review.

Ms. Rosseland noted that the review panel is very experienced but for this round of the grant had critical takes on the applications. She has attempted to get reviewers from around the state so there is no conflict of interest.

Mr. Tierney requested that Ms. Rosseland give a brief summary of each application and whether the review panel's recommendation was to fund it or not; this should be sufficient information for the board to make a decision.

County Museums & CHPP (Gina)

- **CHPP narrative reviews for applicants-** Ms. Rosseland said that most of the overall reviewer comments were regarding the lack of diversity and how the applicants would reach an audience outside of social media.

MWA Discussion: Ms. Rosseland reported that the review panel felt that the MWA could have had more of a history component. She will discuss it with them to see if they can tweak it. If they don't need a professional involved in the project, then there was no resume applied which may have lowered their scores.

Mr. Fineran inquired as to if the signage incorporate the river itself, the water trail designation or was the focus on the mill. He would suggest that they emphasize that we have the only water trail in the state because of all the designated areas and signage along the entire length of the river. The river itself is historic and was turned into a trail and also got recognized by Wild and Scenic which celebrates history, cultural and everything else. Different ways to looking at the history of and along the river: 1st watershed trail; wild & scenic; Native Americans; tell stories; signage exists for Hampton (in Washington) of native site and Plenge site; more than Asbury Mill. Mr. Tierney agreed that they probably are thinking about the history and just not communicating it effectively. Ms. Rosseland offered to talk to their contact person to make it more reflective of the NJ historical aspect of the grant.

Ms. Rosseland reported that in total for round 1 was requested is \$12,000 out of the \$25,123 that the state is giving us and she included the money from the review panels as that comes out of that money also. The amount broken down is attached.

Vote for CHPP applicants after narratives discussed:

- Blairstown (1st—Mr. Gardner, 2nd—Mr. Fineran)
- Knowlton (1st – Primerano, 2nd—Mr. Fineran)
- MWA (1st—Ms. Rapisardi, 2nd—Ms. Miller, Abstain—Mr. Fineran)
- Pohatcong (1st—Ms. Rapisardi, 2nd—Mr. Gardner)
- Rutherford (1st—Ms. Miller, 2nd—Mr. Gardner, Abstain—Mr. Fineran & Ms. R)

Ms. Rosseland is working with a graphic artist on signage for the furnace. She did two mock-ups for him but is having trouble getting the ideas down with the software she has. She will update at the next meeting. She also needs volunteers, so please send them her way if you know anyone. She is planning to reopen for tours in May.

County Arts (Dennis)

Mr. Austin apologized for speaking out of turn at the last meeting and causing any distress or discomfort for any members of the board; he is truly sorry and it will not happen again.

Mr. Austin reported that the regrantees from the state, 19 of them are sharing \$114,700. The remaining \$85,300 is going to arts programming and artistic events in the county. Entertainment for senior residences, concerts at Shippen and around the county with other organizations and it looks like we will have an artistic renaissance.

Mr. Tierney commended Dennis because that was a great deal of money he was awarded without much notice and to try to get that programmed throughout the county is a lot of work.

Ms. Primerano mentioned that Warren County Community Singers will be back as of March 1 and they are going to perform a concert.

Mr. Austin would like for the regrantees to ask for more money. This year there was no match requirement by the state. He is concerned about 2023—a lot of money around now, but does not think there will be as much next year

Mr. Tierney inquired if the schools received separate funding. Mr. Austin said that res, for Teen Arts (not holding Teen Arts due to pandemic); did receive extra money from NJ State Council of the Arts; other ways to fund is through regrants since schools can also apply. North Warren Regional School received \$9000 this year. The other school, Washington PTA, was awarded \$6000 but the person who does the work for their applications and reports had a family member pass away in December and it was a shock to her so she did not complete the application right away.

2022 Meeting Schedule:

Ms. Kruegel corrected that the next Bicentennial Cultural and Heritage Board Meeting would be on March 15, NOT March 8 as it is listed on the agenda.

Mr. Tierney reported that we received a directive from the county administrator that we can reopen our offices on a normal schedule, so everyone will be back in the offices and that Covid protocols are being rescinded. We will be able to meet in person again but we will have to do some noticing so we will start internally making those changes he anticipates that in April we should be ready to reconvene in person. We can discuss this more at the next meeting to get feedback regarding meeting in person for the April meeting.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Mr. Gardner motioned, seconded by Ms. Rapisardi to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Correa-Kruegel
Community Service Aide