

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

500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue  
Oxford, NJ 07863

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
November 19, 2019**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Corey Tierney opened the meeting at 3:01 p.m., read the Open Public Meeting Notice, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:** Nancy Miller, Charles Fineran, Jane Primerano, Laurie Rapisardi, Jeanette Iurato

**Staff Present:** Corey Tierney, Christina Roberts, Elizabeth Roy, Art Charlton, Gina Rosseland, Dennis Austin

**Guests Present:** Freeholder Richard D. Gardner

**REORGANIZATION** - Mr. Tierney swore in the new members, having them read and sign the Oath of Office. Mr. Tierney opened the floor to nominations for Chairperson.

**Election of Officers:**

**Chairperson:** Ms. Primerano motioned, seconded by Mr. Fineran to elect Ms. Rapisardi as Chairperson. Mr. Tierney asked if there were any other nominations; there being none the floor was closed to nominations. Roll was called and all members approved. Motion carried.

From this point forward, Chairwoman Rapisardi presided over the meeting.

**Vice Chairperson:** Ms. Miller motioned, seconded by Ms. Primerano to elect Mr. Fineran as Vice Chairperson. Roll was called and all members approved with Mr. Fineran abstaining. Motion carried.

**Secretary:** Mr. Fineran motioned, seconded by Ms. Miller to elect Ms. Primerano as Secretary. All members approved with Ms. Primerano abstaining. Motion carried.

**Bylaws:** The bylaws were reviewed. The Board agreed the annual meeting will be held at the regular January meeting. Special meetings can be scheduled as needed.

Mr. Fineran motioned, seconded by Ms. Miller to change in Article VII, C. the meeting location from Shippen Manor to the Department of Land Preservation meeting room. Motion carried.

Mr. Fineran motioned, seconded by Ms. Miller to approve the proposed bylaws, as revised. Motion carried.

**Meeting Dates:** The proposed meeting dates were reviewed; it was suggested that the meeting time be moved to the evening to accommodate potential guests/attendees that work during the day. Approval of meeting dates/times will be tabled; members and staff will be polled.

**Administrator's Report:** Mr. Tierney welcomed Board members and staff. He explained that the objective of the Board is to oversee operations/programs of the three county museums, the history and arts grants/programs, and to assist with the planning and coordination of the County's Bicentennial celebration.

Mr. Tierney also noted that The Municipal and Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee recently wrapped up their funding cycle. Accepting the recommendations of the MCCTFC, the Board of Chosen Freeholders awarded grants totaling \$500,000 to three historic restoration projects and two open space projects. A press release regarding the awards will be issued soon.

Chairwoman Rapisardi suggested the Board tour the three museums as a group. Mr. Tierney concurred and tours will be scheduled.

**Museum Operations:** Ms. Rosseland reported that museum attendance can average between four people to several dozen. The last two dates the museum is open for the season are December 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, which will feature a Victorian Christmas theme. The volunteers are in the process of decorating for the holidays. One-hour tours will be provided each hour at 1pm, 2pm, and 3pm. Steve Miller of Paddy & the Pale Boys will be playing his dulcimer.

National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) - Jan Hunold, the Regent of the Gen. Maxwell chapter of NSDAR wants to have a sign installed at Shippen Manor (considered a historic "witness house") that depicts the history of the Manor, whether it be the people, families, or something more specific. The sign content still needs to be discussed and determined. NSDAR will pay for the sign and plan the unveiling ceremony and the Department of Public Works will install it. The process takes about 1-1½ years to complete, but will be done prior to the Bicentennial celebration. Ms. Hunold would like to attend the December or January board meeting and Ms. Rosseland invited the Board members to participate in designing and siting the sign.

Civil War Era Pistol - Phillipsburg Police reached out to Ms. Rosseland to see if the County would be interested in accepting a Civil War era pistol. After receiving some photos of the pistol, it was apparently in very poor condition, with no history on where or how it was found. Ms. Rosseland asked the Board if it was something they wanted to accept for display. After a discussion, it was decided that the pistol would be viewed in person by Ms. Rosseland and photographed for interpretation, but not accepted.

Mr. Tierney noted that the Board should identify what stories they want each of the museums tell, what artifacts help tell those stories, and what types of donated items should be accepted for each site. Mr. Tierney and Ms. Rosseland have spent a lot of time sifting through old items that had been previously placed in a storage facility and Mr. Tierney expressed concern about becoming a repository of old items that aren't historically significant. Ms. Rosseland added that the County has a lot of historical agricultural artifacts, but they don't fit the historic narrative of any County sites. Ms. Rosseland is currently working on documenting the collection with descriptions and photographs and placing some items at other museums throughout the county on long-term loans.

County History Partnership Program - The County History Partnership re-grant program grant was awarded \$10,000 for 2019 and \$15,000 per year for 2020 through 2022. Interim reports for the 2019 grants have been received. Ms. Rosseland is requesting some additional visitor information from the grant recipients. The final report for 2019 is due to the state the end of January. Staff is currently establishing a timeline for the next round of funding.

### **County Arts Program:**

- Mr. Austin reported on the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Senior Arts Show and the two winners from Warren County. Gail Speirs's non-professional watercolor piece won second prize; Jude Griffith's pencil drawing that received honorable mention was sold at the show.
- The Skylands Photo Contest is currently underway; 21 entries were received. Photos will be judged by Robert Beaver from Phillipsburg.
- The 2020 Teens Arts Program will be held at Centenary University in March.
- The Black Maria Film Festival will also be held at Centenary in March/April 2020.

- Local Area Re-grant Program (LAP) - Final reports are coming in for 2019, but deadline may be extended. The 2020 LAP grant period will be starting soon.

**Bicentennial Commemoration:**

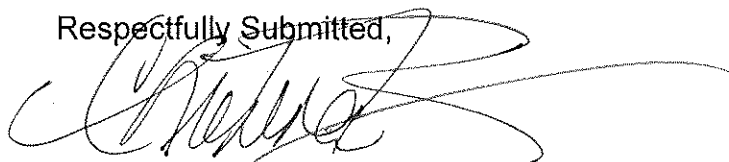
- Mr. Tierney asked the Board members to brain storm ideas for the celebration and explained that this is open for discussion, as there are no set parameters yet. Deadlines for projects should be established. The Board discussed the possibility of moving the celebration around to each municipality over the course of a two year period.
- Mr. Charlton handed out some ideas he had for the celebration and provided some examples of other local anniversary celebrations.
- An updated booklet of the County's history was suggested. Municipalities should be a good source of local history, as many have already done their own research.
- Mr. Fineran suggested partnering with existing entities such as Musconetcong Watershed Association, Warren Heritage Scenic Byway, Warren County Parks Foundation, and Municipal & Charitable Conservancy Trust Fund Committee, etc.
- A master list of historical groups throughout the county should be compiled and shared for outreach. Mr. Charlton said the county directory should have most of the municipal history groups listed under each municipality if they responded to their outreach.
- The County website is going to be revamped and a Facebook page could be made for the event.
- Video clips of local historians, business owners, or anyone that has a story to tell about Warren County as a youth. Ms. Iurato suggested reaching out to the public to see who steps forward.
- QR codes could be added at various locations to assist with self-guided tours. These QR codes would continue to exist at the sites, post-celebration. An annual calendar with historic photos can be created as a fundraiser.
- Reach out to cemetery associations and churches for any historical information they may have.
- The Board can continue to brainstorm ideas and communicate those to staff via email.
- Board members were asked to start compiling a list of existing local celebrations in the county to coordinate with and expand on the events.
- Private, historic cemeteries were discussed. Ms. Rosseland is starting to document and photograph a list of cemeteries in the county.

**Public Comment:** Freeholder Gardner thanked the members for volunteering to serve on the Board and showcase Warren County. He noted that there are still two membership vacancies that he would like to see filled.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for December 17, 2019.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christina Roberts  
Administrative Clerk