

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

500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue  
Oxford, NJ 07863

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
September 21, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Rapisardi opened the meeting at 5:01 p.m. and read the Open Public Meeting Notice and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:** Laurie Rapisardi, Charles Fineran, Jane Primerano, John Metroke, Jeanette Miksa Iurato, Art Charlton, Jane Primerano

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

**Minutes:** The July 21, 2021 minutes were reviewed. Mr. Fineran motioned, seconded by Ms. Primerano (with typo), to approve the minutes as read as Ms. Iurato abstained due to her absence at the July meeting. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT-** none

**CORRESPONDENCE-** none

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Bicentennial Commemoration**

Book – Ms. Primerano and Ms. Iurato need to get together still and will set-up a time after the meeting.

Website – Ms. Rosseland shared that the new BCHAB website launched, but it is still a work in progress; Mr. Tierney shared the webpage on the screen and Mr. Charlton walked through the site showing the Advisory Board members where to go on the page and what to see. The website includes: a calendar on the main page; links to the Shippen Facebook page and County YouTube channel, which has some Shippen items on it, in addition to more video content on county channel; and more. There are two website addresses for access: warrencountynjheritage.gov and warren200.com. Mr. Charlton complimented Gina's hard work on the website. Ms. Rapisardi inquired about having their own Facebook page but Ms. Rosseland recommended continuing to use Shippen and Mr. Charlton recommended using the main County Facebook page as well for bicentennial posts.

Mr. Fineran inquired if you can set up on various townships Facebook pages. Mr. Charlton explained that we cannot post, but we can ask them to share. Ms. Rapisardi suggested that maybe it's the board members' job to get it out to their respective towns to let them know about events and invite them to share items from the county's Facebook pages. Board members will be talking to each of the towns to see how they want to participate in the County Bicentennial.

Ms. Rosseland stated that can share to the Warren County Community, Oxford Community, Washington Community Facebook pages with the Shippen account. Mr. Charlton suggested that the county and board members tag municipalities and such (and explained how to tag groups to make sure they see it and know about it).

Historic Markers – Ms. Rosseland has been working on the website and other matters, but will get back to working the historic markers grant program soon.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Notes from Ms. Rosseland (Attached):**

Ms. Rosseland reviewed items in her report with the Board. Ms. Rosseland asked the Board whether it recommended accepting the donation of the St. Johannes Communion table identified in the report. Mr. Fineran inquired whether the county has a storage unit for items like this. Mr. Tierney explained that the County does have a storage unit, but that it would like to rehome the items and get rid of that storage unit due to the expense. If the County is going to accept items for Shippen, he suggested the items should help tell the story of Shippen, the family, or their connection to the town, and that it should add something to the Shippen Manor experience. Ms. Rosseland explained that Mr. Donald Viewig, grandson of Mrs. Elsie Dux Petsche, called her in August. He has a communion table (32" wide, 21-1/2" deep, 29-1/2" tall) from the former St. Johannes German Reformed Church that used to be located on Washington Avenue in Oxford. It was closed in 1960 and later razed. His grandmother acquired the communion table (which has stayed in the family since) before the church closed its doors. His children do not want it and he would like to return it to Oxford. He will also cover the cost of shipping it. Ms. Rosseland stated we do have the St. Johannes corner stone in the Shippen Manor basement (it was formerly in storage) and a photograph of the church is also included. Ms. Rosseland opened the offered donation up for discussion:

Ms. Primerano suggested St. Rose of Lima, since that is near the original location and the item would still be kept in town. Ms. Iurato asked if it is possible for Shippen to accept gift and put on loan. Ms. Rosseland expressed concern doing this because of a history of items getting lost. Mr. Metroke pointed out that The Second Presbyterian Church closed in town. Mr. Fineran suggested perhaps the Oxford Colonial Methodist Church. Mr. Metroke suggested the Municipal building, which was well received by other members. Ms. Primerano inquired if the Board would authorize Ms. Rosseland to contact the Municipal Hall about the table. Mr. Metroke commented that it would be nice to keep it in town. Ms. Rapisardi inquired if the owner will wait and Ms. Rosseland responded that yes they are willing to wait. Ms. Rapisardi suggested Ms. Rosseland reach out to the clerk within the next month and make a decision next month. Mr. Fineran motioned to authorize Ms. Rosseland to approach the township and the board voted unanimously in favor.

Ms. Rosseland discussed the two McKinney Portraits: These two portraits from 1830 have been removed from the walls of the Reception Room. Gary McGowan (a local conservator who works with Ms. Rosseland occasionally) brought them to his office so he can perform maintenance on the paintings. William McKinney (separation from stretcher, potential issues w/ canvas, repair and secure frame, cleaning of canvas). Mary Winters McKinney & son (tear in lower right quadrant, potential issues w/ canvas, repair frame, clean canvas, possible separation from stretcher). Mr. McGowan will have these for about 45 days and will provide a maintenance report once complete.

Ms. Rosseland spoke with Ray LeMasters from Hackettstown Historical. They have assessed their collection and are donating to local historic sites and museums some of the pieces that they do not have room for (their building is located on 106 Church St, Hackettstown, NJ 07840). They are donating to Shippen a hand-crocheted lace tablecloth made by Ethel David Hale (c. 1930) who was a long-time teacher in Hackettstown. This item has a provenance and documentation, and although not as old as some of the artifacts at Shippen, it will fit the table in the Dining Room. Currently, there is none and Ms. Rosseland felt it would be good to have something to cover the table. It was very dirty but Ms. Rosseland cleaned it several times and is waiting for it to dry.

Ms. Rosseland expressed the need for additional help with documenting artifacts now that her intern is back in college. Any help would be appreciated.

Ms. Primerano inquired as to when they can open up for tours again. Ms. Rosseland explained that in addition to Covid, the HVAC system did not make for a comfortable touring experience inside so it

won't be opened until that issue is fixed. They are doing porch tours in the meantime. Ms. Rosseland was disappointed with the low turnout to the Revolutionary War Day on September 12<sup>th</sup> so she will be pursuing advertising on the radio to get the word out even more regarding local events.

Ms. Rapisardi complimented Ms. Rosseland on how much has been accomplished in spite of the manor being closed.

**Notes from Mr. Austin (Attached):**

Mr. Austin explained that Covid was still impacting social engagements and he is concerned about two of the county's regrantees who are a significantly sized choral groups (Warren Co. Community Singers and Water Gap Singers). Mr. Austin explained that one of the easiest ways to catch Covid is by singing indoors as a choral group. The Warren Co. Community Singers have done outdoor performances but Water Gap Singers have pretty much closed down their public performances; it was suggested to use funding to buy music or other items that will not last longer than 3 years. Mr. Austin was at a loss as far as what they can get besides music and is anticipating both returning grant funds. The problem with that is that the NJ Council of the Arts does not accept returned funds and this could mean that it will diminish our rewards in future.

Ms. Primerano inquired if Mr. Austin if he had talked to Hunter or Meg Shlutteror who have done an abbreviated version of a cabaret and suggested that was one way they could use the money. Mr. Austin requested any info Ms. Primerano can send him, and he would share that with Water Gap. Mr. Austin explained the director made decision to shut down due to mutation of Covid. Mr. Austin explained that the county has funded spin-offs (musical) with Hackettstown Community Band (in same situation). The Hackettstown BID knows about the oompah group from the Hackettstown band performing in Hackettstown and Washington. Mr. Austin was happy to have that going on as it is trying to keep the arts alive as it has been a difficult year and a half as everyone knows, for Arts and more.

Mr. Austin explained that for the Assistive Living Residents programs, there were two residencies locked down due to Covid outbreaks. But they were able to do two to four zoom presentations.

Mr. Austin discussed the Teen Arts program and was happy to report that two county art teachers have applied for and are now receiving funds; they will develop activities instead of bringing people together in one location. With the blessing of State Council of Arts, he will reach out to art teachers and will be funding them directly to help enhance their arts programming as part of the school curriculum.

Mr. Austin discussed the Shippen Lawn Concerts and how all arts programming was truncated this year. The lawn concerts usually start on Father's Day, but did not start until August this year due to Covid (Aug 1). Programming was limited to only 6 performances instead of the usual 12. The first (Kinderhook) was rained out, but he is trying to reschedule them and he has a few sites in mind for their concert. Cirotti & Co was rained out. Mr. Austin shared that he found Joe Cirotti in Chester and he was on the street corner to play (hired by municipality or business owners); Mr. Cirotti is anxious to perform as soon as possible. Rupert & Sheetz writes their own music. Paddy & the Pale Boys (lost Steve Miller within the past year and it is apparent). Mr. Austin noted that the Shippen platform was slippery due to rain earlier that day (Mr. Austin slipped but did not fall). He suggested that the platform needs sanding and refinishing due to mildew.

Mr. Austin discussed the FY 2022 Local Arts Programming Award. Warren County was awarded \$200,000 for Arts programming. The National Endowment of the Arts increasing funding for arts programming in the nation. Increased programming is possible.

Mr. Fineran inquired if the money was for us or for the whole program and spread out for everyone?

Mr. Austin explained that it is for performance, supplies (art), mural or two, but cannot be used for capital. He has artists lined up for a mural (or wall paintings—different from murals), but cautioned that they need maintenance (touched up) after a few years, so instead of positive affect for community, they look shabby and are very expensive to restore, so it's a two-edged sword. Mr. Austin reached out through Teen Arts to schools in Warren Co. who have not been participating in Teen Arts (North Warren, Warren Hills and Phillipsburg) for various reasons and he was able to get North Warren back into Teen Arts. The Teen Arts money will allow them to do what they want to enhance their own programming and look for new art programs, demonstrators, speakers. For example, Harmony is bringing in people from Marvel Comics to 6-8<sup>th</sup> graders. This is contemporary, which students like and know something about, so that's exiting. At Warren Tech they would like to paint a mural and Washington BID tried to get a mural last season, but he is supporting them for 2022.

Mr. Tierney, Ms. Rapisardi, and Mr. Austin met with Mary Eileen Fourat from the State Council of the Arts to discuss the FY 2022 funding. Mr. Tierney stated that while it's good to receive more money, he is concerned about being able to administer the additional funds. He wants to get the funds out into the community for arts, but administering it will be a challenge.

Mr. Metroke noted that for next years' concert schedule the platform issues with the electrical needs to be looked into. Mr. Tierney said they will have it looked at again by Buildings and Grounds. Mr. Metroke expressed concern because what's there now, is unsafe; voltage live. He offered to pick up a new lock to secure the box. Ms. Rosseland spoke with Rob the electrician from Buildings and Grounds and he indicated that he was ordering the hasp. Mr. Austin expressed gratitude to Mr. Metroke who has been very helpful this season with saving more than one concert. Mr. Metroke further noted that there should be a rewiring the "stage" for next year's concerts.

### Events

Ms. Rosseland suggested putting off the events discussion until the next meeting in October. Ms. Rapisardi agreed and asked that it be put on the agenda for October.

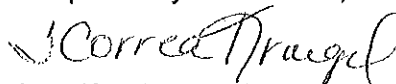
### PUBLIC COMMENT

None

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for October 19, 2021 at 5:00 pm via WebEx.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, Ms. Primerano motioned, seconded by Ms. Iurato to adjourn the meeting at 6:24 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jennifer Correa-Kruegel  
Community Service Aide