

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

500 Mt. Pisgah Avenue  
Oxford, NJ 07863

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
January 18, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Reorganization meeting: Mr. Tierney opened the meeting at 5:02 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, Nancy Miller (in at 5:18)  
Art Charlton, Richard Gardner, Jeannette Iurato

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

**Guests:** Christian DiSpigna, Dr. Joseph Warren Foundation (in at 5:20)

**REORGANIZATION:**

Mr. Tierney opened the meeting up for nominations for Chair. Ms. Iurato nominated Ms. Rapisardi. Mr. Gardner seconded. All members agreed. Motion passed.

Ms. Rapisardi opened the meeting for nominations for Vice Chair. Ms. Iurato nominated Mr. Fineran. Mr. Gardner seconded. Mr. Fineran abstained. All members agreed. Motion passed.

Ms. Rapisardi opened the meeting for nominations for Board Secretary. Ms. Iurato nominated Ms. Primerano. Mr. Fineran seconded. Ms. Primerano abstained. All members agreed. Motion passed.

Mr. Tierney inquired if the board would like to continue having their meetings the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 5 PM. Ms. Iurato motioned for the meetings to continue as is. Mr. Fineran seconded. Motion passed.

**Minutes:** The October 19, 2021 minutes were reviewed. Ms. Primerano motioned to approve with corrections made on page 3, first paragraph. Mr. Gardner seconded. Ms. Iurato abstained. Minutes approved with corrections made on page 3.

**PUBLIC COMMENT- none**

**CORRESPONDENCE- none**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Bicentennial Commemoration**

**Book** – Ms. Iurato said that she and Ms. Primerano spoke and corresponded via email in December but did not have a chance to meet-up due to the holidays. They are finalizing the categories of the book and should be finalized by the next meeting.

Mr. Fineran came across an old scrapbook of each town with specific article dated c. 1938 in the newspaper. It might be a nice way to reach out to each community and will remind them that we would like them to coordinate for the book and upcoming centennial. Ms. Rosseland said that she will take pictures of articles and save as a JPEG file to digitally save them. Ms. Rosseland said the scrapbook has an article about every town's history. Ms. Iurato inquired if they should add the articles to the letters that Ms. Rosseland had crafted for each respective town. Ms. Rosseland suggested revising the letter to mention that they have an article for their town and ask them if they would like a copy, we can send them one in case they already have the article. Ms. Rosseland also said that she could reach out to Tom Drake regarding articles as well.

Mr. Tierney inquired as to who compiled the scrapbook. Mr. Fineran did not know who it was but the scrapbook came from the Allamuchy Historical Society.

Ms. Rosseland asked the subcommittee for the book, ask the towns if they have ever had their own book created for a bicentennial so that could be used in part for the book.

Mr. Gardner said he had a publication to give to Ms. Rosseland about the Washington Township centennial.

Ms. Miller made a point that making book is to not repeat but to carry it forward so she has stayed away from reading old info.

Mr. Gardner suggested that there were important highlights from each municipality that certainly warrants repeating. It depends on how it's written down but doesn't have to be a lengthy thing; ex. Washington was Organ capital of world.

Ms. Miller suggested we tell them what happened to the company; mention it was the capital of the world, but eventually in this period... etc. We can preface with old info to understand the past

Ms. Rosseland inquired as to the perimeters (time period) for the town histories.

Mr. Gardner said it can get lengthy if we go back before 1825.

Ms. Rapisardi inquired as to what are the parameters so it isn't daunting for the townships and municipalities.

Ms. Miller said it was 8 pages in 100 years.

Ms. Iurato said they can talk about modern information and can reference before it if it pertains to relevant information. If someone wants to reference Blair Academy and its progress, then they can go back in history but you have to give background info (respect to past). It has to be relevant to current times.

Mr. Fineran pointed out mentioning railroads, canal—transformed and is now a recreational and educational opportunity (rails to trails, etc.) Mr. Gardner said that the canal went through many municipalities going eastward; same with trains

Ms. Iurato said that when her and Ms. Primerano—Nov/Dec—some of the topics, not exclusive to one town; maybe write on that topic (subcommittee); transportation/communication—we should write it if it covers more than one town.

Mr. Fineran said some of the other things—Yards Creek (power), built in modern times; Merrill Creek; larger projects during our time period that we can refer to also; townships telling us what they want to focus on, but we can have more responsibility for specific things—recreation, etc.

Ms. Rapisardi asked If anyone else has a comment or suggestion for Jane or Jeanette and email them (to include); in February, we'll listen to your presentation on your ideas.

Ms. Iurato said that when Jane & I met, some topics may be too controversial; maybe not be discussed. Ms. Rosseland suggested that they stay neutral and make sure that the both sides are represented.

Ms. Rapisardi offered to assist with the book.

### **Website**

Ms. Rosseland has been updating the photographs on the history portion of the website and is trying to make it relative to Oxford at first and then more of Warren County. She said it is user-friendly and has been receiving positive comments.

### **Historic Marker**

Ms. Rosseland asked the board for feedback on the discuss rough-draft of historic marker grant program that was emailed to them with the agenda.

Ms. Primerano inquired if the highlighted parts were what Ms. Rosseland wanted them to comment on. Ms. Rosseland said there were some parts that she was unsure of how to proceed. Mr. Fineran suggested that it wasn't necessary to have the advisory board be acknowledged on the sign, only the county.

Ms. Rosseland need to decide on date or deadline parameters.

Ms. Rosseland inquired with Mr. Tierney if they need to vote on a resolution for individual municipalities. Mr. Tierney responded that they have already set aside the funds for this grant. A review panel is a requirement for the state grants, not here where its only county funds, and would only be required by the county if there were conflicts of interest; otherwise, the advisory board's recommendation is sufficient and a separate resolution to award the grant to the specific municipality would need to be approved by the County Commissioners.

Mr. Tierney suggested the process be that municipality purchase the sign, install it and then submit for reimbursement from the county and that his would be written into the grant. Ms. Rosseland asked if it was reasonable to request an image of sign and address of location. Ms. Iurato suggested putting the pictures of the finished markers on the website.

Mr. Fineran inquired if the signs need to be brand new or update current sign. Mr. Tierney pointed out that on page 2 the criteria it states, "The markers may replace an outdated or worn sign that needs to be replaced."

Ms. Rosseland inquired if the signs should be the same for each town. Mr. Tierney suggested towns can apply for a \$500 grant with a \$500 municipal match on 1 or more signs (replace or create) but not for less than \$500. Mr. Gardner and Mr. Fineran suggested it be left up to towns to determine type, style and size. Ms. Primerano suggested they send the picture of the finished sign(s) with the invoice.

Ms. Rosseland inquired if there were any other categories that should be listed on page 3. Mr. Fineran and Mr. Gardner should allow the towns to determine the story they would like to tell and allow some leeway.

Ms. Rosseland inquired about the last part of the procedures on page 3 where it states that this is a “rolling application” grant, in which up until the County’s Bicentennial in 2025, monies will be distributed to the county municipalities that have applied for this grant. There is no annual deadline as with other grants.” and asked if a date could be set that everything is completed by a specific date. Mr. Gardner agreed and recommended that it should be completed by the end of 2024. Mr. Fineran also suggested allowing for extensions if needed for certain circumstances the board agreed. Mr. Tierney suggested that the grant be made for an initial one-year term, with a second one-year extension if need be. Mr. Tierney can ask the Commissioners to rollover funds if there are extenuating circumstances. Ms. Rosseland suggested addressing the grant to the town councils and how they want to disperse it if they do not have a historical board.

Ms. Rosseland asked that the board look over the application more and if they would like to send her notes in an email so she can edit it as needed. She will then send it back out to be reviewed again and if everyone agrees we can go with that application. If not she can modify it further.

Christian Di Spigna from Dr. Joseph Warren Foundation—signed in at 520pm.

Mr. Di Spigna is the Executive Director of the Dr. Joseph Warren Foundation. He is reaching out to Warren Counties in the US (14) to offer scholarships for High School students going onto college, as well as do fundraising and support different Warren Counties.

Ms. Rosseland suggested this would be a great connection and get the foundation involved in the bicentennial.

Mr. Fineran thanked him for volunteering group to better present the origin of the name of our county; to get other groups (by name) available; go back to the townships.

Mr. Di Spigna said that normally Warren (street, township, county), they are named for Joseph Warren. We can offer support regarding events, fundraising ideas, hosting events, historical markers.

Mr. Fineran inquired if Mr. Di Spigna had any short blurb that we can use to introduce Joseph Warren to public. Mr. Di Spigna said yes, he wrote biography on Joseph Warren that was published in 2018. He can provide something that is brief on why Dr. Warren was forgotten and his legacy.

Mr. Tierney suggested that when museum opens or another venue, perhaps we could have Mr. Di Spigna come to speak about Dr. Joseph Warren and sign books as a lead up to the bicentennial. Mr. Tierney also suggested Warren County Community College for Scholarship opportunities.

Mr. Di Spigna explained that the scholarship relatively new and they are very involved in Rev250 (compilation of historical groups in New England); March 5, 2022—250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Boston

Massacre (doing 4 events in MA that weekend); planning commemorative events from now to 2025. They have a number of visual props and displays that they bring with them to the events.

Ms. Rapisardi mentioned that they will be planning for our bicentennial soon and suggested they could work together. She asked if he would be available meet up or provide a list of ideas.

Mr. Gardner inquired as to how large is the membership. Mr. Di Spigna said they had a historic society which dissolved to open the foundation with a more extensive board but no brick-and-mortar; which is in works (Warren Co., Lake George, NY). He said they haven't offered memberships yet but we are well-connected in MA and have a good board; still growing.

Mr. Charlton inquired what kind of response from other Counties and where is he based. Mr. Di Spigna is located in Williamsburg, VA but is originally from NYC. Mr. Di Spigna said they have been getting great responses but they are still in the beginning stages and putting together a documentary.

Mr. Charlton also inquired as to why Dr. Joseph Warren seems to be forgotten. Mr. Di Spigna said the Battle of Bunker Hill overshadows 10 years of issues and events (resistance) leading up to AM REV (1<sup>st</sup> martyr) and he died one year before declaration so he died as traitor of King George III (not American citizen) so he was forgotten before things heat up. If it were not for him, the Declaration would not be written; Dr. J. Warren sent Revere and Dawes to Concord & Lexington.

Ms. Rapisardi inquired about a website they can view more information from -([www.djwf.org](http://www.djwf.org))

Mr. Di Spigna offered to be available should anyone have any further questions regarding what the foundation does and can offer.

Ms. Rapisardi thanked Ms. Rosseland for arranging Mr. Di Spigna's call in.

Mr. Austin expressed concerns about working with Mr. Di Spigna and pointed out some historical aspects that were left out in the discussion, emphasizing that Dr. Joseph Warren was never in Warren County NJ. He cautioned against using state funding to support this foundation. Mr. Tierney explained that he suggested Mr. Di Spigna could come talk about the book and sign them. Ms. Rapisardi suggested doing a bit more research on the foundation before making assumptions about their intentions.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- County Museums & CHPP Grants (attached) – *Gina Rosseland*

Ms. Rosseland wanted to speak that some of the artifacts in the museum that were only on loan for 2 years but have been in the collection for 30 years or items that were gifted to Shippen with conditions they were to be displayed or they were to be given back. She has reached out to the family to inquire if they wanted them back and if not, if she could give them to other sites who can properly interpret them and is waiting to hear back to the family member. Hardwick Historical is interested in putting a couple of pieces on display that we have in storage. Ms. Rosseland inquired with the board if it would be reasonable to move the artifacts to other sites for proper interpretation. The board agreed.

Ms. Rosseland the National Museum of Industrial History located in Bethlehem Pennsylvania, has 5 of our furnace items on display. Mr. Tierney brought up some pictures from their visit in December. They were very complimentary of the site and how the artifacts were arranged. They also met at the

Pump House and the purpose was to discuss the National Museum of Industrial History to work with volunteers to restore and improve it as a historical site.

- County Arts Programs (attached) – *Dennis Austin*

Mr. Austin reports that the FY 2022 regrant awards (emailed)—awarded \$200,000 from state (National Endowment for the Arts)—make up for Covid in 2020 and cancellations. Grants panel met 3 weeks ago or so—of \$112,250 requested by our Arts regrantees; grants arts panel awarded \$108,100. Sheet with names of organizations and award amounts and offered the board to pose any questions. If not, get the board approval. Mr. Fineran motioned to approve Mr. Austin’s regrants from the state. Ms. Miller seconded.

Mr. Fineran offered congrats on grant monies; motion to support endeavors to get out to regrantees. Ms. Primerano abstain for St. Luke’s & St. Mary’s (conflict). Motion passed

- 2022 Meeting Schedule- next meeting February 15, 2022 and will be virtual until further notice.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, Mr. Fineran motioned, seconded by Ms. Miller to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Correa-Kruegel  
Community Service Aide