

**SOMERSET COUNTY CULTURAL & HERITAGE COMMISSION**  
**Thursday, April 7, 2022, Meeting Minutes – Virtual Zoom Meeting**

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**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Commission President Rory Britt in compliance with the Open Public Meeting Notice Act, Chapter 231, PL 1975.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

**III. Roll Call**

**Commissioners:** Rory Britt, Donnetta Bishop-Johnson, Kathy Faulks, Natalie Pineiro, Don Esposito, Jonathan Hress, Dennis Quinlan, Edwin Scannell, Marge Sullivan

**Staff:** Walter Lane, Thomas D’Amico, Kaitlin Bundy, Natalie Zaman, Robert Meyer

**Advisory Members:** Aldo Adiazola, Sean Blinn, Brian Faulks, Jessie Havens, Hector Herrera, Hilary Klemick, Keiona Miller, Sharon Onderko, Kathleen Palmer, Lori Sequera,

**Members of the Public:**

**Commissioner Liaison:** Deputy Director Melanie Marano

**IV. Approval of March 3, 2022, Minutes**

**Motion** to accept the minutes made by Don Esposito and seconded by Marge Sullivan. Passed.

**V. Correspondence**

1. Kaitlin Bundy received a letter of thanks from 2022 CHPP Grant recipient Historic Society of the Somerset Hills for awarding them a 2022 CHPP Grant.
2. Kaitlin Bundy received a letter of thanks from LAP 2022 Grant recipient Ukrainian Educational Center for awarding them a 2022 LAP Grant.
3. Robert Meyer received a flyer from Heritage Trail announcing their Colonial Tavern Night, April 9, 2022, at the van Horne House as part of the Battle of Bound Brook.
4. Robert Meyer received a flyer from Heritage Trail announcing their “Forgotten Victories Lecture by Dr. Richard Veit on April 10, 2022, at the van Horne House as part of the Battle of Bound Brook.
5. Tom D’Amico received The Heritage Review of Morris County that included mention of new Morris County entrance markers and an article about President Teddy Roosevelt in Morris County that included a picture of Roosevelt in front of the Somerset County Courthouse in 1912.
6. Tom D’Amico received a letter from George Apgar advocating a statue for Hendrick Fischer.

**VI. Staff Reports/Old Business**

**The following reports were made by Tom D’Amico:**

**Historic Preservation Grant Program.** The 2022 Historic Preservation Grant Program Guidelines and Application Form have been sent out. The applications are due on April 29, 2022. Staff has received five 2021 Grant Program contracts which have been executed by the grant recipients and the County Commissioner Director and payments have been made.

Staff held two virtual County Historic Preservation Grant Program Technical Assistance Workshops; the first was on March 23, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. and the second on March 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. About 12 organizations were represented. Staff made a PowerPoint presentation and answered a number of very good questions.

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**County Preservation Projects. Van Horne House:** The County Public Works Department continues to work on the east wing of the Van Horne House in Bridgewater. Much of the siding has been installed. There was a slow down due to receiving material. Additional work is expected to begin next week. The project includes replacing the siding, installing a new cedar roof and replacing the gutters on the east wing.

**Fleischmann Carriage House:** The County has awarded a professional Service Contract to Mills & Schnoering Architects, LLC for a Historic Preservation Plan and a design study for the Fleischmann Carriage House in Colonial Park in Franklin Township. Initial work has begun on analyzing the structure.

**Baker-Duderstadt Farmstead:** The County is hiring the historic preservation firm of Connolly & Hickey to complete a study and plans for the restoration of Baker-Duderstadt Farmstead in the East County Park in Warren Township. The contract was authorized by the County Commissioners at their meeting on March 22, 2022.

**Lord Memorial Fountain/Stained Glass Windows:** Staff is finalizing the State Historic Preservation Office Authorization to proceed on an application for the cleaning of the Lord Memorial Fountain and are working with the state on the application for the Stained Glass in the First Reformed Church.

**Abraham Staats House:** The Abraham Staats House has suffered some significant water damage from an overflowing sink located on the second floor of the house. There was damage to the door, which is the main entrance to the house, as well as ceiling and wall damage. An assessment has been made by a number of historic preservation consultants. The Borough wishes to apply for an emergency grant from the Historic Preservation Grant Program to fund the repairs of the house. We are waiting for the cost estimates to be submitted after which a meeting of the Historic Sites Committee will be held to discuss the application and make a recommendation to the County Commissioners for funding.

**Historic Preservation Master Plan:** The County is updating the County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, the Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan and developing a new Historic Preservation Plan. As previously noted at the last meeting the final draft of the Historic Preservation Plan has been completed. It was available for review online and at 15 libraries throughout the County. Four virtual public meetings were held and received considerable public input both from the meetings and from comments submitted to the County. The County professional staff has entered all comments into a data base and has sent this to the Preservation Plan steering Committee for their review. The steering committee reviewed all recommendations and all appropriate comments and changes have been made to the plan.

A notice and a copy of the proposed Preservation Plan was sent to all municipal clerks and planning board secretaries consistent with the County Planning Act notifying them of a virtual public hearing of the County Planning Board which was held on March 30, 2022 at 4:45 p.m. to take public comment on the Draft Preservation Plan. The public may view the draft documents using the following link to the Somerset County website: [SoCoNJ.gov/preservation](http://SoCoNJ.gov/preservation). Public comments are being solicited and

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will remain open until May 2, 2022. The County Planning Board should adopt the plan at their May 17, 2022 meeting.

**The following reports were made by Kaitlin Bundy:**

**Local Arts Program Grant. 2022 Grant:** The Local Arts Program Grant (LAP), are funds received annually from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Primarily, these funds are re-granted out to local non-profits and municipalities. Staff has reviewed all of the contracts submitted by the 2022 re-grantees. As contracts are approved they are sent up to the County Commissioner's Office for final signature. Once the contracts are fully executed, staff will release the first payment to each individual organization. The first payment consists of 75% of the organizations total grant award for the year.

**NEA ARP Sub-granting for Local Arts Agencies Grant:** The Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission was awarded \$150,000.00 from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) American Rescue Plan (ARP) Grants to Local Arts Agencies for Sub-granting. Only 66 grants were made nationwide with only three (3) being awarded in the state of New Jersey. These funds are intended to help support jobs in the arts sector, keep the doors open to arts organizations, and assist the field in its response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This grant is limited to six (6) awards of \$25,000 each. Applicants will be allowed to use funding to support:

- Salary support, full or partial, for one or more staff positions.
- Fees/stipends for artists and/or contractual personnel for services they provide for specific activities in support of your organization's general operations.
- Costs associated with health and safety supplies for staff and/or visitors/audiences (e.g., personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, etc.).
- Facilities costs such as rent and utilities, e.g., electric, phone, gas bills. (NOTE: Costs related to home offices, upgrades to HVAC/ventilation systems, and other capital improvements are UNALLOWABLE.)
- Marketing and promotion costs.

Staff are finalizing the application and guidelines for this grant. The paperwork must be reviewed by County Purchasing staff and County Council prior to final release, but staff is optimistic that the application will go live in late April.

**Upcoming Projects:** The Commission is working with the Somerset County Library System to host a number of different workshops over the month of April. This includes a Pysanka Egg workshop at the Manville Library on April 9<sup>th</sup>, a virtual Director's Talk from Director Damian Kolody discussing his 2014 film *Freedom or Death*, a documentary about the 2013/14 Democratic Uprising in Ukraine, which will take place on April 14<sup>th</sup> and a virtual historic talk on Ukraine, entitled *A Young Ancient Nation: A Primer on Ukrainian History and Culture*, on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

In addition to these workshops staff is working with the Ukrainian History and Education Center to bring the "Ukraine 1933: A Cookbook" exhibit to the C&H Gallery at the County Administration Building. This powerful exhibit highlights the genocidal artificial famine in 1932-1933 in Ukraine and

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will open on April 26. Additionally, a collection of Ukrainian pysanky eggs will be on display in the building as well.

Staff has officially been assigned to help coordinate the County's Juneteenth Celebration and are working with Cultural & Heritage Commissioner Donnetta Johnson on this effort.

**The following reports were made by Natalie Zaman:**

**County History Partnership Program Grant. 2022 Grant:** The County History Partnership Program Grant (CHPP), are funds we receive annually from the New Jersey Historical Commission. Primarily, these funds are re-granted out to local non-profits and municipalities. Staff has reviewed all of the contracts submitted by the 2022 re-grantees. As contracts are approved they are sent up to the County Commissioner's Office for final signature. Once the contracts are fully executed staff will release the first payment to each individual organization. The first payment consists of 75% of the organizations total grant award for the year.

**2023-2025 Grant Cycle:** Staff submitted the Commission's declaration of intent to apply for the 23-25 CHPP grant cycle at the end of March. Staff is currently working on the application which is due May 2, 2022. Staff would like to extend its appreciation to all those organizations that participated in our needs assessment survey. As the Historical Commission puts great emphasis on knowing the needs of our local organizations, staff will use the information from the survey responses to inform our requests to the Historical Commission for this 3-year grant round.

**Cooperative Marketing Grant. 2022 Cooperative Marketing Grant:** Last year, staff applied for and received a FY22 Cooperative Marketing Grant from the NJ Division of Travel and Tourism in the amount of \$12,900.00. These funds will be utilized for ad space in digital and print media with target audiences in the greater tristate area to promote the 2022 Journey Through the Past event and economic development in Somerset County. Staff is currently encumbering funds through our purchase order process and updating and creating the ads that will run. Staff is also finalizing the interim report for this grant which is due on April 18, 2022.

**2023 Cooperative Marketing Grant:** Staff will apply for Cooperative Marketing Grant funds from the NJ Department of State, Division of Travel and Tourism for 2023 and are currently working on the Declaration of Intent; the application is due in June. Again, the tristate area will be targeted.

**2022 Virtual Teen Arts Festival:** Staff continues its coordination of the 2022 Virtual Teen Arts Festival. Many of our schools had issues with staffing and bussing which made field trips untenable this year. Student work is due on Friday, April 8, 2022 and will be sent out to adjudicating artists shortly thereafter; staff is expecting approximately 304 works across seven (7) disciplines. Staff has engaged 22 diverse artists to make personalized video adjudications for participating students. Artist videos are due back on May 13, 2022. All videos will be reviewed by staff before they are delivered to school coordinators in early June. In addition to critiquing student work, the artists will be making recommendations for students to move on to adjudication at the 2022 State Teen Arts Festival, and selections to be exhibited in-person at the Cultural & Heritage Gallery.

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**VII. New Business/Action Items**

1. A Motion to allow advisory members to ask questions and make comments during New Business discussions, but not to vote, was made by Kathy Faulks and seconded by Marge Sullivan. Passed.
2. Historic Preservation Master Plan - a public meeting was held on March 3, 2022. Public comments close on May 2, 2022. The plan will be presented to the Planning Board at their May 17, 2022 meeting. A Motion to endorse the Historic Preservation Plan was made by Don Esposito and seconded by Natalie Pineiro. Passed.

**VIII. Commissioner Comments**

1. Kathy Faulks announced the Battle of Bound Brook event on Saturday, April 9, and Sunday, April 10, 2022 with the soldier's encampment at the Abraham Staats House. This is a collaborative program involving the Boroughs of Bound Brook and South Bound Brook, the Van Horne House as well as community organizations. More information can be found at: <https://www.staatshouse.org/events/battle-of-bound-brook/battle-of-bound-brook-2022/>
2. Don Esposito asked about the Bylaws. They are currently being reviewed by County Counsel.
3. Marge Sullivan informed the commission that Paul Soltis of the Wallace House requests a letter of support for a grant to the National Park Service for envelope work on the Wallace House in preparation for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United States. A Motion to endorse the letter to the National Park Service on behalf of the Wallace House was made by Marge Sullivan and seconded by Don Esposito. Passed.
4. Marge Sullivan suggested a shared calendar hosted on the SCCHC website to post events for the 250<sup>th</sup> in order to spread events out and avoid time conflicts. Kaitlin Bundy will check with the IT department on the viability.
5. Natalie Pineiro said that the Downtown Somerville Alliance is seeking sponsors for the Annual Tour of Somerville. She may be contacted at: [npineiro@somervillenj.org](mailto:npineiro@somervillenj.org)
6. Donnetta Bishop-Johnson announced that Somerset County's Juneteenth Celebration will be held on June 16, 2022 at the Somerville Court House Green. Talented youth are still being sought for the event. She may be contacted at: [DonnettaBJ@yahoo.com](mailto:DonnettaBJ@yahoo.com)
7. Donnetta Bishop-Johnson announced that the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum will hold a Juneteenth event of June 19, 2022. More information can be found at: <http://www.ssaamuseum.org/>

**IX. Advisory Committee Comments**

1. Kathleen Palmer's Gallery will be hosting a Friday night Art Glass Show Opening on April 8, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
2. Kathleen Palmer also noted that the "Celebrating the Faces of Bernardsville" event will occur on April 22, 2022, and will feature artwork in shop windows and Kathleen Palmer's Gallery.
3. Jessie Havens announced that the Montgomery Township is celebrating its 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary at a Birthday Party with the Bicentennial Quilt at the Harlingen Church on May 2, 2022, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
4. Sean Blinn will talk about Accessibility at Historic Sites at the Jacobus Vandever House.

**X. Open Meeting to the Public**  
**Announcements/Other News:**

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The next SCC&H meeting will take place VIRTUALLY on Thursday May 5, 2022.

**XI. Adjournment**

**Adjournment 8:29 p.m.**

Motion made by Marge Sullivan and seconded by Natalie Pineiro. Passed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Faulks, Secretary

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