

**Morris County Heritage Commission Minutes
Meeting of June 14, 2011**

Present: Commissioners Larry Fast, Dave Bogert, Henry Kafel, Virginia Vogt, James Woodruff, Daniel Beards; Tracy Kinsel, Archivist Peg Shultz

Absent: Commissioners Epsy Farrell, Kathy Fisher

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at the County Cultural Center at 9:34 a.m. The Open Meeting statement was read.

Minutes: May minutes were read and approved with one correction.

Financial report: Our operating budget as of May 9 stands at \$16,094, with twenty percent spent or encumbered. Commissioner Kinsel reminded all of the need to pace expenses.

Freeholder report: None.

Chairman's report: Chairman Fast's attempt to purchase back our cyber tag from a Japanese cyber-squatter has been rebuffed. He will attempt to purchase morrisheritage.net for \$8, thereby keeping our identity with the exception of the domain change.

Chairman Fast reported that the Morris County Historic Preservation Trust's cycle began in May, with 34 applications requesting \$3.5 million. He, new Trust Fund board member Jim Woodruff, and others will have \$2.5 million to award.

Chairman Fast also worked with Ms. Shultz to optimally schedule her vacation days, comp time and a bereavement day. He also attended the Freeholders' volunteer appreciation party on May 17.

Archivist/acting administrator report: Donna Martino, a history student from Rutgers, is our summer intern. She will work on veteran records, assist in developing an online exhibit on historic churches, and field genealogy research questions from the public. Other matters:

- The July MCAT meeting will update plans for an art and history fair during the Morristown Fall Festival on October 2 and at County College of Morris in February.
- Ms. Shultz spoke with the Park Commission about unauthorized storage in the "A" room cage.
- Demolition has begun at the county-owned Washington Building in Morristown by LVI Demolition Services of East Hanover.
- Ms. Shultz will be on vacation from June 17-June 28.

Committee reports

Archives: David Bogert, Chair

Commissioner Bogert met with Archivist Shultz, and they advise that a professional analysis of the county archives should be done before beginning the work of digitizing the archives. During the summer, Mr. Bogert will meet with various parties to define the task and devise a plan of implementation. He will prepare a report for our September meeting for potential adoption in October.

Shelving installation at Morris View and the Cultural Center is scheduled for late fall or early winter.

The archivist in the county clerk's office is retiring, which may offer an opportunity for reorganization and shared services. This project is in the fact-finding stage, after which the committee will meet to develop goals. Archivist Shultz reported that two of five boxes of court records disappeared with 24 hours after being offered to the MCHC. Ms Shultz has taken possession of the remaining boxes, which appear to contain late nineteenth and early twentieth century documents.

Grants/Re-grants: Dave Bogert, Chair

Ms. Shultz has visited (with various commissioners) the MCHC 2011 re-grantees. All are on track to complete their commitment except the Passaic River Coalition. Commissioner Vogt accompanied Ms. Shultz to the PRC meeting with Susan Nanney, director of development, who began by stating it would not be possible to do their proposed calendar project without an extension. She also desired to delay the speakers portion of the contract. Ms. Shultz suggested a substitution of print projects, a PRC brochure already in draft stage, and this was accepted.

At a subsequent meeting, attended by Grants Chairman Bogert and PRC Executive Director Ella Filipone in addition to Ms. Shultz and Ms. Vogt, it was found that no headway had been made on text approvals and picture credits for the brochure. Ms. Nanney provided a script for a speech she intended to deliver at the scheduled June 27 program.

In an immediate follow-up memo, Commissioner Vogt outlined two step-by-step plans to help the PRC complete both parts of their grant. Ms. Nanney was advised that her proposed speech was too far-reaching and required drawing expert conclusions better made by a recognized scholar in the field of black history. It was suggested that Ms. Nanny limit her participation to introductions of the two scheduled speakers and follow-up comments on sources of further information for the audience.

Ms. Shultz and Ms. Vogt plan to meet with Mark Texel later in the week to enlist his aid on helping PRC vet its brochure and help it find a speaker for the month of July.

Exhibits/Programs: Virginia Vogt, Chair

Ms. Shultz will use the summer intern to assist in creating an online exhibit of area church architecture and history or an exhibit based on graveyards based on material presented in our recent program. Commissioner Beards will do photography if necessary.

Long-Range Plan: Virginia Vogt, Chair

The long range plan is in effect.

Personnel: Henry Kafel, Chair

Commissioner Kafel has spoken with county attorney Alison Stapleton. She indicated that no new job titles are currently being created; indeed, job descriptions are being reviewed for consolidation. Although Mr. Kafel will continue to monitor the situation, he expects no action in the foreseeable future.

The personnel committee will perform Archivist Peg Shultz's six-month review after today's meeting.

Mr. Kafel welcomed summer intern Donna Martino, and all commissioners introduced themselves.

Publications: Virginia Vogt and Epey Farrell, Co-chairs

Commissioner Vogt reminded all that writing of the fall issue of the newsletter should begin very soon.

Suggestions for stories would be helpful, and Ms. Vogt and Ms. Farrell will meet with Ms. Shultz soon. Intern Martino will begin to check archives for Quips and Quotes, focusing on the Civil War era.

Chairman Fast recently spoke with former County Archivist David Mitros, who has suggested that his book, *Gone to Wear the Victor's Crown*, be made available online. Advances in optical recognition and the existence of relatively inexpensive software make ocr conversion a more viable option than scanning pdf files page-by-page. Commissioner Bogert raised questions about who would be credited on the potential revenue stream. It was informally agreed that Chairman Fast would ask Mr. Mitros to explore the potential.

Marker program: Kathy Fisher, Chair

Chairman Fast indicates that the Museum of Early Trades and Crafts is interested in a county historic marker. He directed the museum's curator to the marker application on the MCHC's website. Ms. Shultz will reach out to the METC and also notify Commissioner Fisher, chair of the marker committee, who was absent from the meeting.

Ms. Shultz is currently arranging a marker maintenance schedule. The goal is the repainting of twenty markers this year, at a cost of \$50 each.

Communications: Secretary Vogt

The Commission received invitations to museum events throughout the area, newsletters, and several Section 106 notifications, including a restoration of the Morris Plains train station, and the latest copy of *Preservation* magazine.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Patricia Maynard, former Morris County freeholder, and several of her colleagues (Mr. Maynard, Andrew Houston, and Bill and Kathy Brown) from the Society of Colonial Wars were our guests. SCW members are descendents of prominent citizens of the colonial era and have for many years placed bronze plaques commemorating our country's founders. There is currently no such plaque in Morris County. Ms. Maynard and her group invited the Commissioners to help select a suitable site for a commemorative tablet recognizing Lewis Morris, the governor of the New York and New Jersey colonies. Commissioners had several suggestions, including near the courthouse, near the entrance of Lewis Morris Park, and on the Morristown Green. The bronze tablet would likely be set in a large suitable stone.

The placement and matrix of the plaque will be provided by the Society at no cost. The Commissioners were asked to pinpoint a location by our July meeting and to provide the Society with an all-inclusive estimate for the placement, including the weight and the exact dimensions of the selected rock. Commissioners will deliberate via email and designate a plan of action by July.

The state's planned sale of the NJ network leaves forty years of documentaries, news, and other programming in archival limbo. Chairman Fast has contacted Senator Kean's office, and the senator has agreed to look into the disposition of these taxpayer-funded resources.

Adjournment: 12:02 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Virginia Vogt, Secretary

The next Commission meeting will be held on Tuesday July 12, at 9:30 a.m.
Please inform Ms. Shultz if you are unable to attend.