

**Morris County Heritage Commission Minutes
Meeting of May 10, 2011**

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

Absent: Commissioners Epsey Farrell, Kathy Fisher, Tracy Kinsel

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at the County Cultural Center at 9:33 a.m. The Open Meeting statement was read.

Minutes: April minutes were read and approved with two corrections, with Commissioner Kafel abstaining.

Financial report: Our operating budget as of May 9 stands at \$16,107, with twenty percent spent or encumbered.

Freeholder report: Freeholder Nordstrom had no report.

Chairman's report: Chairman Fast has discovered that the Commission's website domain name is now held by a Japanese cyber-squatter. The name was lost by unknown county personnel when it was not promptly renewed. It may be too expensive to buy back. Next step: The Commission makes an offer of \$10 or so to the squatter to see what happens.

Chairman Fast also worked with Ms. Shultz to optimally schedule her work hours. He is busy with mop-up operations on last year's Morris County Historic Preservation Trust Fund and will soon be working on 2012 grants.

Archivist/Acting Administrator report: Ms. Shultz reports that spring flood issues in the "A" room continue; there has been good response from the Park Commission. She completed county CPR/AED training. Much of her time next month will be spent on meetings with re-grantees (see subcommittee reports, below.)

Outreach and partnerships:

- "Rally for Tourism: Destination Morris County" on May 12 at Washington's Headquarters and MCAT's free museum visitation program, *Be Our Guest*, scheduled for May 15, are the major events in the wings.
- Plans for an art and history fair during the Morristown Fall Festival on October 2, sponsored by the Morris County Tourism Bureau, continue.
- Plans for an art and history fair at County College of Morris in February are under discussion.
- Ms. Shultz will attend a meeting on Army Alternate Procedures to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act on May 16.

Committee reports

Archives: Larry Fast, Chair

Archivist Shultz reported that the popular TV show "Who Do You Think You Are" has resulted in a flurry of genealogy-related requests and has highlighted a general misconception that the county archives are available for casual ancestor-browsing by individuals. Chairman Fast suggested the drafting of an instructional page on the MCHC website guiding information seekers to more readily accessible genealogy sources, such as specialized computer sites, local libraries and museums. Non-computer-savvy seekers would receive this information via snail mail upon request. A "How To Use the Computer to Do Genealogy" guide also might be devised for this purpose.

Commissioner Bogert expressed concern that information in the county archives is not sufficiently available to the public at this time. He and Commissioner Beards favor increased archives functionality through the digitalization of all records. They will prepare a proposal for next meeting that outlines a step-by-step plan and schedule for digitalization that recognizes our current manpower shortage and follows NJ DARMA guidelines. All Commissioners expressed support for this effort.

Grants/Re-grants: Dave Bogert, Chair

Ms. Shultz will conduct visits with grant recipients throughout May and June. She presented a site visitation schedule and invited Commissioners to take part in the visits. Commissioner Bogert, as grants committee chair, will attend as many visitations as possible.

Exhibits/Programs: Virginia Vogt, Chair

Because of Ms. Shultz's full slate of responsibilities, our fall program will likely be a repeat of our grants-writing program, timed to assist grant seekers in mid-to-late August. Ms. Shultz also will attempt to put together 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

Nothing to report. The long range plan is in effect.

Personnel: Henry Kafel, Chair

Commissioner Kafel has heard nothing further on Ms. Shultz's new job description, which has been forwarded to county attorney Alison Stapleton. There was further discussion of securing intern or volunteer help, but it was generally felt that this approach has been exhausted to no avail. The problem of understaffing continues.

Publications: Virginia Vogt and Esey Farrell, Co-chairs

Commissioners Farrell, Woodruff, Vogt and Fast and Ms. Shultz met in a special editorial working session following the Commission's regular April meeting. Many frequently occurring editorial and style questions were resolved, and Commissioner Vogt will add them to David Mitros's manual and work with Ms. Farrell to finalize the entries over the summer. A preliminary schedule for the next newsletter was set that will allow sufficient editing time. Stories will be lined up in June with most writing occurring during July. The publishing goal is to have newsletter ready for Fall Festival in early October, which requires a September 1 "to the printer" date. Commissioner Vogt will meet with Ms. Shultz in early June to start the cycle.

Marker program: Kathy Fisher, Chair

Commissioner Kafel requested, on behalf of the county road crew, that the final positioning of the Montville Dutch Outkitchen marker be accomplished by next week. Ms. Shultz received a request for a marker at the old Nike site in East Hanover but the site was deemed unqualified as there is no remaining physical evidence on the site. Ms Shultz will set up the summer marker repainting schedule soon.

Communications: Secretary Vogt

The Commission received invitations to museum events throughout the area, newsletters, and several Section 106 notifications. There were also newsletter clipping of the Revolutionary Weekend event, with a picture of our Ms. Shultz.

Old Business:

None.

New Business: Commissioner Bogert's new business was addressed under the archives subcommittee report.

Adjournment: 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Virginia Vogt, Secretary

The next Commission meeting will be held on **Tuesday June 14**, at 9:30 a.m.
Please inform Ms. Shultz if you are unable to attend.