

## **NEW JERSEY HISTORIC TRUST**

### **NJHT Board of Trustees Meeting Wednesday, December 13, 2017 Allentown Public Library Allentown, Monmouth County**

#### **Call to Order**

Ms. Foster called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

#### **Open Public Meetings Act**

Ms. Guzzo notified the Board that notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act.

#### **Roll Call**

Ms. Guzzo called the roll and confirmed the meeting had a quorum.

Trustees present: Janet Foster, Deborah Kelly, Peter Lindsay, Kenneth Miller, Katherine Ng, Meme Omogbai (arrived 10:20 and left 12:04), Chris Perks (via phone at 10:34), Patricia Anne Salvatore, Robert Tighue, and Maria Connolly.

NJHT Staff present: Dorothy Guzzo, Glenn Ceponis, Catherine Goulet, Carrie Hogan and Michele Racioppi.

Public in Attendance: Allison Trimarco

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Foster asked if anyone had comments on the June Board meeting minutes. Ms. Omogbai asked that the meeting minutes be revised to show that she was in attendance. There being no additional comments or revisions, Ms. Foster made a motion to approve the revised October meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Tighue. The motion passed.

#### **Public Comment**

No public comment.

#### **Communications**

Ms. Foster referenced a letter in the Board packet from Max Hayden thanking the Trust for a grant for the Mount Rose Distillery in Hopewell Township.

## **Reports of Officers**

### **Chair:**

Ms. Foster thanked Board members for attending this and all meetings and making each meeting a productive working meeting. Ms. Foster also thanked the staff for its efforts.

### **Vice Chair**

No report.

### **Treasurer:**

Mr. Tighue referenced the Treasurer's report included in the Board packet and thanked Ms. Hogan for assembling the report. Mr. Tighue reported that the Trust is well within budget and is doing well. Mr. Tighue reviewed the available funding for future grant rounds. Mr. Tighue stated that generally the Trust is in good shape, especially compared to recent years when a reliable source of grant funding was not available. Mr. Tighue also touched on the status of the Trust's revolving loan fund.

Ms. Omogbai asked if there were any potential issues with the changing of Administrations, especially while personnel gets up to speed with all the departments. Ms. Omogbai asked if during this time it would hamper the Trust's ability to encumber funds. Ms. Guzzo responded that most likely not, but each Administration approaches things differently so we will have to wait and see. Ms. Omogbai acknowledged that the Trust is fortunate to have Ms. Guzzo with her experience and knowledge of operations within State government.

Mr. Tighue stated that he was optimistic about the year ahead.

### **Secretary:**

No report.

## **Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Guzzo referenced her report, and the staff report included in the Board packet. Ms. Guzzo reported that the Trust's former temporary staff position has been converted into a permanent staff position. Ms. Guzzo explained that the Trust hired Haley McAlpine to fill this new position. Ms. Guzzo then provided some background information on Ms. McAlpine. Ms. McAlpine is completing her Master Degree in Michigan and will be starting with the Trust the first week in February.

Ms. Guzzo reported on the plans for the State's semiquincentennial in 2026, which is being spearheaded by the NJ Historical Commission. Ms. Guzzo is part of the planning committee that is looking to the Legislature for funding the celebration over the next couple of years. Ms. Guzzo stated that the committee is hoping that a permanent legacy might be created from the celebration efforts. The NJ Historical Commission may approach the Trust to consider grant funding for historic buildings dating from semiquincentennial period. Crossroads of the American Revolution is hoping to acquire \$500,000 per year to be split between the Historical Commission and

Crossroads. Some of this funding may be available from the federal government since Crossroads is a National Heritage Area.

Mr. Miller asked about the historic preservation certificate program being run out of M.A.R.C.H at Rutgers Camden, specifically can some of the classes be taught further north. Ms. Guzzo said that it has been considered, but we are not sure yet if it is possible. To date M.A.R.C.H. has been great at administering the program including getting continuing education credits for both architects and planners. Ms. Guzzo reminded the Board that the Trust contributes \$1,000 per semester to the program. Ms. Omogbai stated that this is a fabulous component of the Trust's mission and that we should include a discussion of this relationship in the packet assembled for legislators.

### **Report of the Department of Community Affairs**

No formal report, but Ms. Connolly spoke about the new Lieutenant Governor, Sheila Oliver, who is slated to become the new DCA Commissioner. Ms. Connolly stated that Ms. Oliver has had a long history in Essex County and has been a strong proponent of economic development, especially in Newark. Having a long tenure in government Ms. Oliver understands the workings of government and politics, which is an advantage in being DCA Commissioner. Ms. Connolly expressed optimism that programs such as Main Street New Jersey, Urban Enterprise Zones, and Planning Services will be reinstated or brought back under DCA oversight.

Ms. Guzzo reported that no one from the Transition Team has reached out directly to the Historic Trust. We have been requested to provide the standard information.

Ms. Omogbai spoke about providing the new Commissioner and Transition Team information on the Trust especially conveying our top priorities. Ms. Foster stated that the Trust's recently completed strategic plan will be a perfect guide for us and will put us in a good position to state our case.

### **Report of the Department of Environmental Protection**

Ms. Marcopul reported that her office and the DEP Commissioner have received a tremendous number of letters regarding North Wildwood's efforts to take over full management of the Hereford Inlet Lighthouse. The effort by the City to reduce the Friends group involvement with the lighthouse has been controversial with much written in the local press and in social media. Because the lighthouse is owned by DEP and leased to North Wildwood, DEP has been monitoring the situation. Ms. Marcopul reported that the Commissioner has received 500 letters in support of the Friends group. The lease, however, is between the DEP and North Wildwood and unless North Wildwood infringes on the terms of the lease there may not be much DEP can do. They are encouraging both sides to try and resolve the situation.

Ms. Marcopul did not have any information at this date on who may become the new DEP Commissioner.

### **Report of the Department of Treasury**

Mr. Tighue reported that he currently sits on four boards and he has not been informed on whether he will be reappointed to the Trust Board. Trust Board members provided their support and hope that Mr. Tighue is reappointed to the Trust Board.

### **Report of the Executive Committee**

Ms. Ng reported that the Executive Committee meets via conference call once a month. Ms. Ng referenced the Board packet for details on the committee's activities. Specifically, Ms. Ng discussed the Board profile matrix, the Trust's partnership with M.A.R.C.H. and the strategic plan. Ms. Ng stated the importance of assigning duties to Board members in implementing the strategic plan over the next year. Ms. Foster spoke to the benefits experienced by the Executive Committee having prescheduled committee meetings as a way to keep in touch and get activities accomplished. Ms. Foster recommended that other committees consider a similar approach.

### **Report of the Grants & Loans Committee**

Ms. Kelly referenced the Committee report included in the Board packet. Ms. Kelly asked if Board members had any conflicts with these projects. There being no conflicts indicated, Ms. Kelly then reviewed each of four requests for grant extensions. Ms. Goulet provided a brief explanation of the Hoboken Public Library project. Specifically, Ms. Goulet stated that the new Board Chair responded to the Trust's letter on moving the grant project forward. The Committee agreed to extend the grant for three months and if the grantee can demonstrate progress on the project the Committee would consider a longer extension.

Ms. Goulet provided a brief explanation of the Hoboken City Hall and Knowlton Township requests for extensions. Ms. Goulet explained that the extension for Knowlton Township focused on a change of scope that would allow the remaining grant funds to go towards non-construction activities while additional county grant funds will cover construction activities. The non-construction activities are not permitted under the county program, so the shift of Trust funds will allow the project to be completed.

Mr. Ceponis provided a brief overview of the Hudson County Courthouse request for extension.

Following the discussion Ms. Kelly made a motion to approve all the extensions as recommended by the Committee. Ms. Omogbai seconded the motion and the motion passed unopposed.

Ms. Kelly then briefly reviewed the open grant list and Mr. Ceponis reported that work on East Point Lighthouse was complete and the grantee was in the process of closing the grant.

Ms. Kelly updated the Board on the Preserve NJ 2017 grant round. The Senate bill went through committee. The Assembly has not yet introduced a companion bill, but is likely to do so. The Grants & Loans Committee is hopeful that it will pass and be signed by the current Administration (subsequently the bill passed and was signed by the Governor).

It was reported that the Trust's existing grant regulations have been published.

It was reported that the FY 18 Grant Round will be announced later today. Applications will be due in May. The Trust is back to having regular annual grant rounds. It was announced that the Cultural Trust grant round voted on by the Board has passed the Cultural Trust Board and preparation of grant agreements will begin. The 1772 Foundation grant application for 2018 are due on Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Kelly reported that the Trust received two applications under the License Plate grant program. Ms. Foster reported that the Committee is recommending fund one of the two applications. The Committee recommends awarding a \$5,000 grant to the Princeton Battlefield Society to develop a battlefield tour program including docent training. Ms. Foster made a motion to approve the Committee's recommendation, seconded by Ms. Salvatore. The motion passed with Ms. Kelly abstaining from the vote.

Ms. Guzzo provided a brief update on the contract to market the license plate program. Ms. Guzzo explained that the work is moving along and Ms. Racciopi provided a sample of some of the proposed graphics to be used in the marketing. Board members provided comments and suggestions regarding the graphics. The Board requested that as the marketing materials are finalized that the Board is provided copies for review.

#### **Report of the Easements and Acquisitions Standing Committee**

Mr. Miller referenced the Committee's report in the Board packet. Mr. Miller reported that Trinity Episcopal Church in Woodbridge submitted a request to subdivide a portion of its property currently protected by a Historic Trust term easement resulting from a 2008 Trust grant. Mr. Ceponis briefly discussed the details of the request. Trinity Episcopal Church would like to allow the construction of a residence on the proposed subdivided lot. The Committee denied the request for subdivision partly because the easement does not allow for subdividing the protected parcels and in this specific case the proposed new construction would visually block historic features. Additionally, the Committee had concerns regarding the potential for archaeological remains in the area of the proposed new construction. In its response to the Church the Committee provided potential options for the Church to consider that might provide long term funding with less impact on the historic features protected by the preservation easement.

Mr. Miller also reported that the Committee also discussed the Trust's ability to purchase perpetual easements. The Committee is in the process of developing regulations and will make recommendations for full Board discussion at a later meeting.

#### **Report of the Combined Strategic Planning and Legislation and Policy Standing Committees.**

The Strategic Plan will be addressed under unfinished business.

#### **Education Committee**

No formal report, but Ms. Salvatore spoke regarding the availability of marketing grants through the Division of Travel and Tourism. These are \$20,000 to \$25,000 grants. A number of Cape May

organizations applied for these funds, but only two organizations received a grant award. Ms. Salvatore stated that the grants are driven by the Restaurant and Hotel industry not heritage tourism. Jake Bukowski of the Division of Travel and Tourism stated that there was an anomaly in the scoring and that the decision can be appealed. Because of this philosophical change at Travel and Tourism towards accommodating the concerns of the hotel and restaurant industries, it has been much harder for heritage tourism sites to get grant funds.

Mr. Lindsay reported that he attended the Frazee House dedication and the Mayor of Scotch Plains thanked the Historic trust for its grant funding.

### **Unfinished Business**

Ms. Trimarco began a discussion of implementing the Strategic Plan. Ms. Trimarco stated that the Board adopted the strategic plan and already completed a number of activities outlined in the plan. Ms. Trimarco stressed the importance of tracking the progress of implementation and board assignments for FY 18. By December of 2018 the Board should revisit the implementation plan and develop a list of activities that should be implemented over the next year. Ms. Trimarco explained that if a Board member's name is next to an initiative then it is your responsibility to spearhead that initiative. You do not necessarily have to do all the work, but it is your responsibility to figure out how to push the initiative forward. Just do what is in the strategic plan and be sure to keep Ms. Guzzo, Ms. Foster, and Ms. Ng posted. Also share progress at each board meeting. Ms. Trimarco suggested that two weeks prior to the next board meeting answer the four questions provided as an update. Basically, provide three or four bullet points on progress since the last board meeting. If, as you begin implementation and the specific assignment does not feel like a good fit, reach out to Ms. Foster for possible reassignment. Do it sooner rather than later.

It was recommended that you can use the passage of the current legislation as a good reason to reach out to your legislator, thank them and introduce them to the future needs of the Trust. If it is not your legislator you can coordinate with a grantee in that district to gain access to the office. There is a lot to impart to a legislator on how the Trust can help in their district. By March you can report on your success in meeting with legislators. It was stressed that it is important to be accountable regarding implementation and to figure out how to make progress if progress is not being made.

Ms. Trimarco stated that the Trust is on a good path so far. Keep coordination simple. Convey these last items to Ms. Omogbai and Mr. Perks both of whom had to leave the meeting due to prior commitments. Also, the Trust needs to reach out to areas of the state where we do not have board members. Provide a one-page email, one page specific to their district and relate it to our strategic plan. Every Board meeting agenda should have a strategic plan item. Reminders would be helpful to make sure Board members can provide updates.

Ms. Guzzo reported to the Board that through Ms. Omogbai a meeting is being set up with Sheila Oliver, the new Lieutenant Governor and Acting Commissioner of DCA. All members are invited if they want to come. Ms. Foster and the entire Board thanked Ms. Trimarco for her efforts in helping develop the strategic plan.

Ms. Foster referenced the Board profile analysis and ask the Board to let Ms. Guzzo know if you know of anyone that matches our requirements.

### **New Business**

Senator Diane Allen joined the meeting and Ms. Foster presented Senator Allen with proclamation and resolution from the Board for Senator Allen's long a distinguished career in which she was an untiring advocate and friend of historic preservation.

Following a reading of the resolution, the Board asked Ms. Allen to provide her opinions on how the Trust can reach out to legislators and educate them on the Trust. Ms. Allen stressed the importance of developing relationships with legislators. Be prepared to explain what the Trust does and why it is important. It could take several contacts before they fully understand what the Trust does and needs. Ms. Allen thought that Sen. Bateman has always been a strong advocate for historic preservation. So are Sen. Weinberg, Rep. Singleton and Sen. Kean. Likewise, Sen. Smith is important regarding environmental issues and preservation. The incoming Governor also appears to be sympathetic to environmental issues. Generally, January and February are good months to make appointments. Have a single sheet that explains the Trust to the legislator.

Ms. Racioppi reviewed the Trust's social media activities. Ms. Racioppi also provided suggestions on various formats (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Pinterest) and what Board members can do to help support the Trust through social media. Ms. Racioppi suggested developing a calendar to coordinate posts by Board members and also to ask grantees to post as well. It is important to "like" the Trust and post items and share posts.

### **Adjournment**

There being no additional business, Ms. Foster made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Miler. The motion passed unopposed. The meeting adjourned at 12:56