



Minutes

Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission

7pm - Charles Town Visitor's Center

108 N. George St., Charles Town, WV

January 18, 2017

Members Present: Martin Burke (Chair), Curt Mason (Treasurer), Leigh Koonce, Sara Lambert (Secretary), Eric Jenkins

Guests: Peter Onoszko (County Commissioner), John Demer, Rob Aitcheson, Lauren Kelly, Tim Johnson, Jacqueline Shadle, Paul Rosa, Bill Theriault

M. Burke called the meeting into order at 6:59pm.

Introductions: M. Burke welcomed all in attendance for the meeting.

Public Comment: None.

December Meeting Minutes: Minutes of the December 21 meeting were submitted by Sara Lambert and Rob Aitcheson.

Acceptance was moved by L.Koonce, and passed.

Treasurer's Report: C. Mason presented the balance sheet and profit and loss statement for the year. He is working with the accountant to prepare a report that would show budget versus actual expenditure (which has not been computed yet) but reported that the commission was in good shape for the fiscal year.

A. Bank Account Balance: C. Mason reported on the commission's accounts.

B. Review of FY-17 Income and Expenditure: M. Burke announced that the hotel-motel tax is ahead of estimates, so there will be approximately \$4,000 extra income not yet accounted for in the budget. In addition, the commission would be spending \$2,000 less for its AmeriCorps member in 2017 since the position is currently half-time. He suggested moving \$1,000 of that money to the commission's endowment fund. The budget also allotted \$2,500 for the taxes on the Eyler tract, since the commission hoped to have the title donated from ABPP (along with the adjacent Merkhams tracts). However, the commission will not have ownership until after the tax deadline, so that \$2,500 can now be spent on other projects as well. He suggested using those funds to clear vegetation and trees on the proposed parking lot and has received estimates from Sustainable Solutions in Shepherdstown.

C. Reprogramming funds for FY-17: Discussion was opened to discuss reprogramming these funds. M. Burke suggested an additional contribution to the endowment fund or the GeoExplorer project or utilizing them in an effort to assign the conservation easement the commission holds on Blakeley. After it was ascertained that no additional funds were needed at Snow Hill or the Peter Burr Farm, suggestions were made to spend the money as needed for endowment fundraising to raise the profile of the commission, as well as brochures and flyers. E. Jenkins suggested adding to a contingency fund. No consensus was reached on the hotel-motel funds, but a motion was made to use \$1,000 allotted for AmeriCorps position toward the endowment fund and the \$2,500 allotted for the Eyler property to clear vegetation on the Shepherdstown Battlefield.

C.Mason moved to reprogram those funds, S. Lambert seconded, and the motion passed.

WV GeoExplorer Project: B. Theriault (project manager) announced that the site was hacked on Sunday. The software is old, and he is looking into options with Tori Myers, grants to help pay for the costs of upgrades, new systems software, and a new permanent home for the site. He also announced that he is still progressing with a Kickstarter but that work will continue on content.

Planning for 2017: Discussion was opened about the legislative packet that will be presented to Jefferson County's three congressional representatives that proposes the expansion of Antietam National Battlefield into Shepherdstown. C. Mason emphasized the importance of local support. M. Burke noted that he is in the process of collecting updated letters of support and that one had just been received from the Corporation of Shepherdstown. P. Onoszko added that it was important when addressing the JCC to separate the boundary expansion proposal from the court case surrounding Faraway Farms since anything perceived as encroaching on the property rights of private citizens would not be looked upon favorably. M. Burke noted that the boundary expansion was a separate matter and did not entail eminent domain. P. Rosa added that Harpers Ferry encountered many problems at the beginning, but that you enlarge your voice when you align with national groups. M. Burke ended by saying that he hoped to go to DC in February or March to meet with the representatives. L. Koonce asked if it would be possible to have a non-voting HLC representative on the Planning Commission who could comment on behalf of the JCHLC. J. Shadle asked whether the JCHLC was involved with work on the courthouse building. M. Burke replied that it is an unusual situation because the courthouse is a county building in the Charles Town Historic District. L. Koonce suggested a courthouse committee.

AmeriCorps Member Report: R. Aitcheson announced that this was to be his last meeting and reported that the battlefield workshops were going well. He thanked the JCHLC for a great year of service. The incoming member, L. Kelly, announced that she was just getting started and was working on adding information to the website and going to start traveling around the county with C. Mason to update the photo inventory of county and National Register landmarks.

Changing the Time and Location of the Monthly Meeting: Discussion was opened about moving the location of the monthly meeting to the basement of the Library and shifting the date to either the 2nd or 4th Wednesday of the month. It was decided that the meeting would now be held on the 2nd rather than the 3rd Wednesday of every month, beginning February 8, 2017, in the County Commission hearing room at the basement of the Charles Town Library.

Establishing a Fundraising Committee: L. Koonce volunteered to be on the committee. M. Burke said he was due to appear before the Jefferson County Historical Society to explain the endowment fund. He is hesitant to throw fundraising events because of the volunteer requirements and looking for lead gifts before presenting the fund to the community at large.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

- A. Status of Shepherdstown Battlefield:** M. Burke announced that he would continue working with the Civil War Trust to acquire land but that the current goal is to get the legislative packet together. He has a list of local organizations he is going to for support.
- B. Status of Old Standard Tract Grant and Easement:** M. Burke said the ABPP Land Acquisition Grant was approved but the delay was finding an organization to hold and enforce the easement. The December 31 deadline for recording the easement at the County Clerk's Office was not met, and there were easement language concerns at the WVSHPO. P. Rosa said the landowner was willing to wait another year.
- C. Status of Feagan's Mill NR Submission:** J. Demer said this nomination is on review in DC and that he expects to hear back (hopefully) by February.
- D. Status of Wild Goose NR Submission:** J. Demer said this nomination was sent to the WVSHPO at the end of December and is now under a 2-month review with Jeff Smith in Charleston.

Additional Comments: M. Burke added that Section 106 forms need to be completed on the PHC, LLC (Merkham) tracts at the Shepherdstown Battlefield. These tracts will be added to the Eyler tract because the Land Trust has a 40-acre

minimum. The Land Acquisition Grant application with ABPP for the \$44,000 was submitted in December and approval should be prior April 15th. Forms need to be filed to expand the Snow Hill National Register nomination to include the surrounding farmland. J. Demer said there is a draft proposal for updating inventory forms at the WVSHPO. L. Koonce encouraged everyone to attend the opening ceremony at Charles Washington Hall. S. Lambert noted that recently the role of the Landmarks Commission in Shepherdstown had changed from making recommendations to making decisions, but that the situation in Harpers Ferry is now opposite. C. Mason recommended John Newcomer, a Jefferson County native, as a potential source of information and ideas and reminded everyone that his house is still for sale.

C. Mason made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by M. Burke. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 8:34pm.