



Meeting Minutes
Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission
County Commission Room, Charles Town Library
Charles Town, WV
February 8, 2023

Present: JCHLC: Martin Burke (Chair); Commissioners Ray Benzinger, John Demer, Jim King, and Addison Reese.

Call to order: Mr. Burke called the meeting to order at 7:03.

I. Public Comments: None.

II. Approval of Minutes from December 7, 2022 -Mr. Demer. No comments.

Mr. Benzinger moved approval; Ms. Reese seconded; vote unanimous.

III Treasurer's Report – Mr. Benzinger.

Mr. Benzinger reported that since August 9, 2022, income totaled \$18,977.60 and expenses were \$19,881.60, leaving a current balance of \$30, 222.19. All bills are paid as of this date, and all JCHLC accounts are current and in order.

Mr. Demer moved approval; Mr. Burke seconded; vote unanimous.

IV Mid-year review of budget – Messrs. Benzinger and Burke. Mr. Burke reminded that at over the halfway point of our fiscal year, a comparison of our approved budget from August 10, 2022, is necessary to ensure we're on course for the remainder of the fiscal year ending June 30. We budgeted income of \$19,460 from the hotel/motel tax. We will probably earn more than that because AirBnbs now generate income and the National Conservation and Training Center has resumed classes. Our estimate of income from bread baking at the Peter Burr Farm is dependent on Wayne Braunstein's continued ability to bake as he hopes he will. We also have benefitted from four grants. We were a pass-through for a Battlefield Land Acquisition Grant (BLAG) for \$977,144 from the American Battlefield Trust for purchase of the James Osbourn farm (former Far Away Farm). We received two grants from the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation. One will pay for living history interpreter Dr. Deborah Rochefort to visit all fourth-grade classes to describe Fiber and Textiles in Colonial America and the other paid for flooring at Duffield's Depot. Finally, a grant from the West Virginia Humanities Council helped pay for reprinting five folders.

Our insurance expenses will increase dramatically when we assume ownership of the James Osbourn Farm and two structures in particular – the house and the barn. What we will do with the two structures that postdate the period of significance is uncertain. The structures are the corn crib and metal work building now rented by Butch Sanders.

We will ask the Jefferson County Visitor Bureau to take over payment of \$400 for two Civil War signs erected, owned, and maintained by Civil War Trails.

Mr. Burke will appear before the Jefferson County Commission to ask for \$5,000 for flooring for Duffields Depot. We also need to pay for removal of water from the basement of Duffields as the current sump system hasn't been able to keep up with water entering.

Ms. Reese plans to apply for a grant for Fairview Cemetery. Mr. Burke investigated a grant from Lowes, and he asked commissioners about applying for a grant from Charles Town Races and Casino.

- V Certified Local Government (CLG) review and comments on the James Osbourn Farm draft nomination for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Demer summarized justification for the National Register nomination under areas of significance for agriculture, architecture, and most importantly, as site of the Civil War Battle of Shepherdstown. He will represent the nomination to the West Virginia Archives and History Commission in Charleston on February 22.

Mr. Burke recommended approval; Mr. King seconded: vote unanimous.

VI Reports and announcements.

- a. JC County Courthouse National Historic Landmark status. Mr. Burke reported that until a new National Park Service Advisory Board is named and in place our National Historic Landmark nomination for the Jefferson County Courthouse is on hold.
- b. Status of social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube). Patrick Fuller will update our social media pages on contract at the hourly rate of \$15.
- c. Status of Jefferson County cemeteries. Ms. Reese reported meeting with George Rutherford at Fairview Cemetery and his compliments that she had completed so much work. He suggested she look at a Black cemetery in Middleway that needed attention. Ms. Reese reported that she has spent a few weeks there, and that it looks much better. Because the site contains animal bones Ms. Reese feels an archeologist should examine it. She reported a giant well and the foundation of what may have been a former church. Mr. Burke reported that Sidewinder Industries from Newport Beach, California bought what was the old 3-M plant in Middleway and began pumping water out of Lake Louise until the Army Corps of Engineers stopped them. Mr. Burke and Ms. Reese said they would report locations of heretofore unrecorded cemeteries to Susan Wood at the SHPO.
- d. Status of National Register and JC Landmark nominations.

1. Route 340 mitigation – Shady Grove. Maral Kalbian will continue contract work on Shady Grove, a farm owned by Wade Louthan in southern Jefferson County on the Virginia border. Mr. Burke said he'd ask Ms. Kalbian to work on either McPherson's Mill and or Straithmore. He spoke with Steve Stohliper (Chair, Jefferson County Commission) about both sites. In any case the JCHLC needs to ask the West Virginia Highway Department for an extension of two years to complete the project.

2. Susan Thornton House. The JCHLC faced pushback for a stand-alone nomination for the Susan Thornton House and instead prepared an amended nomination to the Nathan Haines Farm. Because the Susan Thornton House occupies land that belonged to the Nathan Haines family, and because the Thorntons provided three generations of domestic and agricultural service to the Haines family, the amended nomination is warranted. Cody Straley, our state SHPO contact for National Register nominations tentatively accepted our revised nomination. Ms. Reese volunteered to present it to the WV.
 3. Shenandoah Planing Mill/Winchester Cold Storage. The project is a work-in-progress, having been begun by Patrick Fuller. Mr. Demer offered to take it over, and Mr. Burke agreed.
 4. Isaac Clymer House. Mr. Demer reported that property owners need to supply photographs.
 5. Keller Furnace. Mr. Demer will make a site visit. The property is located at the junction of Bakerton Road and Trough Roads. The property adjoins the B&O Railroad that historically allowed cement to be shipped by rail to Washington, D. C. and northern Virginia.
 6. James Osbourn House. Mr. Demer reported that the National Register draft nomination will be presented to the West Virginia Commission of Culture and History February 23, 2023. Mr. Burke elaborated that on November 30, 2022, the American Battlefield Trust (ABT), with major funding from the West Virginia Outdoor Conservation Heritage Fund, the American Battlefield Protection Program, part of the National Park Service, and the Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association, bought the property from its private owner, Far Away Farm, Inc.
 7. May House. Mr. Demer reported no response from the realty office or owner for permission to draft a West Virginia Historic Property Inventory Form (WVHPIF). Mr. Burke asked Mr. Demer to try again.
 8. Waltz House. Mr. Demer reported no response from the owner for permission to draft a WVHPIF on the property. Mr. Burke asked Mr. Demer to try again.
- e. Status of concept plan reviews and zoning changes. Mr. King, also a member of the Shepherdstown Comprehensive Planning Committee reported the committee looks favorably on a demolition by neglect ordinance. He said that Karine Motivans wants to meet with the JCHLC to talk about areas where our two commissions overlap and the need to work more closely together. She is particularly interested in Shepherdstown's next ten-year plan. Mr. King reported that Jefferson County is working on an update to its comprehensive plan as well.
 - f. JCHLC properties.
 - 1a. *Peter Burr Farm.* Mr. Burke reported setting up a meeting with the new assistant director for JC Parks and Recreation, David Kling, to encourage their use of the property. Mr. Burke plans to invite Mr. Kling to take a tour. Mr. Burke also hope to discuss lawn care as JC Parks and Rec. is advertising a new contract for maintenance of its parks.
 - 1b. *Moulton Farm.* On the topic of Jefferson County Parks and Recreation, Mr. Benzinger said it acquired Moulton Farm on the south side of the Shenandoah River. Mr. Burke said there is a category two historic house on the property that he suggested the P&R lease to maintain its integrity.

2. *Duffields Depot*. Mr. Burke said that the depot requires two parking spaces under the current Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Burke has written to Michael George, owner of a small parcel on the northwest corner of the depot. Mr. George has parked a travel van on the site. Mr. Burke will ask Nathan Cochran, county attorney, to contact Mr. George about selling the parcel.

3. *Shepherdstown Battlefield*. Mr. Burke reported that sometime before July 1, 2023, the American Battlefield Trust will transfer the James Osbourn Farm to the JCHLC. We will have to increase our insurance to cover it. Currently the property generates \$2,200 from the tenant, \$500 a month from Butch Sanders who leases shop space, \$500 a month from the farm lease (\$6,000 annually), and \$2,500 annually from the lease to hunt. The Commission will not renew the lease to hunt. Mr. Burke is working with Kathy Robertson at the ABT on leases.

- g. Status of projects with Jefferson County schools. Mr. Burke reported that during March, Deborah Rochefort will visit all Jefferson County fourth-graders to talk about life in 1775 in Jefferson County. Dr. Rochefort will dress in period clothing and demonstrate wool carding and have the students make sweet bags..
- h. Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation cemetery grants. Mr. Benzinger reminded that the next deadline for cemetery grants from the Helen Willard Parker Fund is February 23. Ms. Reese said she's had success in applying for those grants in the past and plans to continue doing so.
- i. AmeriCorps Member. Mr. Burke reported no follow-through responses to our quest for an intern. One person from New Hampshire showed interest but decided against applying. Mr. Burke will approach the County Commission for funding to hire a part-time contract employee, paid jointly by the County Commission and JCHLC.

Adjournment. At 8:38 *Mr. Burke moved adjournment; Mr. Benzinger seconded; vote unanimous.*

Respectfully submitted,

John Demer, Commissioner and Secretary