

MEETING NOTES

Thurston County Historic Commission
Wednesday, December 14, 2022
Thurston County Community Planning & Economic Development
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW, Bldg.1, Room 280, Olympia, WA 98502

Members & Alternates Present: Rob Kirkwood, Grace Edwards, Chris Hoffman, Bill Lindstrom, Rebecca Sanchez, David Petrich, John Grenier, Charlie Roe, Ken Balsley

Members & Alternates Absent:

Chairing: Grace Edwards

Staff Present: Sonja Cady, Community Planning & Economic Development
Jeremy Davis, Community Planning & Economic Development

Guests: Janice Arnold, Stan Klyne

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:30 p.m. by Vice-Chair Edwards.

A. ADMINISTRATION

1. Attendance

Attendance of the Historic Commission was noted by Staff.

2. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Roe made a motion to approve the December 14, 2022 agenda.
Commissioner Balsley seconded. Motion Carried.

3. Approval of Meeting Notes

Commissioner Kirkwood moved to approve the November 9, 2022 meeting minutes.
Commissioner Hoffman seconded. Motion carried.

B. Grand Mound Schoolhouse Special Tax Valuation

The Historic Commission received a staff report prior to the meeting detailing the rehabilitation project done to the schoolhouse, expenditures, and Special Tax Valuation guidelines. In the report staff and the subcommittee recommended approval of the Special Tax Valuation application for the Grand Mound Schoolhouse.

The applicants Janice Arnold and Stan Klyne were in attendance and thanked the Historic Commission and staff for all their hard work.

Commissioner Balsley moved to approve the Special Tax Valuation for the Grand Mound Schoolhouse. Commissioner Kirkwood seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

The applicant's asked what the next steps were, staff will be sending them the special tax valuation agreement for their review, which will be recorded by the Auditor's office before the end of the year. The Applicant's also asked how to obtain a Historic Register plaque and whether they could place a sign closer to the road. Staff answered that a sign could be posted closer to the road as long as it was in compliance with County setbacks. Commissioner Kirkwood offered to work with the Applicant's and plaque vendor.

C. Election of Officers

Commissioner Edwards will be promoted to Chair in 2023 per the updated Historic Commissions Policies and Procedures. Commissioner Lindstrom nominated Commissioner Hoffman as Vice-Chair because of the energy and zeal he has brought to the Commission. Other Commissioners were in favor and Commissioner Hoffman accepted.

Commissioner Balsley made a motion to elect Commissioner Hoffman as Vice-Chair. Commissioner Kirkwood seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Commissioner Hoffman thanked everyone and provided a brief summary of his background and experiences chairing.

Commissioner Balsley praised Commissioner Edwards for her role as Vice-Chair.

D. Recap of Meeting with the CPED Director

Commissioner Edwards informed the group that Commissioner Kirkwood had requested a meeting with the Director of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED). Commissioners Kirkwood, Edwards, Hoffman, and Lindstrom attended the meeting with Mr. Cummings and Mr. Davis. They requested clarification on the delayed timeline of the RAC kiosk project, what the Historic Commissions role is for the County, and to create a path forward. Director Cummings expressed that the Commission's primary role is to issue and track Heritage Grants. Commissioner Edwards would like to meet with the Board of County Commissioners more frequently and requested guidance on what their roles are and what expectations the BoCC has for the Commission and what kind of assistance the Commission can expect from the BoCC. The Commissioners would also like further clarification on what their limitations are. Both she

and Commissioner Kirkwood were surprised that the Heritage Grant Program is considered the top priority of the Commission as it is not detailed anywhere in the ordinance or policies.

Commissioner Kirkwood recommended forming a subcommittee to review and revise the ordinance at the beginning of 2023. The Commission currently does not meet the required qualifications for Board Members, which may need to be revised as well as the Commission's objectives. The Historic Commission agreed to form a subcommittee and enlist the members who were present for the meeting, Commissioners Kirkwood, Edwards, Hoffman, and Lindstrom.

Commissioner Sanchez asked if the meeting with the Director is an annual meeting, if not, how was the meeting initiated? Commissioner Kirkwood responded that he had called for the meeting to inquire why the RAC project had been taking so long, and to establish a connection with the BoCC for more information on expectations and objectives.

E. Historic Preservation Review of section 2.106.030 and 2.106.040

Commissioner Balsley had requested that the item be removed from the agenda. He had hoped to review the section of code prior to listing a property on the Historic Register.

F. Yelm Cemetery Plaque Unveiling

Commissioner Kirkwood shared the plaque that will be presented to the Yelm Cemetery signifying their placement on the Historic Register. The Historic Commission is able to gift the \$700 plaque to the Cemetery because the Cemetery is County property. The Commission is still working on a program to sell the plaques or gift them through a lottery to other properties on the register. Commissioner Grenier asked what the Historic Commission's budget is? Commissioner Kirkwood and staff clarified that it is typically a \$10,000 annual budget for projects including the County birthday, Heritage Day, and other projects. There is also a large fund that is used for the Heritage Grant Program and larger scaled projects like the history book and RAC Kiosk, with BoCC approval.

Commissioner Kirkwood and Hoffman have volunteered to install the plaque at the Yelm Cemetery. The Commission would like to have an unveiling ceremony to share with the Community and promote the Historic Register. Staff will work with the County PIO to promote the event once a date has been determined. Commissioner Lindstrom suggested reaching out to the coach of the Yelm football team who just won a state championship to see if they would like to participate at the unveiling.

Commissioner Balsley made a motion to designate \$500 of the 2023 budget to mounting the plaque at the Yelm Cemetery. Commissioner Lindstrom seconded. All in Favor. Motion Carried.

G. WWP Sales Report Update

Staff informed the Commission that the Olympia Historical Society & Bigelow House Museum are down to their last 20 copies of the history book and will be terminating their contract once the remaining books have been sold. The Commission agreed to revisit this topic at the January meeting once the BoCC has approved the final budget. At that time, they can determine whether there are enough funds to do an additional printing. There will also need to be another application period for a new non-profit to assume the contract. Commissioner Lindstrom agreed to track the topic.

H. CLG Grant

Commissioner Kirkwood gave an overview on the CLG grant application to hire a consultant to update the Historic Register. The Historic Commission has applied for the grant in the past and plans to apply for it in April of 2023. A subcommittee was formed for this task in the November meeting and has been updated to Commissioners Sanchez, Kirkwood, and Grenier. Staff will send the subcommittee a copy of the previous application and work to schedule a meeting in January.

I. RAC Interpretive Panels Update

Commissioner Balsley submitted a draft write up for the Evergreen Ballroom panel to the City for review and they will continue to make edits. Commissioner Hoffman suggested setting a deadline for the text and layout of the panels to be completed for presentations to the entire Historic Commission. The subcommittee will need to create a template of the panel layouts. All Commission members are encouraged to help with the writing of the panels. Staff will send a list of suggested topics for panels to the entire Historic Commission.

J. Staff Updates

Mr. Davis informed the group that CPED has completed their move to the Atrium building at 3000 Pacific Ave SE. The January meeting will be held at the new location and be available via Zoom.

K. Other Business

Commissioner Edwards followed up on the status of the Heritage Day report, it has not been sent out. She also asked Staff to speak to the County PIO to help with recruitment, maybe use the Fair Boards recent recruitment as an example.

L. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Prepared by Sonja Cady, Historic Commission staff