

MEETING NOTES

Thurston County Historic Commission
Wednesday, July 12, 2023
Thurston County Community Planning & Economic Development
3000 Pacific Ave SE, Room 110, Olympia, WA 98501

Members & Alternates Present: Grace Edwards, Chris Hoffman, Bill Lindstrom, Rebecca Sanchez, David Petrich, Charlie Roe, Troy Wilson, Charles Gloyd

Members & Alternates Absent: Rob Kirkwood

Chairing: Grace Edwards

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

Guests:

CALL TO ORDER

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

A. ADMINISTRATION

1. Land Acknowledgement
2. Roll Call-Roll call was taken, attendance is listed above
3. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Hoffman made a motion to approve the July 12, 2023 agenda, Commissioner Lindstrom seconded. Motion Carried.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Wilson moved to approve the June 14, 2023 meeting minutes. Commissioner Lindstrom seconded. Motion carried.

B. Pruitt Barn Public Hearing (Staff)

Ms. Bowers presented the staff report on the 1901 barn and opened the hearing to public comment, no members of the public were present. Ms. Pruitt, the applicant and owner of the barn was present and available for questions. Commissioner Lindstrom asked if the Commission would be voting to place the barn on the Historic Register as is, or once rehabilitated? Staff answered that it would be placed as is. Ms. Pruitt explained that the work done to the barn would be to lift it off its rotting log foundation and replace it with cement foundation and fasteners to stabilize the building. The work will be done by a contractor who was recommended to her by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), and that the original floorboards would be put back in place once the barn is stabilized. Commissioner Gloyd asked what the intended use of the barn is once the rehabilitation is completed. Mr. Pruitt answered that it will be used to house her horses and store hay and a tractor.

Commissioner Hoffman made a motion to place the Pruitt Barn on the Thurston County Historic Register. Commissioner Petrich seconded. Call to vote, all in favor. Motion carried.

C. Update Subcommittees (Grace Edwards)

Commissioner Edwards gave a brief overview of each subcommittee's duties, who the current members are, and who the chair is. She encouraged the Commissioners to take time to consider which subcommittees they would like to serve on, each subcommittee can now have up to 4 members.

Ms. Bowers suggested reorganizing the subcommittees and merging some of the similar groups so they are not for individual projects. Commissioner Hoffman agreed and asked if it would be appropriate to form a Historic Register Review subcommittee. Commissioner Sanchez also suggested forming a subcommittee for writing and tracking grants, this would replace the CLG Grant subcommittee. This item will be added to the August agenda to further discuss the subcommittee format and Historic Commissioners can volunteer for the committees they prefer.

D. Budget Requests (Grace/Jeremy)

Commissioner Edwards opened the discussion explaining that the Heritage Preservation budget receives \$1 from every document recorded at the County. The Historic Commission is given \$10,000 a year for projects and can request additional funds from the BoCC for Heritage Grants and other larger projects. Mr. Davis asked that the Historic Commission make a prioritized list for the 2024-25 budget to request from the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC). The County is currently planning the biennium budget for both those years and will need to have requests received by the beginning of August. He worked with the budget office and there is roughly \$100,000 of Heritage Preservation funds available and they are estimating that approximately \$85,000 of annual revenue will be generated this year. Staff will be meeting with the budget office shortly to discuss this further.

The Historic Journal is not a part of the Commissions \$10,000 project budget, but is funded by Heritage Preservation funds, staff will ask that this continue to be funded.

Commissioner Lindstrom asked about the budget for the history book, staff answered that the Commission did not designate funds for another printing of the book when they prioritized their budget in January. Commissioner Lindstrom added that the subcommittee and staff will be meeting with the City of Lacey the following week to discuss transferring the rights of the book. Commissioner Petrich asked if the Commission could request money for another printing of the book even if they don't end up needing to use it, Staff said this could be requested.

Commissioner Edwards would like to request raising the amount granted for each Heritage Grant Project, staff said it would be possible to request a higher amount from the Board for 2024 grants.

Mr. Davis reiterated that the Historic Commission receives a \$10,000 discretionary budget for things like the plaque project, Heritage Day, and cake for the birthday. He suggested that the Commission request to increase this budget to \$15,000 annually. Ms. Bowers suggested requesting funds annually for the Historic Register update that could go towards hiring a consultant to help with the work.

Commissioner Gloyd asked if there are provisions for maintaining plaques and information displays that have been granted or installed by the County. Mr. Davis said no but suggested creating a program to grant funds to organizations to maintain and upkeep their markers as the County does not have enforcement authority. Ms. Bowers added that most grants will have maintenance timelines, the Commission may want to review the language in their grant agreements. She added that plaques and markers in the County are maintained by the Parks Department which is underfunded, the Commission could use their funds to help Parks maintain County owned markers and plaques.

The Historic Commission continued to discuss the budget, based on their suggestions Staff compiled the list below and forwarded it to the Commission to be reviewed with comments to be returned to staff.

- Increase the Historic Commission project budget to \$15,000
- Increase Heritage Grant Program grants to \$7,500 per grant for 6 grants
- Reprinting of the history book \$9,000
- Professional Services \$5,000

E. CLG Grant Presentation Update (Grace)

Commissioner Edwards gave a recap on the CLG Grant Presentation during the subcommittee review. She shared with the Commission that the presentation given to DAHP earlier that day went very well. Ms. Bowers created a PowerPoint presentation and Commissioners Sanchez and Edwards presented. The panelists shared excitement about the project and had a few questions regarding the phases of the grant, when the 10 articles would be published in the Thurston Journal, and specifics on how the Register will be updated and shared publicly. Commissioner

Wilson asked when the Historic Commission began to work on the application, Commissioner Edwards answered that it started in January. The Historic Commission was going to apply the previous year but were not able to complete the application in time to be reviewed by the County Manager, so they began extra early this year.

Commissioner Edwards reiterated that the Historic Commission had agreed to begin work on updating the register with or without the grant. The subcommittee had discussed updating the register every 5 years to lessen the burden of reviewing properties.

Commissioner Sanchez suggested sharing the PowerPoint with the entire Commission in August, it will be added to the agenda.

F. 2024 Heritage Grant Program (HGP) Applications (Rob)

The Historic Commissioners received the application and guidelines as part of their meeting packets. Commissioner Edwards asked for input from the Commissioners prior to posting the guidelines and applications, suggestions are due to staff by the end of the week. Commissioner Gloyd asked how the grant is announced? Staff answered that in previous years the BoCC would send a press release for local media to pick up if they would like. Ms. Bowers suggested posting the announcement on the BoCC webpage and social medias, other media sources are still able to pick up the article if they wish. Ms. Cady offered to email the announcement to the email list of previous HGP recipients. Commissioner Hoffman asked if schools are eligible for funding and suggested reaching out to schools to encourage educating youth groups.

G. Yelm Cemetery (Chris)

The plaque has been mounted at the Yelm Cemetery and the unveiling event has been scheduled for Saturday September 16th at 10 am. Ms. Bowers was glad to share that two County Commissioners will be in attendance and Commissioner Edwards will be speaking. The Commission and staff will continue to work on a plaque program to grant plaques to Historic Register properties and/or sell them. Commissioner Roe drafted a program that is being reviewed by the legal department.

H. Heritage Day Planning (Grace/Staff)

Heritage Day is scheduled for October 14th at Heritage Hall, so far seven Heritage Grant Program recipients have confirmed attendance. The groups who plan on attending are the City of Lacey, Old Brewhouse Foundation, Olympia Historical Society and Bigelow House Museum, Olympia Tumwater Foundation, Northwest Playwrights Alliance, Window Seat Media, and potentially the Northwest Institute of Leadership and Change. Commissioner Edwards would like to have 10 groups present and would like to follow up with phone calls.

Ms. Bowers offered to help with the outreach for the event and asked the Commission who the target audience is. Commissioner Edwards would like to see HGP recipients, cities within the County, and people interested in local history. Ms. Bowers suggested creating a type of competition at the local schools for one class to win the honor of presenting at Heritage Day. The Commission liked this idea and would like to incorporate kids at the event.

Commissioner Gloyd asked if there is a list of heritage entities in the County. There is not a comprehensive list at this time, Ms. Bowers volunteered to help create a directory of historic groups and contacts to include the tribes.

I. Water, Woods, & Prairies Update (Bill)

The book was discussed during the subcommittee updates. Staff and the subcommittee will be meeting with the City of Lacey on Tuesday to discuss possibly transferring publishing rights.

J. RAC Interpretive Panel Update (Bill/Staff)

Mr. Davis is working with the County legal department to review the MOU. Commissioner Hoffman updated the group that they are still working on the panels, the artist had been out of town but has now returned. The Commission gave Ms. Bowers an overview on the content of panels and style of the kiosk. The subcommittee will schedule a meeting in the near future.

K. Ordinance Revisions Update (Staff)

Commissioner Edwards explained that a subcommittee has made proposed revisions to the Historic Commissions Ordinance with the guidance of the CLG coordinator. Mr. Davis is reviewing the requested changes.

L. Thurston County Fair (Grace)

Commissioner Edwards stated that the Commission has typically participated in the Thurston Throwback event at the Thurston County Fair. The previous year the Commission did not participate because the event wasn't planned in advance and other groups dropped out as well. On July 5th staff was contacted by the Secretary of State's office inviting heritage groups to participate at the fair and share information and give away promotional materials. The Commission discussed the event and decided not to participate because of the time constraints.

M. Staff Updates (Staff)

Staff did not have any other updates.

N. Other Business

There was no other business.

O. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Prepared by Sonja Cady, Historic Commission staff