

MEETING NOTES

Thurston County Historic Commission
Wednesday, October 11, 2023
Thurston County Community Planning & Economic Development
3000 Pacific Ave SE, Room 110, Olympia, WA 98501

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

Members & Alternates Absent: Grace Edwards

Chairing: Chris Hoffman

Staff Present: Sonja Cady, Community Planning & Economic Development

Guests: Howard Bergh, Janice Arnold

CALL TO ORDER

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

A. ADMINISTRATION

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

Commissioner Petrich moved to approve the October 11, 2023 agenda. Commissioner Lindstrom seconded. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Roe moved to approve the September 13, 2023 meeting minutes. Commissioner Petrich seconded. Motion carried.

B. Besse Road Historic Sign Public Hearing (Staff/Mr. Bergh)

Commissioner Hoffman. opened the public hearing, no members of the public were in attendance. Ms. Bowers went over the details of the application and staff report for a historic road sign to be placed at the intersection of Tilley RD and 100th Ave SE. Mr. Howard Bergh

submitted the application for placement of the historic road sign to commemorate the original name of the road as Besse RD. The road was originally petitioned to be named Besse Road in 1902 and later changed to 100th Ave in 1970 when the county changed the addressing ordinance. Mr. Bergh shared that he grew up on Besse RD and was a neighbor to the Besse family. There were 4 children whom all attended Olympia High School, and the two sons served in World War Two.

Commissioner Gloyd asked whether the application was for one sign or two, one for each end of the road. Staff confirmed that it is for 1 sign, Mr. Bergh is aware that he will be responsible for paying Public Works the \$175 to purchase the sign. Commissioner Kirkwood asked if the Commission could use funds from their budget to purchase a second sign as an education and outreach project. Staff will look into this. Commissioner Gloyd asked what the timeline was for the installation of the sign? Staff will reach out to Public Works to get a timeline and share it with the Commission and Mr. Bergh.

Commissioner Petrich made a motion to approve the application for placement of historic road sign at the intersection of Tilley Rd and 100th Ave SE. Commissioner Gloyd seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kirkwood made a motion to request up to \$250 for the purchase of a second sign to be placed at the other end of 100th Ave. Commissioner Petrich seconded. Motion carried.

C. Yelm Cemetery Recap (Rob/Dana)

Commissioner Kirkwood debriefed the Commission on the Yelm Cemetery event stating that it was attended by all 3 County Commissioners, multiple Cemetery District Commissioners, and members of the public. The weather was great and people enjoyed the unveiling event. Ms. Bowers added that a retired cemetery district commissioner of 30 years attended the event with her entire family. She shared that it was an honor for her to be at the plaque unveiling and see her hard work honored with her family by her side. She and her family were also happy to share information about the cemetery and interments, taking staff on a small tour of the grounds.

Commissioner Kirkwood asked about the status of the plaque program. Ms. Bowers answered that the process needs to be created still. There still needs to be a recommendation on funds and timing of the frequency of plaque production. Also create a procedure to determine how to place the plaques equitably. Ms. Cady added that the City of Spokane has an application fee for placement to their historic register. This fee covers the cost of each bronze plaque, but their plaques are not unique to each property.

Ms. Bowers suggested having the subcommittee on the Yelm Cemetery Plaque continue to meet to discuss the proposed program.

D. Heritage Day Planning (Staff/subcommittee)

Commissioner Sanchez informed the group that she is ill and will not be able to attend Heritage Day and left the meeting. Ms. Bowers received the video from Chair Edwards to open the event and asked Commissioner Hoffman to lead the event. It was decided not to show the PowerPoint

presentation on the CLG grant and historic register update. Ms. Bowers will be providing Commissioner Hoffman with a bulleted script.

E. Heritage Grant Review (Staff)

Staff provided the Commission with a brief rundown of the applications received including the name of the heritage organization and proposed projects. Six applications were received by the following historic groups; City of Olympia, City of Tenino, Gate Community Club, Olympia Historical Society & Bigelow House Museum, Olympia Tumwater Foundation, and Window Seat Media. The budget allowed for up to \$45,000 in grants to be funded and only \$30,000 have been requested. The subcommittee had requested to propose granting each group additional funds if they could use them.

Commissioner Kirkwood made a motion to award each applicant the requested amount of money and an additional \$1500 to each group needing additional funding if the budget allows. Commissioner Wilson seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

F. Water, Woods, Prairies (Bill/Staff)

Ms. Bowers drafted an MOU for the City of Lacey to review. They have let her know that they will be unable to review the draft until the end of October or early November because of an upcoming conference. The city will have a representative presenting at Heritage Day and will be selling copies of the book. Commissioner Lindstrom shared that Ms. Crowell will be selling her remaining copies of the book on November 18-19th at the Elma Christmas Bazaar.

G. RAC Interpretive Panel Update (Rob/Staff)

Commissioner Kirkwood asked if the MOU is completed. Ms. Bowers needed to confirm that the construction drawings provided earlier were accurate as they would need to be included in the MOU for signature. Commissioner Kirkwood confirmed that they are correct and will drop off 11"x17" print outs of them the next day.

Ms. Bowers and Ms. Burbidge with Lacey met previously to discuss the MOU and Ms. Burbidge stated that the cities Capital Projects Department does not pour concrete in the winter, they would want to wait for dryer weather in the spring. Discussions continued on this topic. Commissioner Kirkwood will provide a construction schedule for the project and added that the roof of the structure may not be completed until February or March which would coincide with the city's timeline.

Staff and Commissioner Kirkwood have been working with Geodata to create the map for the kiosk, Ms. Bowers will bring it to Heritage Day for review. She will need to know what fonts and design styles Mr. Murray is using for the other panels so that the map matches the style of the other panels. Commissioner Lindstrom shared that he has narratives and photos ready for the majority of the panels, and that the subcommittee may need to purchase a few photos to complete the panels.

H. Historic Register Update (Staff)

Seventeen property owners have responded to the letters regarding site visits of their properties on the historic register. Staff and the subcommittee discussed a better plan of action to schedule these visits. It was decided that it would not be secure to share the spreadsheet with all of the property owner's information so staff will be assigning a property to a member of the subcommittee and provide them with the contact information. That person would then work with the property owner to schedule a time and coordinate with a Historic Commissioner to perform the site visit with them.

Commissioner Kirkwood and Hoffman performed the first site visit at the Bell Bennette House and will be going to the Bronson Resort later in the week.

I. Staff Updates (staff/Chris)

Ms. Bowers shared that the County was approached by Holly Borth with the City of Olympia to apply for an African American Civil Rights grant with the Olympia Historical Society & Bigelow House Museum, Dr. Thelma Jackson, and other jurisdictions. It was discovered that there are unmarked graves of African American settlers in the Odd Fellow Cemetery and was later found that there are similar situations in other cemeteries throughout the county. The County has signed off to be the fiscal agent for the grant and there are no expectations for the Historic Commissioners, the work will be done by consultants and the county fiscal staff would be monitoring the grant agreement. Commissioner Wilson asked who made the decision with such a quick turn around time? Ms. Bowers answered that the interim County Manager, Robin Campbell signed off on it after being approved by CPED. The grant deadline extended which helped with the decision making. Staff will send the grant to the commission for review.

Commissioner Kirkwood made a motion to move forward with being the fiscal agent of the grant and help the project. Commissioner Lindstrom seconded. Motion carried.

J. Other Business

- Janice Arnold, owner of the Grand Mound Schoolhouse property attended the meeting to discuss her proposal to the county for a Grand Mound Historic District. Ms. Bowers shared that the Historic Commissions ordinance does have some criteria for establishing a historic district, but it could benefit from updates. The Historic Commission is currently working on revising the ordinance which makes for perfect timing to receive a proposal for a historic district.
Ms. Arnold's proposal would include the 2.5 acres property that is the Grand Mound Schoolhouse, the adjacent property which is on the historic register called Sunshine Hall, an Oregon Trail Marker, the parcel where Woody's Nook once was, and land for a cultural landscape where wild camas grow. The idea for a historic district came to her and her husband Stan Klyne when they hosted an event this summer with former students at the Grand Mound School. The students were happy to show them the parcel where Woody's Nook once was and the stairs to the building that still remain. Woody's Nook was a dance hall and community center built in 1917 and burned down in the 1950's.

Ms. Bower asked the Commission if they would like to add a presentation by Ms. Arnold to the November agenda or if they would like to figure out the historic district ordinance prior to having a project to focus on. The Commission would like to have examples of other jurisdictions first. Staff will bring examples of other historic districts in the state and applications to the November meeting. Commissioner Kirkwood suggesting looking into a National Historic District on Whidbey Island and Commissioner Wilson suggested looking at districts in the state of Washington through DAHP.

- Commissioner Hoffman was looking into editing the land acknowledgment prior to Heritage Day and found that it can be very controversial. He and Commissioner Edwards would like the Racial Equity Program Manager to help review the acknowledgement. Ms. Bowers would like to invite Devi Ogden to the November meeting to discuss this and putting a historic timeline on the Historic Commission webpage. The Commission agreed to add this to the agenda.

K. Adjournment

Commissioner Lindstrom made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Petrich seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.
Prepared by Sonja Cady, Historic Commission staff