

**Culture & Heritage
Board of Commissioners Meeting
March 24, 2014
6:00pm
McCelvey Center, York, SC**

Approved 5-5-14

Person Presiding: Chair, David Plexico
Members Present: Carlos Bryson, Ragin Craig, David Duncan, Dennis Getter, Jonell Hagner,
Rick Lee
Ex Officio Present: Nancy Craig
Staff Present: Carey Tilley, Barbara Ardrey
Others: County Council Members Britt Blackwell, Joe Cox, Bruce Henderson,
Chad Williams; County Attorney Michael Kendree

Prior to the meeting being called to order, those present at the time took a tour of the new McCelvey Annex.

The meeting was called to order by CHC Chair, David Plexico. Plexico thanked the County Councilmembers for being present and the staff for the tour of the Annex. He then noted that he would like a motion to have the Executive Session, for receipt of legal advice, moved up so the Commission could meet with the Councilmembers present and not tie up their time any longer than necessary .

Plexico so moved; Lee seconded; Kendree noted that it can be moved to extend the rules and bring the matter up first in Executive Session and that once in Executive Session, he will limit the number of Councilmembers in attendance; a vote was taken and all those in attendance at the time voted in favor; the motion passed unanimously. (Note: Commissioner Bryson was not present at this time but arrived at 7:30pm during Executive Session.)

Executive Session

- Receipt of Legal Advice

Reconvened to Open Session

[Note: Councilmembers Joe Cox, Bruce Henderson and Chad Williams were present during Executive Session.]

Plexico announced that no action was taken as a result of Executive Session.

Getter noted for the record that Rick Lee asked to be excused due to illness so he will not be attending the rest of the meeting.

Plexico moved to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2014; Ragin Craig seconded; a vote was taken and all those presented were in favor; the motion passed unanimously.

Report of Executive Director

(See full report of Executive Director attached as Addendum A to these minutes.)

Committee Reports

- Finance Committee – no formal meeting
 - Getter did have a handout for the Commissioners of the Revenue and Expenditures through February 28, 2014.
 - Getter and Tilley did a quick review of the report and Getter asked that if anyone had questions, to bring them to the next meeting or to call him.

- Governance Committee – no formal meeting
 - Hagner noted that she is still interested in surveying the employees to get their input as to where they feel the organization is at the moment and if we are headed in the right direction, etc. She is working on some questions for Commission review.
 - Hagner inquired as to what is being done about filling Frank Couch's job. Tilley advised that he would like to set up a time to meet with the Governance Committee to discuss options on filling that position and make revisions to the organizational chart.

- Collections Committee
 - Duncan reported that the Collections Committee did meet at Brattonsville. He noted that there was a lot of discussion about the buildings at HB being like pieces of the museum and the need for guidelines to manage them as such.
 - Duncan also advised that there were no Recommendations for Accession or Deaccession to come before the Commission this month.

Old Business

- Admission Charges
 - Tilley reported that the staff has not yet put together an analysis on this that would allow him to make a recommendation at this point and it doesn't seem like a pressing issue at the moment. He, therefore, respectfully requested that this matter be deferred to a future date. Getter concurred.

- By-Laws
 - Getter noted that officially any proposed changes in the By-Laws presented at this meeting cannot be voted on because such changes require seven days' notice but they can be discussed and voted on at the next meeting.
 - Getter presented three proposed changes as follows:
 - 1) Under Section 7, paragraph (a), add the word "standing" in front of the word "committees" in the third sentence to clarify that sentence.
 - 2) Also under Section 7, paragraph (f), delete the heading and the first two sentences and add the following: "Other committees that are authorized by the Commission (ie. Collections, Fundraising, and others) will submit their charters for approval. These committees will consist of up to seven (7) members, with the chair appointed by the

Commission Chairperson. Also, staff, ex officio board members, or volunteers may be voting members of these committees.”

3) Under Section 11, eliminate the current paragraph (c) entitled “Participation by Conference Telephone.” and reletter the remaining three paragraphs accordingly.

- Lengthy discussion ensued.
- It was decided to drop the telephone participation for Executive Session. Getter then noted that for the next meeting he will prepare two versions regarding telephone conference participation for the public meeting -- one allowing participation and one disallowing participation.
- All proposed changes will be sent to the Commissioners at least seven days in advance of the next Commission meeting for presentation at that meeting and thereafter to be voted upon.
- Tilley questioned whether it is within the rules for an individual to propose a By-Laws change if it is sent out seven days in advance of the meeting. Kendree advised that it was.
- Nancy Craig questioned the need for a larger Commission. Discussion followed. Ragin Craig noted that the Commission could stay at the same number but increase the number of committees.

- Survey Questions

- Hagner advised that this matter is being put off until possibly the May meeting.

New Business

- None

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Plexico moved to adjourn; Ragin Craig seconded; no discussion; all voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Prepared by: Barbara Ardrey

Submitted by: Dennis Getter, Secretary/Treasurer

Addendum A
Culture and Heritage Museums
Director's Report
March 24, 2014

Mission: to communicate and preserve the natural and cultural histories of the Carolina Piedmont, inspiring a lifetime of learning.

CHC Commissioners,

I want to thank you once again for your support of the mission of the Culture and Heritage Commission. Despite the continued challenges of the weather we continue to position ourselves for a strong, albeit busy, final quarter. As we moved into March several positives have come together – including two state awards, a second sold-out concert, and what may be our highest single-day attendance total at Historic Brattonsville on record.

Record Day at Children's Day on the Farm

Springtime erupted, if only for a day, this past Saturday with what is possibly a single-day attendance record for Historic Brattonsville. Perfect weather and a wonderful family event combined for a huge visitor turnout. As of the end of the day Saturday, the unofficial total had crossed 1,700 with anticipated increase on the final tally. The previous known record for single-day attendance was 1,735 set at Children's Day on the Farm in 2003. The past weekend marks a return to the growth in special events that we were experiencing earlier in the year before rain slowed us down at Christmas Candlelight and, to a lesser extent, Hog Butchering Day. By comparison and to show the difference that the weather makes, the 2014 Children's Day marked a 559% increase over a drizzly cool event in 2013. The attendance indicates that the people of our community support our programs and the word is getting out to them. While guaranteeing such a beautiful day may not be within our power we will do our best to continue to build on this success through the quality of our programming and public outreach.

"Sweat" and "Way Back When" Receive State Awards

On March 13th, the South Carolina Federation of Museums presented the Culture and Heritage Museums with the 2013 Award of Achievement for our exhibition of "Way Back When: Ice Age Beasts of the Carolina". This exhibition exploring the fauna and flora of the prehistoric Carolina Piedmont opened at MYCO this past June and has been very popular with school groups and general audiences alike. Our team of Teresa Armour, Steve Fields, and Todd Stewart deserve special congratulations and recognition for their talent and hard work in creating this exhibition and our new star – Jeffrey the Jeffersonian Ground Sloth. The exhibition will remain up through the summer of 2014.

We are also proud to announce that "By the Sweat of Our Brows" has been chosen by the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission to receive their 2014 *Preserving our Places in History* Project Award. "Sweat" is a special event offered to the public each September that presents the African American story at Historic Brattonsville through special living history programming as well as unique activities. This year the event had its highest attendance since 2007. Dontavius Williams and the staff at Historic Brattonsville are also to be congratulated for this well-deserved honor. A delegation from the Culture and Heritage Museums will receive the award on March 28th in Columbia.

Visitation Numbers through February

The extreme weather of December and January came to a head in February with a major snow storm causing the Museum of York County (MYCO) and Main Street Children’s Museum (MSCM) to be closed three days and Historic Brattonsville (HB) to be closed four. Still, overall on-site attendance remains strong for the year as we continue to be up 5.7% over 2012-2013. HB and MSCM actually increased February totals while the cancellation of groups on our closed days resulted in a monthly deficit at MYCO. Through the end of February, all three of these sites were up for the year with McCelvey gaining ground. We are still awaiting the March totals but we already know there will be some strong numbers to add – including Children’s Day on the Farm.

Year-To-Date On-site Visitation Comparisons

	Overall	MYCO	HB	MSCM	McCelvey
YTD 2013-2014	49,489	17,846	16,213	13,850 ¹	1,580
YTD 2012-2013	46,827	16,369	16,079	12,449	1,930 ²
Change from Previous Year	+2,662	+1,477	+134	+1,401	-350
% Change from Previous Year	+5.7%	+9.0%	+0.8%	+11.3%	-18.1%
Avg. of last 5 yrs.	40,563³	14,917	17,909	12,356 ⁴	1,773
Change from Avg.	+8,926	+2,929	-1,696	+1,494	-193
% Change Avg.	+22.0%	+19.6%	-9.5%	+12.1%	-10.9%

February Monthly On-site Visitation Comparison

	Overall	MYCO	HB	MSCM	McCelvey
February 13/14	4,979	1,802 ⁵	1,185 ⁶	1,511	481
February 12/13	5,159	2,151	1,032	1,504	470
Change from Prev. Year	-180	-349	+153	+7	+11
% Change	-3.5%	-16.2%	+14.8%	+0.5%	+2.3%

¹ Main Street Children’s Museum YTD Totals for 2013-14 include Countdown to Kindergarten (total of 500). “Countdown” was a first-time program not held in previous years.

² McCelvey YTD Totals for 2012-13 include Southern Harmonies Concerts in July of 2012. These Concerts were funded by a one-time grant. The 2012-13 totals also include the “Keepers of the Culture” event held in November of 2012 with an attendance of 200 (not held in 2013-14).

³ In order to show the growth in total people served at our sites, the mid-year average total attendance includes MSCM; however, it should be noted that MSCM did not open until December of 2010. If MSCM is removed from the equation, the other sites have exceeded the five-year average this year by c. 3%.

⁴ MSCM’s average YTD on-site attendance is only for the two previous years since it did not open until December of 2010.

⁵ Closed three days due to weather

⁶ Closed four days due to weather

Membership

Monthly Membership totals (1,104 members) and monthly income (\$4,370) both fell slightly in February from last month (1,131 members, \$5,500 income). Still membership income for the year-to-date at \$35,263 remains up by more than \$4,500 from last year. This total is the highest it has been in five years and exceeds the average of the past four years by more than \$9,000. We expect March to be strong as twenty-six new memberships were received at Children's Day on the Farm.

Carolina Chocolate Drops Draw the Second Sell-out of the 2014 Southern Sound Series

On March 7th those who could find a ticket were treated to an incredible performance by the Grammy-winning *Carolina Chocolate Drops* at the Lowery Family Theater at McCelvey. The show marked the second sell-out of the season (capacity is 500) following up on the earlier sold-out show featuring the *Steep Canyon Rangers*. Although not quite at capacity, we also had a great turnout (c. 400) for the performance of *Tim O'Brien and Darrell Scott* in February. With one show left in the season, we have already more than doubled our budgeted revenue. *Suzy Bogguss* who is returning to the Lowery Family Theater for the third time on April 5th always brings a great show and strong turnout.

McCelvey Annex

Work on the McCelvey Annex or the "History Center of York County" is down to a few punch list items. Staff has been moving in furnishings and public access material over the past month. We are preparing to open the offices and research room by April 1st and are currently working on a date to celebrate the opening of the facility with the community. The collections and archival material will be slowly and carefully moved over the next several months. The newest addition to the CHC Team, Jillian Matthews (Collections Specialist) has arrived just in time to provide much needed assistance in this endeavor. This Annex project represents a high level of cooperation between the county and the museum staff. County Engineering under the leadership of, first, Mark Kettlewell and, later, Rebecca Bowyer directed the project and coordinated efforts with the architect - Darrell Watts and Contractors – Hendrick Construction to work with History Center staff to meet the unique requirements of this facility. We greatly appreciate the commitment of the county to our heritage as represented through our collections, archives, and research facilities.

HB Brick House – Front Porch Restoration

Phase I (roof, masonry repair, and structural stabilization) for the Brick House at Historic Brattonsville is rolling into the second phase of the project as materials for the Restoration of the Front Porch are actively being purchased and the preservation team is under contract and ready to start the work. We still anticipate final cost savings from the initial work which can be applied to important water-divergence needs. Once the specialized materials are in place, the work should go quickly and we anticipate completion of the porch including painting by June. The project will be a case study for a paper on "Lime Putty and Historic Masonry" to be presented at the South Carolina Historic Preservation Conference by our Preservation Specialist, Shawn Beckwith, and Matt Wolf of Centennial Preservation on April 22nd, in Columbia.

HB Huck's Defeat Battlefield

Work on the Huck's Defeat Battlefield interpretation is well underway. When completed, the project will include a trail around the battlefield, interpretive signage along the trail, a "ghost" structure, a new orientation video, and an interactive electronic component. The signage will feature the artwork of esteemed Revolutionary War artists, Don Troiani and Dan Nance. We are currently on target to have the Battlefield ready to open by July 12th – the anniversary of the battle as well as the date of our annual reenactment. Plans for opening activities, including a special preview for members, are currently being finalized. The original artwork by Nance and Troiani will be displayed at the opening. We are finalizing plans to have the artists present as well.

The Great Awakening and Southern Backcountry Revolutionaries

CHM Historian, Michael Scoggins has worked with Winthrop Anthropology Professor Richard Chacon to co-author a new book on the "crucial role that protestant churches and leadership played in the Revolutionary War". The book will be released on March 31st. The Colonel William Bratton Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution will be hosting a lecture on the new book by the authors on April 12th at the Museum of York County at 10:00 am.

Conclusion

I hope you all will keep in mind our upcoming events including: Suzy Boggus at the McCelvey Center on April 5th, Sheep Shearing Day at Historic Brattonsville on April 12th, the SAR Lecture at MYCO on April 12th, children's events at MSCM in conjunction with Rock Hill's "Come See Me Festival" (April 9th, 10th, and 11th), and our annual Earth Day Birthday Celebration on April 26th. It is always encouraging to the staff to see the Commissioners at our events. Please check with staff or the calendar on our website for more details. Next month's meeting on April 28th will include the presentation of the budget and organizational chart. We will need to make sure that we meet with the Governance and Finance Committees to finalize the recommendations.

The staff and all of the CHC family have worked with heavy hearts over the past few weeks with the loss of our good friend and coworker Frank Couch. Frank had served as Operations Manager of the Culture and Heritage Museums since March of 2006. He was challenged with the monumental task of managing our operations department and did so with extreme effectiveness and without complaining. Despite an immense workload and often long hours, there was never panic. The work simply got done. He had the confidence and respect of the staff. The news of his terminal condition and his passing on March 10th came as a shock to all of us. He will be missed.

Again, I thank you for your support for our mission and our staff.

Sincerely,

(submitted electronically)

Carey L. Tilley
Executive Director