

AUBURN'S HISTORIC & CULTURAL SITES COMMISSION

Meeting minutes from October 12, 2022

NYS Equal Rights Heritage Center, 25 South Street, Auburn, NY 13021

Present: Dr. R. Burgess, B. Chabot, A. Daddabbo, J. Giannettino, J. Kline, K. Kuhl, C. Mason, M. McEvers, G. Sears, D. Stankus, K. Wise Gosch

Excused: L. Carr, C. Kasper, D. Gottschalk-Fielding, J. Waller

Absent: J. Armstrong, R. Bradley, Rev. P. Carter, C. Eidel, K. Hill, S. Kline, J. Kolb, D. Lamb, Rev. P. Price, K. Szewczyk, K. Walker, M. Welych, A. Wilson, J. Wrench

Guests: Lisa Kribs, TGW Studio

Call to Order October 12, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. by B. Chabot. The mission statement was read by A. Daddabbo. Members welcomed Dr. Renee Burgess, Auburn Enlarged City School District's Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to the Commission.

Approval of Minutes

B. Chabot asked for a motion to accept the July 13, 2022 minutes as submitted, and the motion was made by A. Daddabbo and seconded by K. Wise Gosch. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Finance Report

B. Chabot presented the Finance Report and requested that future reports be formatted to reflect quarterly activity. The fiscal year report indicates advertising expenses paid for year-to-date, plus a marginal cost for fulfillment from materials mailed, as well as the small increase in the FLTA membership cost now up \$5 per year totaling \$400. B. Chabot asked for a motion to accept the finance report as submitted, and the motion was made by R. Burgess and seconded by D. Stankus. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Committee Reports

Tourism Strategies

K. Kuhl shared details about upcoming campaigns through Tour Cayuga, including Hibercation and Brave Women. A Harriet Tubman Byway will pass through all of New York State including a section through Auburn. This project will continue its planning stages over the next 2-3 years and will incorporate partnership with the Underground Railroad Museum in Niagara Falls. The Travel Unity Conference will come to Auburn in December 2022, to be held at Hilton Garden Inn.

The Site Director Strategic Meeting will be held on Monday, November 7 at the NYS Equal Rights Heritage Center. B. Chabot will email site directors with more information. C. Kasper and C. Mason will participate in the meeting, as well.

Marketing

J. Kline stated that the Marketing Committee met on September 28 and reviewed the advertising campaign, and agreed to continue on with current ad buys, with some tweaking considering performance and return on investment.

Other ideas were brainstormed for ads, with regional season program booklets for performing arts venues striking a chord. C. Kasper will explore placing ads in the Geneva, Ithaca, Cooperstown, and Binghamton markets. This is a win-win as we would be supporting these fellow arts organizations, as well.

In addition to City support, the Market NY grant funds our marketing & PR work with TGW and BTI, which is going very well. Efforts include social media advertising, billboards, a new e-newsletter, the Visit Auburn booklet & merchandise and street light banners. The Committee was agreeable to allocating \$10,000 of ARPA funding to digital billboards for summer 2023 and promotional banners for South Street. Juneteenth is the signature 2023 event for Market NY; Site Directors, please consider creating programs and events to tie into the theme.

BID & ERHC partnered on notecards, and the 12 designs are replicas of the DRI art panels to be installed on the street lights. If you would like to sell these cards at your site, please let us know. We will host an exhibit opening at ERHC, showcasing the 5 artists' original artwork for Holiday Traditions. It will also be the unveiling event for the art installation.

Programming

B. Chabot introduced Kate Grindstaff, the Outreach Coordinator at Seward House Museum, who operated the Passport to History Program with Ranger Kimberly Szewczyk this past season. Planning for the 2023 school program for Auburn's 4th grade students is underway.

Dates for 2022 and 2023 events were mentioned, such as Founder's Day, Holiday Traditions, Brave Brews, Harriet Tubman Week, Auburn NY Pride, and Juneteenth. An email will be coming from C. Kasper regarding planning and sites can choose ways to collaborate for these events, with receipt of responses being sought prior to Thanksgiving.

Special Presentation: TGW Studio Campaign Report x Harriet's Lantern Trail Troubleshooting

Lisa Kribs shared a PowerPoint presentation illustrating details about the campaign performance. Digital and Print Billboards were displayed in Auburn, Ithaca, Trumansburg, and Lansing advertising the Harriet Tubman Bicentennial celebration in Auburn during 2022. Visuals of targeted ads on social media relating to events, the Harriet Tubman Lantern Trail, and bicentennial awareness were shown, with 30-50% having video ads and most others featuring photos. Google Ad metrics per search reflected the most engaged demographic being the 55+ year old female visitor, with banner ads having the most interaction from the 25-44 year old group. LaLew PR contributed primary themes messaging, news

releases, and story angles; resulting in over 200 online/print/broadcast company and 34 national and global media placements including MSN, ABC, Bridge Street, Yahoo, etc.

Details about the Harriet Tubman Lantern Trail progress were shared. Participation increased significantly during spring and summer 2022. August saw the greatest amount of interaction. QR code usage resulted in nearly 1,000 page views with an average time of 3:14 minutes per page. Improvements and iterations were suggested, with mention of some stickers being damaged or removed, with some comments received of the program being hard to navigate in general. The scavenger hunt element will be maintained with implementation of ease of use plus more unique details to be featured to entice more participation and visitation for multi-site promotion. The Market NY Grant continues in 2023 and the billboards will return.

New Business

There was no new business.

Old Business

There was no old business.

Announcements

A. Daddabbo announced the Cayuga Film Festival will be coming soon. A Harriet Tubman Award Ceremony will occur on October 29.

M. McEvers announced Seymour Library will continue construction with new projects to renovate the roof and North entrance soon. The West Lobby is expected to reopen mid-November. The Fall Festival will take place on October 15 and will include Fort Hill Cemetery guided tours. The Library will celebrate 120 years in 2023.

K. Wise Gosch announced Cayuga Museum will turn 86 years old on October 13, 2022. Case Research Lab will close for the season after this weekend. The second floor of Cayuga Museum will feature a lab display. A Macabre Museum Murder Mystery event returns later this month with limited tickets available. A lecture on October 28 will feature Larry Bell from Howland Stone Store Museum reviewing the history of Prohibition. In December, the museum celebrates the centennial of Sound on Film with special programming, details to come.

K. Grindstaff announced specialty tours will be scheduled monthly at Seward House Museum with the next one occurring today entitled Death Rites in the Victorian Era. On October 18, ERHC will host a book lecture with author David Gellman for his latest release, Liberty's Chain. Haunted History tours will be returning next week on select dates at 6:00 and 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment

B. Chabot adjourned the meeting at 9:51 a.m. A motion was made by A. Daddabbo and seconded by K. Wise Gosch. All were in favor and the motion carried. The next Commission meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, 1/11/2023 at Auburn Public Theater, 8 Exchange Street.

Minutes by Gillian Sears