

AUBURN'S HISTORIC & CULTURAL SITES COMMISSION

Meeting minutes from January 12, 2022 via Zoom

Present: R. Bradley, B. Chabot, J. Giannettino, C. Kasper, J. Kline, J. Kolb, K. Kuhl, C. Mason, Rev. P. Price, G. Sears, K. Szewczyk, M. Welych, K. Wise Gosch, J. Wrench

Excused: J. Armstrong, L. Carr, Rev. P. Carter, A. Daddabbo, C. Eidel, D. Gottschalk-Fielding, K. Hill, S. Kline, D. Lamb, D. Stankus, K. Walker, J. Waller, A. Wilson

Guests: Gavin Thomas, TGW; Lisa Kribs, TGW;

C. Kasper welcomed the group to the meeting and introduced Jessica Wrench as a new member of the commission. She acts as the Education and Program Director, running the Leadership Cayuga program and grant info center for the Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce.

Call to Order January 12, 2021, at 9:02 a.m. by K. Wise Gosch. The mission statement was read by K. Szewczyk.

TGW Studio Campaign Presentation

Gavin Thomas offered a presentation to review 2021 marketing and highlights. Paid Social Media ad statistics were shared with significant gains. Display advertising with the Google Display Network showed the target market geographically. History and dining themed ads performed the best. Visuals included local photographs and promotional videos. The QR code capture for the Lantern Trail was demonstrated. Questions were fielded- C. Kasper asked about the November TGW report and contact capturing, and G. Thomas elaborated about demographics. Conversation was shared about methods of reaching a younger crowd, such as TikTok. Lisa Kribs added perspectives about creative visuals and what portion of visuals should be showing masks, etc. M. Welych asked about which demographics and areas were targeted, G. Thomas responded with the attempt to attract page followers and new viewers. C. Kasper elaborated that more in-market will be targeted soon.

Commission Chair Official Election – Billye Chabot

K. Wise Gosch asked for a motion to elect B. Chabot as the 2022 chair, and the motion was made by R. Bradley and seconded by J. Kline. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

B. Chabot asked for a motion to accept the 11/12/2021 minutes as submitted, and the motion was made by J. Kline and seconded by R. Bradley. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Finance Report

C. Kasper presented the Finance Report. The administrative expense of \$10,000 has been taken out and special projects checks have been mailed. B. Chabot asked for a motion to accept the finance report as submitted, and the motion was made by K. Wise Gosch and seconded by M. Welych. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Committee Reports

Site Directors' written reports were included in the packet. M. Welych shared visitation figures from Q=A=Q. Schweinfurth Art Center (SAC) hosted 1400 visitors for the exhibit in 2021 vs. 1800 in 2019. In 2021 visitation surpassed that in 2018! The Both Ends of the Rainbow exhibit opens on February 6. K. Wise Gosch stated that the end of year traffic was strong and plans to continue the collaboration with SAC are underway, to include the discounted pass for both sites. The next exhibit opens March 4. Seward House Museum (SHM) will be closed in January and February. In 2021, SHM saw 7,000+ visitors, comparable to ERHC's approximate 7500, maintaining the capacity limit of 16 per tour. The candlelight tours were so popular that potential visitors sat on a wait list. Staff are working remotely at the moment. R. Bradley stated the Ward O'Hara Ag. Museum's festival of trees saw about 1800 visitors since mid-November.

Marketing

Market NY award announcement- the third year of grant funding has been awarded, with a value of \$300,000 and a city match of \$100,000 to bolster programming in 2022 and 2023. The RFP enables us to continue working with TGW, who will collaborate with new subcontractors. Paperwork is expected soon. Details were shared about the agencies involved and intent to fund the Harriet Tubman Bicentennial celebration throughout the year. ARPA funding for Visit Auburn can be utilized for reproduction of the visitor guide. In-market campaign strategies will be explored to capitalize on local Harriet Tubman interest. J. Giannettino requested museum directors to share their 2021 attendance figures that he can share with City Council.

Auburn NY Visitor Guide feedback & reprinting

J. Kline thanked C. Mason and the City for their efforts to obtain the necessary funds. Site directors were requested to offer their copy and photo updates. C. Kasper noted that the cover image will remain perennial, pages of content will be added, the map will more closely resemble the one issued in the Skaneateles Directory, the font size will be changed and reduced, and select businesses will not be approached for ad spaces, such as Vape Kult, since the products don't align with what the group wants to represent. C. Mason stated the lobby of ERHC will be visually enhanced with a wall decal resembling the colorful Auburn logo as seen on the visitor guide cover, as well as a welcome message posted on the interior concrete wall. The parking garage renovation project is slated to wrap in spring 2022. National Park style signage will be installed on the campus. The Citizen will be pursuing ad sales to reduce the final cost, as well as a \$50 business listing. A four-page spread for the Harriet Tubman Bicentennial will be included. A mini meeting will be set for next week.

C. Kasper shared the new website, HarrietTubman200.com. The feature exhibit will be the traveling Harriet Tubman statue in residence during July and August at Harriet Tubman Home/National Historical Park. The events page was shown and site directors were encouraged to provide their related events and a cost analysis by mid-February for hosting to be reimbursed. Discussion was had regarding Brave Brews Weekend 2022 March 4-6 and First Friday programming aligning with beverage theme.

New Business

R. Bradley shared that the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution is four years away.

Old Business

K. Kuhl shared the updating of the Underground Railroad tour info, hoping for collateral and online presence in March. The Brave Women 100K challenge is active now, a collaboration with four counties.

C. Kasper add how the Harriet Tubman bicentennial website has been live for one week and already received interest from a bus tour group.

Announcements

Commission members shared news.

C. Mason shared the South Street project is nearly completed and looks impressive. All that remains is electricity for the lights and some landscaping in springtime. Harriet Tubman bicentennial banners will be installed in early March and stay up through the summer.

J. Wrench announced Restaurant Week is coming up January 21-29. A webinar about board governance is on February 28.

Rev. P. Price announced Harriet Tubman Day celebration will take place at AME Zion Church on March 10 and requested 4-minute video clips from commission members.

Adjournment

B. Chabot adjourned the meeting at 10:16 a.m. A motion was made by J. Kline 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 3/9/2022. Closer to that date it will be decided whether to meet in person or via Zoom.

Minutes by Gillian Sears