

AUBURN'S HISTORIC & CULTURAL SITES COMMISSION

Meeting minutes from September 9, 2020 via Zoom

Present: J. Kline, C. Kasper, K. Wise Gosch, K. Kuhl, J. Giannettino, K. Szewcyk, B. Chabot, R. Bradley, C. Mason, D. Gottschalk-Fielding, J. Waller, D. Lamb, Chanda Powell (NPS)

Excused: S. Muldoon, Rev. P. Carter, L. Carr, D. Stankus, K. Walker, S. Kline, K. Hill, C. Taylor, J. Armstrong

Absent: A. Daddabbo, M. Alberici, A. Saret

Call to Order

The bimonthly meeting of Auburn's Historic and Cultural Sites Commission was called to order on September 9, 2020, at 9:03 a.m. by K. Wise Gosch.

Approval of Minutes

K. Wise Gosch asked for a motion to accept the 7/8/2020 minutes as submitted, and the motion was made by J. Kline and seconded by D. Lamb. **All were in favor and the motion carried.**

Finance Report

C. Kasper presented the Finance Report. K. Wise Gosch asked for a motion to accept the finance report as submitted, and the motion was made K. Kuhl and seconded by R. Bradley. **All were in favor and the motion carried.**

Committee Reports

Site Directors' written reports were included in the packet.

Marketing

C. Kasper updated that TGW concluded a two-day photoshoot of Auburn and its sites for an upcoming digital campaign; the footage will also be a repository for future use. The remainder of the Year 1 campaign can be extended to December 31, 2020. There is still no report from New York State regarding Year 2 marketing grant. The marketing committee will meet soon to review the campaign outline and Commission advertising plans for the year. J. Giannettino shared that AIDA put out an RFP to market the City of Auburn from an AIDA point of view and the committee is aware of our work with TGW, since they did submit a proposal.

Programming

C. Kasper shared the City of Auburn is postponing its sponsored events like First Friday until further notice. Commission members collectively agreed that Holiday Traditions will not be held this year. Commission members shared information about current programming efforts: B. Chabot reported that the Seward House Museum's September First Friday experienced a low turnout of 28 people; K. Wise Gosch said Cayuga Museum is hosting an invite-only exhibit opening for First Friday; and K. Szewcyk shared that the Harriet Tubman Board makes the decision about the home's reopening, so NPS has partnered with SHM and CM to conduct walking tours and working with the school system to provide a Passport to History curriculum-based education program.

COVID-19 Safety Committee

Discussion was had regarding shared lessons learned from each site on reopening. B. Chabot shared that Seward House Museum reconfigured online reservation process due to visitor feedback, and she noted that tours have been added to accommodate demand, as they are not taking walk-ins. K. Wise Gosch noted that Cayuga Museum has had smooth process of online reservations, finding that people are booking the day before or day of. D. Lamb shared that

about one-third of visitors are making reservations, but they are able to accommodate walk-ins. All sites reported that visitors have been following guidelines and rules.

New Business

K. Kuhl presented that the Cayuga County Tourism Office has a new marketing focus to help ensure our reach extends to a broader, more equitability inclusive base. In order to better understand how area organizations are currently receiving visitors, the Commission has agreed to participate in a survey on customer service engagement/operations, so that the Tourism Office can better assist marketing our area as a welcoming destination and it will be used to serve as model of communication to other partners in the county.

Old Business

None.

Announcements

Commission members shared news.

K. Szewcyk shared that Andrea DeKoter has moved back to Virginia and a search is underway for a new, permanent superintendent for Women's Rights and Harriet Tubman NPS.

C. Mason shared that roadwork reconstruction of the Southern gateway is slated for the 2021 construction season. This update will provide curbed sidewalks and street lighting and create walkability between northern South Street sites to the Harriet Tubman Home, plus serve as a nice tourism tie-in for the South Street Historic Walk. News was shared that two sites in Auburn (ERHC as WEIU site; Cayuga County Women's Equality Club, 9 Exchange St.) have been nominated for the Votes for Women Pomeroy Foundation historical marker trail. R. Bradley noted that two sites in the county (Union Springs Zobia Alleman homesite; Opendore in Sherwood) have also been nominated and confirmed that Sherwood has been designated an Equal Rights Heritage Area; there is confirmed evidence Sherwood played a major part in the abolition movement and Underground Railroad.

Adjournment

K. Wise Gosch adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m. A motion was made by R. Bradley. **All were in favor and the motion carried.**

The next Commission meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday 11/12/2020 via Zoom.

Minutes by Courtney Kasper