



**America250 PA Chester County Commission
Meeting Minutes of 10/05/2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Mary Sue Boyle, Barbara Cohen, Jane Dorchester, Susan Hamley, Conor Hepp, Paul Kahan, Commissioner Michelle Kichline, MaryFrances McGarrity, Winifred Moran Sebastian, Bruce Mowday, Beverly Sheppard, Krystine Sipple, Randell Spackman, Jim Ziegler

MEMBERS PRESENT IN-PERSON: Fernando Fonseca, James Garrison, Brian O’Leary, Mark Slouf, Robert Williams

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: David Blackburn, Nicole Flamer, Alex Parham, Cliff Parker

CC250 MANAGEMENT TEAM PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Karen Simmons, Beth Krallis, Malcolm Johnstone, Angela Scully, Connie Carter

CC250 MANAGEMENT TEAM PRESENT IN-PERSON: Heather Reiffer

CCPC STAFF PRESENT IN-PERSON: William Deguffroy, Gene Huller

INVITED GUESTS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Deborah Bookman, Lisa Doan-Hawley, Jennifer Green, Larycia Hawkins PhD, Malcolm Johnstone, Brandi Levine, Laura Manion, Gene Pisasale, Matthew Roberson,

1. CALL TO ORDER:

A. WELCOME

The America250PA Chester County (CC250) Commission Meeting, held via Zoom and in-person at the Henrietta Hankin Library on Thursday, October 5, 2023, was called to order at 4:02 PM by Vice-Chair Moran-Sebastian.

2. ACTION ITEMS:

Moran-Sebastian asked if there were any comments or items to be added to the agenda by Commission members or guests or the public. There were none. She asked for a motion for approval of the Agenda.

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA WAS MADE BY BRIAN O’LEARY, SECONDED BY JANE DORCHESTER, AND APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE BY THE COMMISSION.

A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

With no comments or suggested corrections, Moran-Sebastian asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Commission’s Meeting of September 7, 2023.

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE SEPTEMBER 7, 2023 MEETING OF THE AMERICA250PA CHESTER COUNTY COMMISSION WAS MADE BY PAUL KAHAN, SECONDED BY MARY SUE BOYLE AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

B. APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Moran-Sebastian asked for a motion to accept the committee reports submitted since the last meeting.

A MOTION TO APPROVE COMMITTEE REPORTS SUBMITTED SINCE THE LAST MEETING WAS MADE BY BEVERLY SHEPPARD AND SECONDED BY JIM GARRISON AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

3. REPORTING & DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Nominating/CC250 Commissioner Recruitment

O’Leary reported that there are currently five vacant positions on the CC250 Commission, and that a recommendation to add five candidates is currently before the Chester County Commissioners for review and approval. Williams asked whether we would fill all five vacancies. O’Leary responded yes, and reminded the Commission that it would be likely that more vacancies would open in coming months.

B. Ad Hoc Bylaws Task Force

Jane Dorchester and Karen Simmons reviewed proposed revisions to the bylaws. Simmons noted to Hon. Kichline that these are the Task Force's proposed changes, and that if she had further suggestions, especially with the revised wording of the Education aims of the Commission, they are welcome. After Commission review, the next step is for O'Leary to forward the recommended changes to the Chester County Solicitor for review.

In Article 4.2, Dorchester noted the recommendation to change the number of Commissioners from "29" to "up to 35." Boyle inquired about the rationale to increase members. Moran-Sebastian replied that it would allow the Commission to reflect more communities. Boyle expressed concern about the need for member participation.

In Article 4.4, MaryFrances McGarrity noted a typo that should read "Commission members," not "Commissioners."

In Article 4.3 concerning resignations in the event of missing three consecutive meetings, it was asked whether a leave of absence was allowed. O'Leary and Simmons agreed it is a question for the Solicitor to answer.

In Article 5.1 Dorchester explained the clarified the roles of the officers, adding "1st Chair," "2nd Chair," and expanding the role of Secretary to that of "Secretary/Parliamentarian" to help the Chair ensure that meetings are run efficiently and respectfully. In 5.2, it was added that the Chair would serve as ex-officio member of all meetings and represent the Commission at public events.

In Article 6.3 there was discussion of the proposed elimination of member nominations from the floor. O'Leary expressed concern that nominations from the floor are required. Simmons noted that the committee had noted it as a question for the Solicitor.

Article 8.2 added that at least one Commission member must serve on each committee and that both Commission and non-Commission members could serve on committees. It was discussed that Committee Chairs are responsible to direct the committee in alignment with Commission goals and the strategic plan.

In Article 8.4, it was discussed and agreed that the Nominating Committee should be appointed annually and composed of at least three Commission members not interested in serving as an Officer.

Moran-Sebastian concluded the conversation noting that while it was not on the agenda to approve the proposed revisions, she felt that it was in good order to do so.

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE COMMISSION BY-LAWS, SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY THE COUNTY SOLICITOR AND APPROVAL OF THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, WAS MADE BY JANE DORCHESTER, SECONDED BY BEVERLY SHEPPARD, AND APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

Beverly Sheppard interjected to request that the Commission move the Education Committee report up in the agenda because she wished to introduce Jennifer Green and Lisa Doan-Hawley as the new Committee Co-Chairs, and Green would have to leave the meeting shortly to lead a walking tour.

(F.) Education Committee

Sheppard explained that while she needed to step away as Committee Chair, she intended to remain on the Committee. She had recruited Green and Doan-Hawley to serve as Co-Chairs. Green introduced herself as the Director of Education at the Chester County History Center, who had served in leadership and education roles at multiple sites in Chester and Delaware Counties. Lisa Doan-Hawley introduced herself as a retired history teacher at Coatesville School District (grades 6 – 12), with a doctorate in experiential history. Sheppard shared that Green and Doan-Hawley had worked together before and that she hoped they would bring new focus to civics education and to how heritage sites throughout the county could be connected to educational programs.

C. CC250 Phases: Initiate – Plan – Implement & Monitor – Closure

Simmons reviewed a messaging and timeline graphic she had developed to offer larger context for Chester County 250 planning, placing local initiatives in context with the national scene. Simmons asked for Commission feedback. Williams commented that it is a helpful visual to give a sense of timing and big picture events; and that he likes the “closure” aspect because it showed that there is a finish line.

D. PA 250 Regional Initiatives Committee

Spackman reported that Reiffer would be attending the regional America 250 meeting in Philadelphia in early November, and that Delco 250 is moving along and wants to collaborate. He also shared that the Liberty Tree Program has been moved to 2024.

E. Partnership Committee

Simmons shared a “Key Talking Points” document prepared for a 1:1 meeting with a legislator, noting it can be customized for discussions with other groups. Williams noted that as municipalities are discussing budgets for 2024 and 2025 now, it would be helpful for them to have this information.

McGarrity suggested that this type of overall CC250 PowerPoint presentation should be posted online for Commission members to use and share. McGarrity asked whether the slide show should be approved by the Commission. Simmons noted that submitted this to the full Commission and Marketing / Communications Committee for suggestions. She will refine then share and post for Commission members.

Simmons emphasized the need to spread the word so that organizations can “Take the Pledge” to celebrate and commemorate CC250, and CC250 can co-promote their event information online and via social media.

Williams suggested that CC250 information, such as the Pledge and website, should be forwarded to local Townships to publish in their newsletters because they reach so many people.

G. Fundraising Committee

Honorable Kichline shared thoughts on the August PA Infrastructure Hearing, noting that it was fairly bipartisan. She shared that Andy Dinniman was there presenting a proposal from Lincoln University; and invited guest Dr. Larycia Hawkins of Lincoln University presence was noted as being on this zoom call, as she is interested in becoming involved the CC250 Commission. Hon. Kichline said Chester County was represented well in the hearings.

H. Marketing/Communications Committee

Krystine Sipple shared that website revisions are underway, and that CC250 Project Management staff would be joining Marketing/Communications Committee meetings.

I. Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan

Reiffer reported that CC250 Commission members are invited to a special meeting on November 16th at 4 pm via Zoom. The Marketing firm SWELL will share the creative brief and visuals generated as part of the Chester County Heritage Tourism plan project.

J. Heritage Sites Legacy Projects Committee

Mark Slouf reported that he, Randell Spackman and Rob Williams have been meeting with representatives from several individual heritage sites to assess infrastructure needs, related to the themes:

- 1-Philadelphia Campaign,
- 2-Iron & Steel,
- 3-Pathway to Freedom, and
- 4-Agriculture.

Slouf shared that he and Rob Williams had been talking to the Valley Forge Park Alliance about incorporating the **Philadelphia Campaign** into the interpretation at Valley Forge National Park. Williams' initial meetings evidently prompted a senior level meeting to take place next week with representatives from both Chester County and Montgomery County. Hamley interjected that she would be in attendance with Commissioners Kichline and Moskowitz. Their counterparts from Montgomery County are also expected to be present.

Slouf shared that his talks with **Iron & Steel** Partnership members indicate they are fairly well developed.

Slouf also mentioned the development of a task force for the Harriet Tubman **Underground Railroad Scenic Byway**. Simmons introduced Dr. Larycia Hawkins from Lincoln University's newly established Center for the Underground Railroad. Dr. Hawkins explained that she was in her second week as Director at the August hearing with Andy Dinniman, and that her position is tied in with Voices Underground. She has become involved with the Harriet Tubman Byway Commission and would like to have the Center tied in with CC250.

Slouf also shared that the Oxford Region Planning Commission is focusing on the development of the **Agricultural history** theme, and that there is potential for further interpretation with Springton Manor Farm and the Agricultural Development Council.

Slouf reiterated that he has been promising representatives that CC250 will be a marketing vehicle for them, and that the CC250 website is extremely important in his ability to share information and make connections.

Slouf concluded by sharing that it is becoming apparent to him that most heritage sites have extremely limited hours and that there is a need for something that can provide historical interpretation and information that does not rely on staff. He feels that the most valuable piece in filling the gap on heritage site capacity is introducing interactive kiosks at sites.

4. FUTURE MEETING DATES

Moran-Sebastian noted that future meeting dates are listed on the last page of the agenda, and asked if there were any comments on the Commission's future meeting dates. No comments were offered.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Moran-Sebastian asked if there was any public comment. No public comments.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Moran-Sebastian asked if there were any announcements. No announcements.

7. MEETING ADJOURNED

Moran-Sebastian asked for a motion to adjourn.

A MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MARYFRANCES MCGARRITY, SECONDED BY ROBERT WILLIAMS, AND PASSED BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE BY THE COMMISSION.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Heather P. Reiffer, Senior Program Associate,
CC 250 Management Team 10/17/2023

Corrected to reflect Jim Ziegler's attendance via Zoom at the 10/5/23 meeting 12/7/2023
Approved by: MaryFrances McGarrity, Secretary, CC250 Commission, as of 12/11/2023

