



MINUTES: Chester County A250PA Commission Monthly Meeting
Hybrid – Chester County Government Services Center, Room 270

May 7, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON: MarySue Boyle, Adam Desch, Fernando Fonseca, Susan Hamley, Colin Hanna, Tim Hennessey, Mark Slouf

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: James Christ, Jane Dorchester, Larycia Hawkins, Jennifer Green, Conor Hepp, Michelle Kichline, Winifred Moran Sebastian, Bruce Mowday, Beverly Sheppard, Randell Spackman, Dr. tonya thames-taylor (T3), Robert Williams

COMMUNITY PARTNERS PRESENT IN PERSON: None

COMMUNITY PARTNERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Karen Simmons, Dave Stauffer

CCPC STAFF PRESENT IN PERSON: Matt Edmond, Carol Stauffer, Bronwen Barnett, Jeannine Speirs, Gene Huller, Rachael Griffith

CCPC STAFF PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Beth Cunliffe

VISITORS PRESENT IN PERSON: None

VISITORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: County Commissioner Josh Maxwell, and Joseph Sherwood and April Nickel of Chester County Library System

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular monthly meeting of the Chester County A250PA Commission held in person at the Chester County Government Services Center and via Zoom audio/video on Thursday, May 7th, 2026, was called to order at 4:01 P.M. by Michelle Kichline, Chair.

Michelle and Matt Edmond presented this morning on the CC250 to the Chester County Chamber of Business and Industry (CCCBI). Good connections have been made with the business community, and they are very interested in supporting our efforts and events, notably for the 2027 activities.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CONSENT AGENDA:

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WAS MADE BY WINIFRED MORAN SEBASTIAN, SECONDED BY TIM HENNESSEY, AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

THE CONSENT AGENDA INCLUDED: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR APRIL 5, 2026, MEETING OF THE CHESTER COUNTY A250PA COMMISSION.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

- Matt Edmond presented a snapshot of the America250 Chester County Commission Charitable Fund (CC250) showing donations and authorized expenditures to date.
- Matt reviewed the financial reporting template tracking budget allocations, and expenditures across different funds.
 - There have been no new donations received and no invoices paid in the past month.
 - Under Partnerships, the money allocated for flags and pocket declarations has been noted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS, PLANS & BUDGETS

Heritage Sites Committee – Mark Slouf

- Jeannine Speirs reported on the software updates to the existing kiosks (Marshallton, Schuylkill River) to connect them to the Brandywine Visitor Center. Marshallton is approved to proceed, and Schuylkill River is under review to be approved by its Board.
- The revised scope, planning work and timeline for Phase I and 2 for the new Kiosks (8 – 9 sites) and the RFP process was explained by Jeannine and Matt.
- Mark Slouf updated the Commission on The Pines, which was identified as a proposed gateway for Evolving Values theme of the Heritage Tourism Plan. A report had been created several years ago on the \$1.2M improvements needed, and grants were available at the time. However, the grants disappeared with the new administration and the project was halted. Potential budget is now pared down to \$400k and there is continuing hope of resurrecting the project.

Education Committee – Beverly Sheppard

- The Intermediate Unit has reached out to teachers requesting examples of any programs or activities created which are focused on the 250 themes and the materials distributed.
- The Chester County Ledger's most recent edition includes many of the educational and historical programs featuring 250 themes occurring in Chester County.

Marketing and Communication Committee – Jane Dorchester

- Jane reported on the popularity of marketing items (stickers, bookmarks, magnets, pins) at various events.
- Committee is determining where to boost social media marketing as far as promoting various 250 themed county events.

Fundraising Committee – Winifred Moran Sebastian

- There has been some outreach to law firms for potential sponsoring of the flags, but no firms have committed.

- The Committee has an opportunity to garner interest and support from the business community in our 2027 focus (Battle of Clouds, Paoli, Battle of Brandywine, Valley Forge.)
- A discussion ensued on the Events Committee interest and the current communications out on all the events focused on the 250.
 - Members suggested ramping up our social media and newsletters to actively communicate events for more engagement.
 - Matt Edmond highlighted our current social media efforts and proposed we could expand our reach by maintaining frequency of an in-person “roadshow” to engage with organizations.
 - Brandywine Valley Tourism has created a 2-page flyer highlighting the major upcoming events through to September. They have these available at their welcome center and at various hotels. Susan Hamley explained that tourists don’t necessarily want to research the events, but rather they would like them presented to them either verbally or by takeaway handouts.
 - An Events Committee will be formed as a sub-committee under MarCom, and an initial focus will be spreading awareness through social media. Tim Hennessey, MarySue Boyle, and Commissioner Josh Maxwell volunteered to join Colin Hanna and Adam Desch on this Committee.
 - John Reynolds on MarCom is working with news media (Daily Local News and Delaware Today) so printed communications is also a focus.
 - Each member of the Commission can be a conduit to communicate with their local organizations and municipalities. Using their contacts and relationships can be effective in growing awareness of CC250.
 - Michelle noted that the Chester County Commissioners would like to focus on 2027 as a “big deal” for Chester County as far as events and programs, so the Events Committee will have lead time and should begin the planning for 2027.
 - Conor Hepp noted that using Vista in Kennett could be a resource as they have a huge mailing list and a large reach.

Partnerships Committee – Matt Edmond for Randell Spackman

- Matt Edmond requested review from the Commission members present on the CC250 flag sample hanging in the conference room that had been produced by our proposed flag vendor. The Commission agreed that the quality of the flag construction was not as expected and a new vendor should be identified.
- The desired flag would be double-sided and the size of 4x6.
- Due to the quick turnaround time needed to obtain the flags, the Commission has pre-approved the purchase of these flags for approximately \$14,000 and do not need a formal action before ordering. If the cost is significantly higher an emergency meeting can be called.
- The next steps are for CCPC staff to identify turn-around time for production from potential vendors.

Technology Committee – Adam Desch for Sam Bissenbina

- The volunteering for events automation has been established on the site and is in use.

- The selected patriotic music by the Brandywine Symphony will be placed on the home page front and center once it is ready to be made public.
- A separate page has been established to identify County-sponsored events related to the 250th.

Executive Committee – Michelle Kichline

- No current update.

A250PA CHESTER COUNTY (CC250) BUSINESS

- April Nickel, Youth Services District Coordinator of the Chester County Library System (CCLS), presented on the system's initiatives for CC250.
 - Decisions on the cohesive plan for the 18 libraries began in June 2025 with representatives from 8 libraries. All libraries voted on the plan.
 - Each library will have a booklet on events, 1 Dare to Declare event, 3 CC250 specific programs, a decorated Liberty Bell display (Bells Across CCLS), and an event to give away commemorative stickers.
 - Programs vary widely, with examples such as a Liberty Tea Party, arts and crafts events, movies, Colonial Science series, musical events and book discussions and lectures.
 - Michelle Kichline requested a link from the CCLS's site to our CC250 site. April will investigate next steps on this.
 - Any questions, please contact April at anickel@ccls.org.

PARTNER WORK UPDATES

Chester County Planning Commission

- Jeannine Speirs will have draft language next week of the HIN brochure for the Committees to review.
- The late afternoon event on April 30th (including the Town Tours kickoff, Dare to Declare and Bell unveiling) was well-attended and positive feedback has been received.

Community Partners

- Chester County Community Foundation – Karen Simmons
 - There has been great interest from the public in viewing the Bell.
 - There are currently 379 events across the County, and these are being pushed on to the CC250 website events page for the public to register.
 - A notable Dare to Declare event is being planned with the Brandywine Symphony at a concert at Longwood Gardens on June 25th.
- Chester County Tourism – Susan Hamley
 - Susan Hamley presented the organization's April 9th Partner Event, highlighting the America250 content, and the guest speakers, re-enactors and historical organizations who participated.
- Chester County History Center (CCHC) – Conor Hepp
 - Conor Hepp presented on their current programming, highlighting the Revolutionary War walking tours, podcasts, exhibit on the Revolutionary

War in Chester County, and the Author Series talk with H.W. Brands at West Chester University on May 15th.

- Chester County Parks Department - Dave Stauffer
 - Sheep and Wool Day on May 2nd at Springton Manor Farm had over 3,000 in attendance.
 - Park staff continue to work with CCHC to clean and update the Family Farm Museum located in the Great Barn at Springton Manor Farm.
 - Park staff have announced a photo contest; the first theme is the natural history of the parks, and the subsequent contest focuses on the history of the parks.
- Keep Chester County Beautiful (KCCB) - Rachael Griffith
 - Rachael Griffith gave an update on the KCCB program, highlighting the progress on the goal of 50 new volunteer groups by the end of 2026. Current count is 18 groups.
 - The program is using social media and in person events to promote the program, including an interactive weaving mural activity at the recent Sheep and Wool Day.

NEW BUSINESS

- Website and Social Media Report - Matt Edmond
 - This is a new agenda item to track the statistics on visitors and followers for the CC250 social media and website pages. This will be updated monthly and included in the monthly packet.
- Goshen Day 250th Celebration - Fred Fonseca
 - This May 30 joint celebration for East and West Goshen is a large event including demonstrations and reenactments, a parade, live music, food trucks, document signing, quilt display, weapons display, Dare to Declare, and a Battle of the Clouds memorial.
 - Jeannine Speirs reported that the Battle of the Clouds animation map technology has been updated and is now working in time for Goshen Day.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, A MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 5:55 PM WAS MADE BY SUSAN HAMLEY, SECONDED BY JANE DORCHESTER, AND PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle Kichline, Chair
Chester County A250PA Commission

MK/brb