

Ohio War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission

Meeting Minutes 08/4/2011

Niagara Center, Put-in-Bay, Ohio (Hosted by Perry's Victory Monument and International Peace Memorial)

Commission Members Present: Pat Barker (on behalf of Amir Eylon), Rick Finch, Peter Hahn, George Ironstrack, Joshua Mann, Louis Schultz, Alan Shellhause, Carrie Sowden, Blanca Stransky, Joseph Zerbey

Working Group Members & Guests Present: Maggie Beckford, Peter Huston, Richard Kudner, David Merkwowitz, Richard Rozevink, Pat Williamsen

Commission Members Absent: Craig Brown, Andrew Cayton, Amir Eylon, Anthony Milburn, Dennis Murray, Peter Wilhelm

Call to order

Joseph Zerbey, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m. The meeting started with introductions of those present.

Approval of minutes

Mr. Zerbey asked for any corrections to the previous meeting minutes. Hearing none, Carrie Sowden made a motion to except the minutes as presented. Seconded by Alan Shellhause. Approved unanimously.

Working Group Reports

Public Information and Marketing Working Group

Website:

Alan Shellhause presented an update of this working group. Mr. Shellhause stated that new content had been added to the website. In addition they had "cleaned up" the banner on the website, cleaned up the menu bar, added pictures, added the War of 1812 research papers of Mr. Jim Brenner, and created two types of "contact us" areas. One of these areas will go to the Department of Commerce who can then review the email and send it to the appropriate person or working group.

Mr. Shellhause noted that they had finished information on some of the historic sites including Fort Meigs, and Perry's Victory, and the current site of the former Fort Stephenson. They have also added the list of known War of 1812 historic markers, and have the calendar of events and registration information section ready.

Areas that Mr. Shellhause can still use help are on a media kit, educational resources links, and he also noted the need for a schedule of known speaking engagements related to the War of 1812. Lastly, Mr. Shellhause reminded those present of the URL: www.warof1812.ohio.gov

Rick Finch asked that Mr. Shellhause remove the email addresses of Commission members. He felt the contact us section would be sufficient.

Pat Williamsen suggested an email press release be crafted announcing the release of the new website.

Pat Barker stated the Ohio Division of Tourism could get a hold of Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVBs) to help make the announcement about the new website.

Maggie Beckford offered a small advertisement space in next season's island guide for Put-in-Bay to help promote the Bicentennial and the website. She also recommended contacting Larry Fletcher with the Sandusky County CVB to inquire about a free ad in their guide.

Discussion then turned to making the website "go live." Peter Hahn moved that the Commission authorize Mr. Shellhause to have the website go live. Ms. Sowden seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mr. Zerbey asked who would be willing to help improve the home page to make it more attractive. Mr. Shellhause stated he would partner with anyone willing to help. Blanca Stransky felt there was a need on the home page to stress why this event was important. Ms. Barker stressed the need for more graphics on the home page, of which Mr. Finch agreed. Mr. Zerbey agreed with both statements and asked members to send content to Mr. Shellhause. Mr. Shellhause stressed that he could use more content for the website. No further discussion brought the vote and the motion was passed unanimously.

Logo

Discussion then turned to the Commission logo. Ms. Sowden stated that she sent the final version to all members via email. It was updated to make the wampum belt on the bottom of the logo look more beaded. Mr. Zerbey stated that he liked the logo and that with two colors it will be inexpensive to reproduce but is still colorful. Ms. Barker asked if the Commission wanted a simplified version for smaller print. Ms. Sowden indicated that a simpler version can be created.

Mr. Zerbey suggested that some biographical information be gathered on the artist so that we may put it on the website and give her some credit for the logo. Mr. Shellhause agreed and suggested the logo also be copyrighted, with permission of the artist.

Mr. Zerbey offered his thanks to Ms. Sowden on behalf of the Commission for her help coordinating this project.

George Ironstrack made a motion to adopt the logo as the official logo and to apply for copyright of the logo (with artist's permission) and to have the Public Information Working Group look into the usage guidelines that they had been crafting. Ms. Stransky seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

Development and Fundraising Working Group

No report. Mr. Zerbey offered to contact Mr. Brown to see what progress he had made on drafting a letter to be mailed to veteran's organizations to help solicit funds for the flag project.

Preservation Working Group

Flag Project

An update was given on the 15-star flag project. Ms. Stransky had contacted a flag supplier to ascertain the cost of 15-star U.S. flags that could be handed out to commemorate the declaration of war. (See previous meeting minutes for more information on the project). Her vendor quoted a cost for a 3'x5' nylon flag at \$17 for those made in China or \$25 - \$35 for a U.S. made flag.

Louis Schultz reminded Ms. Stransky to make sure the flags had both 15-stars and 15 stripes as many vendors sell 15-star flags with the inaccurate 13 stripes.

Much discussion ensued as to U.S. made flags versus foreign made flags with the majority of those present agreeing that U.S. made flags should be purchased. Ms. Stransky commented that a 3'x5' flag may be too small for buildings and the Commission might need to price 5' x 7' flags. It was agreed that Ms. Stransky should get quotes for 5'x7' flags made in the U.S.A. and from an Ohio vendor. She was also asked to get multiple bids.

Ms. Stransky also recommended that the group, when adopting the template for the program include town criers who would read the declaration of war. Mr. Zerbey stated that this was a good idea.

Ms. Stransky asked if the Commission wanted the governor involved in a flag event. Yes was the reply by many. Mr. Zerbey indicated a subcommittee should be formed to work on planning the governor's event. Joshua Mann offered his help on the subcommittee as did Mr. Zerbey and Dr. Hahn.

War of 1812 Veteran Burials Identification Project

Ms. Sowden informed those present that Mr. Brown had been working on the War of 1812 burials project and had been in contact with the Daughters of the War of 1812. Mr. Brown had indicated that this group was working on a book that listed burials, which they wished to update and republish. Mr. Finch thought the mentioned book only contained the names of ancestors of members of the Daughters of the War of 1812 and would not contain all veterans. Ms. Sowden said she would contact Mr. Brown to have him follow up with the Daughter of the War of 1812.

Historic Markers and Marker Template Project

Discussion then turned to the marker list on the website and the template created by Richard Rozevink on how to apply for a marker. It was stated there is a need to make sure this information is on the website and promoted. Mr. Finch informed the group that Andy Verhoff of the Local History Department at the Ohio Historical Society sent some additions to Mr. Rozevink's template. Mr. Finch volunteered to merge the two documents into one and get that to Mr. Shellhause for inclusion on the website.

Mr. Zerbey inquired if a Commission member was available to attend a historic marker dedication in Defiance, Ohio on the 10th of September as the official representative of the Commission. Mr. Shellhause stated that he could attend as the Commission's representative.

Ms. Stransky informed the group that her organization has had a person contact them about whether the Commission knew of the burial site of the last surviving War of 1812 veteran in Ohio. She asked if there was someone who could follow up with this person. Mr. Finch stated that Peter Wilhelm has an intern who is working on Bicentennial projects and suggested Ms. Stransky send the inquiry to Mr. Wilhelm for the intern to follow up.

Traveling Exhibit

Discussion next turned to a traveling exhibit on Ohio in the War of 1812. Mr. Finch stated that he spoke with Bill Mahon, head of the fabrication and exhibit design department at OHS, and Mr. Mahon estimated a cost of \$25,000 to create the traveling exhibit. This would consist of 6 – 10 panels with text and graphics. This was a rough estimate which would include costs for research, writing, development,

and fabrication. This would not include the cost of coordinating the exhibit schedule and shipment around the state.

Ms. Stranksy stated that Perry's Victory site could contribute to the project as long as one set of panels stays with the National Park Service.

Dr. Hahn asked who this exhibit would touch, or who would be the target audience(s)? Mr. Finch stated this exhibit would be targeted to local and county historical societies and to local libraries and their patrons. Ms. Williamsen concurred and stated most exhibits like the one being discussed are well received. She stated the key was to keep the rental cost as low as possible to make it affordable to many groups. She also felt this exhibit would be in demand because of the topic.

Ms. Williamsen asked how quickly Mr. Finch could acquire a detailed estimate. Mr. Finch thought it would be available by Monday. Ms. Williamsen stated that the Ohio Humanities Council (OHC) would like to help fund this project. She stated OHC would not be able to fund the entire project, but she would be willing to work with Mr. Brown to help leverage their contribution to obtain additional funding. Mr. Finch stated that Keith Ashley, President of the Society of the War of 1812 in Ohio, had indicated that organization would also help with some funding. Mr. Finch asked if OHC had a deadline for when they needed the detail budget. Ms. Williamsen asked to have it as soon as possible.

Ms. Williamsen stated that either OHS or OHC may be possible candidates to handle the coordinating and distribution of the exhibit, when completed.

Ms. Stranksy stated that she had received information from the Canadian Consulate about a temporary exhibit being created in Canada that will be available to U.S. based museums in 2013. She asked if that information should go Mr. Shellhause for inclusion on the website. Mr. Zerbey stated that it should be sent to Mr. Shellhause.

Education Working Group-

Dr. Hahn distributed the action plan put together by the education working group. He noted the group is still in the planning stages but was optimistic that projects will develop more in the next few months.

Lesson Plans

Mr. Ironstrack discussed his work on lesson plans related to the War of 1812. He stated that he spoke with the director of Teaching American History grant program at Miami University to inquire if they could center a seminar on the War of 1812. This could be developed into a template to take to other TAH granted organizations. Dr. Hahn urged the group to get contact information to Mr. Ironstrack if they know of anyone who runs similar programs in their part of the state.

Speaker's Bureau

After reviewing the action plan, Ms. Williamsen informed the group that the OHC runs a speaker's bureau, and said they could take over the Bicentennial speaker's bureau project. David Merkwowitz would coordinate the project on behalf of the OHC. Dr. Hahn noted that there is also an Organization of American Historians speaker's bureau with War of 1812 scholars. He thought the two bureaus could complement each other.

Old Business

Mr. Zerbey spoke with State Senator Mark Wagoner regarding a replacement on the Commission for State Senator Steve Buehrer who is now leading the Bureau of Workers Compensation. Mr. Zerbey informed the group that Senator Wagoner will ask the Senate President to appoint a replacement and that this should be done by next week. Senator Wagoner was also contacting Governor Kasich's office to inquire if there was a staff member who wished to attend Commission meetings in a non-voting capacity.

New Business

Mr. Zerbey informed the Commission that the U.S. Navy cruise will take place in 2012, and the Navy will be visiting ports in the Great Lakes, including Toledo and Cleveland. However, logistical concerns may make it a smaller event than originally planned. More details to follow.

Mr. Zerbey also noted that the Navy would be returning in 2013 and needed to render honors at the site of the Battle of Lake Erie to mark the 200th anniversary of that battle. He felt Commission members should be present for this ceremony.

Ms. Stransky stated that the Brig Niagara will return in 2013 along with the Navy. The activities that year will last a week beginning with a tall ships festival (organized by the Perry Group) which starts the Friday of Labor Day weekend 2013 and is the "kick-off" event. She stated the Perry Group is also trying to organize a battle re-enactment. There will be activities by multiple organizations during the week which will culminate in a program on the 10th of September (anniversary of the battle).

Announcements

Mr. Finch informed the group that WGTE Public TV in Toledo had secured a first round of funding from the OHC to complete research on a documentary about the War of 1812 in the Great Lakes region. This phase has been completed. They have applied for a second round of funding from OHC to complete the production phase of the documentary. If approved and the documentary completed, the video will air on WGTE in September. However, they informed Mr. Finch that any group who wishes to purchase a copy of the documentary will be allowed to have "premier" showings of the video prior to September as a fundraising opportunity for their organization. Ms. Williamsen noted that the documentary has a good script and it will be a good video.

Mr. Finch also noted that WNED and Florentine Films have produced a War of 1812 documentary that will be airing nationally on PBS in October 2012.

Ms. Barker stated that the Commission needs to see if OHS will use the template they created for CW150 marketing and press releases to help promote the Bicentennial of the War of 1812. She noted that OHS has a new media director, Jane Mason, who is doing a great job. Mr. Finch asked if Ms. Barker will follow up with Ms. Mason. Ms. Barker said she would and suggested she, Mr. Finch, and Ms. Mason meet for lunch in Columbus.

Ms. Stransky informed the group that there will be a press conference on Put-In-Bay on 10 September 2011 to discuss Bicentennial plans. She asked if a Commission member could participate as an official representative and discuss the projects the Commission is planning. Ms. Barker and Sgt. Mann said they could participate.

Peter Houston, of the Perry Group, informed the Commission of that group's website, www.battleofkiaeerie-bicentennial.com

Mr. Ironstrack informed the group that the Ohio Local History Alliance state conference will be held in October and Bicentennial programs should be promoted at the conference. Mr. Finch stated he will be presenting on Ohio in the War of 1812 at that conference.

Mr. Schultz informed the Commission that the Hayes Center in Fremont will be hosting a temporary exhibit on the War of 1812 from February through September 2013. Mr. Zerbey asked that all this information be forwarded to Mr. Shellhouse for inclusion on the website.

Next Meeting

Mr. Schultz will inquire with the Hayes Center about hosting the next Commission meeting. First choice for the meeting is 11 October 2011 and second choice is 13 October 2011, contingent on the Hayes Center scheduling. The meeting will start at 10:30 a.m. and last until 3:30 p.m., if needed.

Mr. Zerbey adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.