

Ohio War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission

Meeting Minutes 03/25/2011

The Motorist Building, Columbus, Ohio

Commission Members Present: Craig Brown, Rick Finch, George Ironstrack, Joshua Mann, Anthony Milburn, Alan Shellhause, Carrie Sowden, Peter Wilhelm, Joseph Zerbey

Working Group Members & Guests Present: Keith Ashley (Society of the War of 1812), Frank Dunkle, Julie Goldsmith (Ohio Humanities Council), Pat Williamsen

Commission Members Absent: Steve Buehrer, Andrew Cayton, Peter Hahn, Dennis Murray, Louis Schultz, Blanca Stranksy

Call to order

Joe Zerbey, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m. and began with introductions of members and guests present.

Julie Goldsmith, Executive Director of the Ohio Humanities Council, gave welcoming remarks.

Approval of minutes

Mr. Zerbey asked for any corrections to the previous meeting minutes. Hearing none, Craig Brown made a motion to except the minutes as presented. Second by Carrie Sowden. Approved.

Mission & visioning session review

Pat Williamsen presented the notes from the missioning and visioning session conducted at the October 2010 meeting. In addition, Ms. Williamsen handed out the draft of the mission statement for the Commission.

Mr. Zerbey asked for discussion regarding the mission statement. Several suggestions were presented and agreed upon. The final mission statement, with changes, reads: *The Bicentennial Commission for the War of 1812 will provide leadership to the State of Ohio, in partnership with its neighbors, to encourage public programs, commemorations, and scholarship on the War of 1812. By exploring the impact of the War, the Commission will foster a lasting legacy grounded in sound scholarship, thoughtful discussion and the inclusion of diverse peoples and perspectives.*

The mission was approved unanimously.

Next, Mr. Zerbey asked for discussion on the visioning session and what should be the role of the commission. Rick Finch stated that he felt the commission should act as a resource and promotional tool for the Bicentennial and not as an event planner. He stated that lack of funding and no dedicated project staff would make it very difficult to do anything else. Mr. Zerbey concurred. Anthony Milburn stated that without a budget it would be hard to do anything else. Frank Dunkle noted that the Commission can do well by encouraging other groups to do programs and that a good website can provide a clearing house of information and ideas to help groups planning events. Ms. Williamsen agreed that a good website is crucial. There was consensus amongst the attendees that this was the approach to take.

Working Group Reports

Public Information and Marketing Working Group (See report)

Alan Shellhause presented notes from the last meeting of this working group. The group met to discuss six topics; 1) Review which visioning outcomes apply to this work group 2) The creation of a website for the Commission and what approach should be taken 3) The formation of a public information database for citizens/organizations that want to stay in contact with the Commission 4) Crafting guidelines for a Bicentennial logo 5) Review the potential of using E-Tech Ohio for video conferencing 6) Receive and review any new names suggested by workgroup members for inclusion into the workgroup.

Regarding a website, Mr. Shellhause stated that three options were available to the Commission:

- 1) The Commission hires a group to create the website. This would incur substantial time and money.
- 2) The Commission finds an organization to volunteer to develop and host a website. This would still incur time and money costs, but it would be substantially less than hiring a private firm. However, it would take time to find the right organization willing to take on the project.
- 3) Using State based resources to develop a website. The working group looked at two potential agencies, The Division of Travel and Tourism and the Department of Commerce, both of whom have members on the Commission. The Division of Travel and Tourism contracts with outside vendors for their web development, which makes them an expensive option. The Department of Commerce does their development "in-house" and would be willing to take on developing a Bicentennial website. The benefits of this option are that it is cost effective, it is secure, and work can begin immediately.

Based on these options, the working group recommended that the Department of Commerce establish and host a portal site for the Bicentennial. The site would contain information regarding the Commission and the Bicentennial, and would also link to other sites to utilize as many resources as possible. The recommendation of the working group is to establish a web presence as quickly as possible then continue to add new content as it becomes available.

Regarding a Bicentennial logo, the working group recommended that the core component of the logo should:

- 1) Have an 1812 reference
- 2) Convey a relationship to Ohio
- 3) Have a multi-nation reference, if possible
- 4) A Perry's Monument or naval reference could be made

The working group recommended that the Commission find/hire a professional firm to develop the logo and that the approved logo be copyrighted. The cost to copyright is minimal, approximately \$40. The working group recommended not holding a student/school design contest for the logo. Instead, the schools/students could participate in a design for a poster.

Mr. Zerbey commended the working group for their hard work, and began discussion regarding the recommendation for the website. The recommendation was to have a website developed and hosted by the Department of Commerce with a web address of warof182.ohio.gov

Joshua Mann inquired if there would be any restrictions to content or web sales if the Department of Commerce was to host the site. Mr. Shellhause stated that he had done some research in regards to that question and that the closest parallel is the Capital Square website which provides retail service online. Mr. Shellhause believes retail sales would not be prohibited, but the bigger question would be

how to set up the correct account to receive the proceeds from the sale and insure that those proceeds are then in turn transferred to the Commission's account held by Northwest State Community College.

Ms. Williamsen stated that utilizing the Department of Commerce to create the website would not cost the Commission much money. Mr. Shellhouse followed up by informing the Commission that the new director of the Department of Commerce has approved creating and hosting the website.

Mr. Finch asked if the Department of Commerce would also handle maintenance and upgrade issues too. Mr. Shellhouse confirmed that they would. He also stated that access accounts could be created for Commission members to review and approve new content before it goes "live."

Mr. Zerbey asked how the content would be created. Mr. Shellhouse replied that it would be the responsibility of the Public Information and Marketing Working Group and they would need additional help to establish the content. Mr. Finch stated that some content would be provided by outside organizations through links or by the organization providing information for an events calendar. The outside group would input the information on-line which in turn would be reviewed prior to going "live."

It was asked how the general public would find the newly created website. Mr. Shellhouse stated that the website pages would be appropriately meta tagged or hash tagged to help boost its place in search engine results.

Mr. Finch asked if it would be possible to still use an outside hosting firm such as godaddy.com and create a portal page from that site to the Department of Commerce website so that an address such as ohio1812.com could be used instead of a ".gov" url. Mr. Finch inquired to the expense of having an additional portal website hosted by a private server. Mr. Brown stated that hosting a site through godaady.com would not be expensive, probably \$50 - \$60 per year. Mr. Shellhouse said that the suggestion could be done as long as the domain name was available.

Discussion turned to creating two websites. The first website would be developed and hosted by the Department of Commerce and would contain resource information, public information about meetings, and the like. The second website would be hosted by an outside server and serve as a promotion piece to raise awareness and create interest in the Bicentennial. Both sites would be linked to each other to make the content as seamless as possible. Mr. Brown offered to get bids for creating and hosting the outside website.

Mr. Zerbey recommended the creation an official commission website (created and hosted by the Department of Commerce) immediately. Mr. Brown amended the recommendation to include getting two bids for the creation of the promotional website.

Mr. Brown made the motion to create the official Commission website (created and hosted by the Department of Commerce) immediately and for Mr. Brown to acquire two bids for the creation and hosting of a promotional website (to be done by a private firm). Dr. Milburn seconded.

Discussion: Mr. Ironstrack noted that the working group needs to look at the long term sustainability of the websites. Mr. Finch asked for clarification in the difference between the website. Mr. Shellhouse stated the official commission site will host meeting minutes of the Commission, member information, etc. The promotional website would host the things the commission wants to do and foster. He also

noted the promotional website would have to be maintained by another person or organization. Mr. Brown stated the promotional website will be the show piece to create excitement. Mr. Brown also stated he would create a Facebook page for the Bicentennial in Ohio. No further discussion. Motion was approved.

Discussion then turned to the creation of a Bicentennial logo. Dr. Milburn asked if a logo was needed. Mr. Zerbey and Mr. Finch both stated that they felt there was an immediate need and supported the recommendation of hiring a professional firm to design the logo.

Mr. Finch stated the Commission should strike the recommendation from the working group that a reference to Perry's Monument be included in the logo. He felt that singling out one site could create animosity. There was general agreement to this statement.

Mr. Zerbey stated that the Commission should keep the recommendation from the working group that a multi-nation reference be incorporated into the design. There was general agreement to this statement.

Mr. Brown offered to work with a design firm to create several options for the Commission to review. A motion was made by Dr. Milburn to have Mr. Brown work with his resources to develop several design options based on the first three recommendations of the working group. The designs will be presented in color and in black and white and that once a design is approved, the Commission will proceed with obtaining a copyright for the design. Seconded by Mr. Ironstrack. Approved.

Mr. Shellhause next discussed the test of E-Tech Ohio. He noted the test was successful and this technology could be used for future video conferencing as there are 300 E-Tech sites throughout the state.

Mr. Shellhause concluded his report with a handout providing information on the points he discussed at a recent Civil War 150 planning meeting. Mr. Shellhause was invited to speak about the work of the Bicentennial Commission.

Development and Fundraising Working Group

Mr. Brown stated that he had nothing yet to report because the Commission had yet to define which projects they want to pursue. Once defined, Mr. Brown can initiate fundraising efforts to support these projects. Mr. Brown also stated that he needed parameters from the Commission as to what the working group was allowed to do?

Mr. Finch stated that these were valid points. He recommended that each working group meets to review the visioning session notes and make recommendation as to what they want to accomplish. Then, Mr. Brown can use that information to begin raising funds.

Ms. Williamsen stated that many grants can't be given to a State agency, but she could help provide guidance and insight into finding grants.

Mr. Finch stated that the Development and Fundraising Working Group should be utilized to find funding for Commission projects, and that they could also be a resource for other organizations and communities seeking funds. The working group would not and should not raise funds for the outside organizations, but it could help direct them to resources for grants and funds.

Mr. Zerbey noted that Ms. Goldsmith had to leave but that she indicated that the Ohio Humanities Council would be willing to host upcoming meetings, create a War of 1812 Speakers Bureau, and provide dedicated grants to Bicentennial projects.

Preservation Working Group

Ms. Sowden stated she had no report. She noted she will use direction from the current meeting to start forming ideas. She will also look into on-going outside projects and how the Commission might be able to provide support and promotion for these existing projects. Ms. Williamsen stated that the Commission should have tutorials for gravesite preservation. Ms. Sowden stated the working group would look into that and others.

This concluded the working group reports. Mr. Zerbey informed the chairs of the working groups to be prepared to present progress reports at the next meeting. Mr. Finch noted that the list of working groups and their members were included in the minutes of the last meeting.

Old Business- None discussed

New Business

Commission Seats

Ms. Williamsen asked about the status of the Commission seats held by former Senator Steve Buehrer and the seat held by the Department of Education. Mr. Shellhause stated that he believe Senator Hite, who replaced Senator Buehrer was filling the Senate seat. Mr. Finch noted that confirmation was needed. Mr. Finch will contact Senator Hite's office to confirm. Mr. Finch stated that Ms. Stransky was chosen at the last Commission meeting to contact the Department of Education and inquire if they were going to participate in the Commission. It was also recommended that Steve Buehrer's new email address be obtained and that he be included on the update list.

Governor's Office

Mr. Zerbey stated that he felt it important to keep the Governor's office apprised of Commission proceedings. He stated he would contact Senator Mark Wagoner's office to inquire who to contact. Mr. Shellhause stated that he understood the Governor has expressed interest in the Commission and was looking at having one of his staff attend Commission meetings. Mr. Shellhause and Ms. Williamsen recommended Steve George, Governor's staff, be contacted.

Defiance, Ohio Case Study

Peter Wilhelm handed out a copy of the presentation that Richard Rozevink was to have made to the Commission regarding the Bicentennial projects being planned and run by the citizens and City of Defiance. This presentation was postponed twice (as was the Commission meeting) due to inclement weather, and Mr. Rozevink could not attend the rescheduled meeting. Mr. Wilhelm stated the presentation was intended to provide the Commission with a way to learn how one community was marking the Bicentennial, and to act as a case study for other communities interested in observing the Bicentennial. Mr. Wilhelm recommended members review the document in their own time, but felt it important to note that the Defiance collaboration have worked on their own to get five Ohio Historic Markers created and dedicated. The point he was making was that Bicentennial events and projects could be completed without the use of State or Federal monies.

Indian Removal Conference

Mr. Wilhelm informed the Commission that Northwest Community College, Defiance College, and Sauder Village are organizing an Indian Removal Conference (a follow up to a similar conference held in 2006) to be held 10th – 12th of May 2012. They would like to get official approval or an official recommendation from the Commission for this conference. Mr. Wilhelm made a motion to get the seal of approval and use of any Commission logo in promotion of the Conference. Discussion: Ms. Sowden inquired as to what were the guidelines to approve or endorse an event or program. Mr. Dunkle noted that the Ohio CW150 organization has guidelines for use of their logo at Sesquicentennial events related to the American Civil War. The Committee voted to table Mr. Wilhelm's proposal until guidelines could be established for the Commission. Mr. Shellhause and Ms. Williamsen will work on creating guidelines to present to the Commission.

Mr. Keith Ashley, incoming President of the Ohio Society for the War of 1812, offered his services as a member of the Preservation Working Group. He also posed the following questions and recommendations to the Commission.

- 1) Has there been any work on creating a reading list on the War of 1812 that could be given to libraries?
- 2) Has there been any discussion on the creation of a travel exhibit (created by the Ohio Historical Society) and funded by the Society of the War of 1812 and the Daughters of the War of 1812 which could travel the state and raise awareness for the Bicentennial?
- 3) Are there plans to review the text regarding the War of 1812 in current school books?
- 4) Are there any plans to hold an event in Chillicothe, Ohio (then Capital) to commemorate the start of the War?
- 5) Recommendation of creating commemorative coins and 200 premier medals of silver to mark the anniversary of the War which would then be available for sale to the public.
- 6) Recommendation to try to find out if any high ranking politicians have ancestry related to the War of 1812.

Mr. Zerbey stated these were all good questions and recommendations.

Mr. Finch recommended that the Ohio Local History Alliance be contacted for guidance and for a list of potential firms that could create a traveling exhibit. He noted that the Ohio Historical Society is too busy at the moment updating their own exhibits to most likely be able to provide design and fabrication of a traveling exhibit.

Mr. Finch stated that a reading list had been started by Louis Schultz and that it could be added to the new website as a resource. Mr. Finch also noted that there are articles regarding Ohio's roles in the War that will be added to the website.

Lastly, Mr. Finch recommended that Mr. Ashley's education and exhibit ideas be passed to Peter Hahn, chair of the education working group.

Ms. Sowden stated that the Commission needs to know what organizations are currently planning traveling exhibits.

Mr. Ashley stated that the Commission would also need to know who would provide artifacts for a traveling exhibit and how they would be loaned/procured. Mr. Finch recommended that any traveling exhibit be text and image panels only. This would make the exhibit less costly, would make it more

accessible to all organizations since it would not require a large amount of space, and it would alleviate shipping and security concerns that accompany traveling exhibits that include artifacts.

Future Meetings

Mr. Zerbey recommended that the Motorist Building be used for future meetings during cold weather months, and that meetings during warm weather months be held at sites in Ohio that are related to the War of 1812. Commission members agreed.

Travel Reimbursement

Mr. Wilhelm reminded Commission members that there is \$2,000 in the Commission's account. Some of this can be used to reimburse members for travel expenses if they are not reimbursed by their own organization.

CW150 Update

It was suggested that a staff member of the CW150 present a report on their activities to the Commission at the next Commission meeting. Mr. Finch will contact Katie Dallos, NW Ohio representative, to see if she could present at the next meeting.

Next Meeting

May 24, 2011 at the visitor center at Fort Meigs located at 29100 W. River Road, Perrysburg, Ohio. The meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m.

Working groups to come prepared with progress reports at this meeting.

Mr. Zerbey adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.