



Meeting Minutes
Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission
7pm – County Commission Room, Charles Town Library
Charles Town, WV
June 7, 2023

Present: Commissioners Martin Burke (Chair); Ray Benzinger (Treasurer); John Demer (Secretary); Addison Reese. Absent: Jim King.

Guest: Ms. Lineka Quijano.

Call to order. Mr. Burke called the meeting to order at 7:00.

- I. Public Comments: None.
- II Approval of Minutes from April 12, 2023. John Demer, Secretary. Amendments added by Mr. Burke and Ms. Reese. Motion to accept by Mr. Burke; second by Mr. Benzinger: *Approved* by unanimous vote.
- III. Treasurer’s Report. Ray Benzinger, Treasurer. Since April 12, 2023, income totaled \$8,676.37 and expenses were \$9,934.88. Current Balance: \$28,009.81. All bills are paid as of this date. All JCHLC accounts are current and in order. Motion to accept by Mr. Demer; second by Ms. Reese: *Approved* by unanimous vote.
- IV. Review of Draft FY-24 budget. Mr. Burke reminded that the fiscal year for the JCHLC begins July1 and that the need to present a draft budget is required. He discussed the draft, line by line, for projected income, expenditures, and unknowns. Among unknowns are donations, grants, and when the American Battlefield Trust will transfer title to the Osbourn Farm to the JCHLC. After the transfer the JCHLC will have rental income from the farm offset by expenditures for repairs and maintenance. Mr. Benzinger asked if the JCHLC can join the county insurance pool for economies of scale. Mr. Burke said that the JCHLC is already part of a large insurance pool and thus realizes savings. Mr. Burke said a final vote on the budget can take place at August meeting in the new fiscal year.

- V. Bequest of Jane F. Rissler. Mr. Burke reported an email from the investment firm Charles Schwab with news that the late Jane Rissler had left the JCHLC three percent of her investments (with Schwab) for continued preservation of the Boyd-Carter Cemetery. In late April the dollar amount of the bequest was about \$13,000. Ms. Reese had described the work she was doing at Boyd-Carter with Ms. Rissler once about four years ago but had not spoken to Ms. Rissler since. Ms. Rissler was passionate about representation of African Americans in the county. Schwab's contact set up a JCHLC account with Schwab as a place holder for JCHLC funds. Commissioners discussed a range of thoughts on how to best administer the bequest. They agreed to think about alternatives and discuss the bequest at August 2023 meeting.
- VI. Nomination of Winchester Cold Storage as a Jefferson County Landmark. Mr. Demer presented a nomination for county landmark status of the Winchester Cold Storage (WCS) facility located just west of Charles Town. Patrick Fuller, AmeriCorps Member, prepared the nomination. Mr. Burke asked where heavy refrigeration equipment was located. Mr. Demer didn't know but would contact WCS for more details. Motion to approve the nomination by Mr. Demer; second by Ms. Reese: *Approved* by unanimous vote.
- VII. Reports and Announcements.
- a. Jefferson County Courthouse National Landmark Nomination. Mr. Burke reported that the National Park Service is making progress in naming its Advisory Board, and that hopefully, the Board will meet sometime later in 2023 to approve the nomination of the courthouse as a National Historic Landmark.
- b. Status of website, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Ms. Reese reported uploading content to Facebook and Instagram. Patrick Fuller has also uploaded content to the website.
- c. Status of cemeteries. Ms. Reese reported encroachments to the Middleway cemetery despite a legal effort to discourage such actions. She feels ground-penetrating radar is needed to pinpoint burials, some of which may have occurred beyond property boundaries. Ms. Reese continues work at the Boyd-Carter Cemetery and said that it, too, needs ground-penetrating radar to assist in further discoveries. Finally, some good news for Fairview Cemetery. This summer (July) a crew will visit the cemetery to conduct a preservation workshop, their only stop in West Virginia. More details to follow.
- d. Status of NR and JC landmark nominations.
1. Route 340 mitigation and Shady Grove. Mr. Burke reported that Maral Kalbian hopes to complete work this summer on the nomination for Shady Grove, home of Wade Louthan. Mr. Louthan reports that he will lose about eight acres to the 340-widening project.

2. *Isaac Clymer Farm NR nomination*. Mr. Demer reported that John Restaino and Mark Schiavo continue to work on the project. Mr. Schiavone recently retired as director of the Farmland Protection Board for Berkeley County, plans to begin another volunteer position soon, but reported he hopes to focus on the Isaac Clymer nomination in July.
 3. *Keller Furnace WVHPIF*. Mr. Demer has drafted a West Virginia Historic Property Form (WVHPIF) on the site and will forward it to Mr. Burke to transmit to the WV State Historic Preservation Office (WV SHPO).
 4. *Fair View Farm/Rees-Daniels Farm*. Mr. Demer has drafted a WVHPIF on the site and will forward it to Mr. Burke to transmit to the WV SHPO.
- e. Brochure for Morgan's Grove Historic District. Mr. Burke reported that Mr. Demer had drafted text and compiled images for a brochure. Mr. Burke transmitted the data to Eden Designs for Jen Rolston, JCHLC's graphic designer, to compile as a brochure.
- f. Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan for 2045. Mr. Burke reported on his attendance at a kick-off meeting for the first Public Input Session to the county's 2045 comprehensive plan. West Virginia code requires an updated plan that looks 20 years in the future. Mr. Burke reported that the JCHLC has already accomplished many goals in the county's existing plan for 2035.

JCHLC guest Ms. Lineka Quijano also attended the session. She and Mr. Burke described the session organized as a planning charette. She and Mr. Burke said the session leaders divided participants into smaller working groups. Each group compiled lists of what it hoped to see in 2045 and set tentative weights or priorities for those goals. Both said goals seemed predictable: participants wanted good schools, well-maintained roads and infrastructure, and a rural feeling. Groups discussed the future of solar farms. At least one farm owner said he wanted to keep his farm in his family in hopes his family would continue to farm. Solar farm owners assured him he could keep his farm with a predictable income stream for his retirement, an enticement. Mr. Benzinger reminded that solar farms in Maryland at the end of their useful cycles cannot be reverted to working farms. He and the other commissioners agreed that a proposed PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) does not fund the county with the income warranted. Mr. Burke reported that former county commissioner Lyn Widmeyer observed similarities between what residents wanted ten years ago and what they still want today. The county has planned future Public Input Sessions.

g. JCHLC Properties.

1. *Peter Burr Farm.* Mr. Burke reported that Wayne Braunstein and his bakers have started baking for the season. Bread baking attracts countians to the Farm and is a source of income to support it. Mr. Burke said the JCHLC will use lawn services of the county parks and recreations department and will spend less than in previous years. He also said that the county parks and recreations department will hold three activities: two archery day camps and an American Girl enclave. Mr. Burke is looking for a contractor to reside and paint the utility building, whose siding is rotting.
2. *Duffields Depot.* Mr. Burke is applying for a grant from the West Virginia Department of Highways, Transportation Alternatives fund for \$66,000. Twenty percent (\$13,200) is required from the JCHLC to match. With the funding, Mr. Burke hopes to complete renovations to the inside of the depot (plaster and other finishing).
3. *Osbourn Farm and Shepherdstown Battlefield.* The JCHLC awaits transfer of title to the farm from the American Battlefield Trust (ABT). The delay seems to be administrative with the ABT needing to ensure legal requirements are met before a transfer can occur. In the meantime, the ABT continues to meet such ongoing needs as insurance and maintenance.

Mr. Burke said there may be a need for a special meeting to approve a Certificate of Adoption of Resolution to conclude the transfer.

Adjournment. There being no further business, at 8:30 commissioners voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

John Demer, Secretary