

METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC)
MINUTES
January 27, 2020

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held its regular meeting on January 27, 2020, in the conference room of the Metro Historical Commission office at 3000 Granny White Pike, with Commission Chair Clay Bailey presiding.

Commissioners Present: Dr. Clay Bailey, Chair; Davis Acker, Bob Allen, Menié Bell, John Bridges, Dr. Don Cusic, Jim Hoobler, Dr. Bill McKee, Gerry Searcy, E. Thomas Wood and Linda Wynn, **were present**. Christopher Cotton, Michelle Hall, Lynn Maddox, Chakita Patterson, and County Historian Dr. Carole Bucy **did not attend**.

Staff Members Present: Sean Alexander, Melissa Baldock, Caroline Eller, Scarlett Miles, Susie Pallas, Jessica Reeves, Melissa Sajid, Tim Walker, and Robin Zeigler were present.

Guest Present: Michael Caldwell

Chair Dr. Clay Bailey called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. after verifying that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Dr. Clay Bailey

Chair Bailey presented the December minutes for approval. Jim Hoobler made a motion to approve the minutes, Dr. McKee provided a second, and the December minutes were unanimously approved. Dr. McKee reminded Clay that today is the 75th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz.

MHC BUDGET UPDATE – Tim Walker

Tim thanked Susie for her help with the budget and informed the Commission that we submitted our FY 2021 budget and investment requests last Friday. Tim recapped Metro Finance personnel changes and the budget savings goal of \$28,900 that will be absolutely required this year. He summarized two information sheets that Susie created for the Commissioners to understand the current budget situation, highlighting that over 90% of our annual budget is dedicated to employee salaries and benefits. Tim responded to questions about the savings amounts of the various line items. Bob Allen asked for clarification on the Registration/Membership line item and Tim said the \$3,900 was a cut of registration fees for educational conferences and other training for staff and Commissioners and membership dues for professional organizations. Menié asked if certain organizations would waive the fee for MHC and Tim said that has not been the case in the past. Robin said that they are all nonprofits, so they need membership dues to run. Clay reiterated the unfortunate necessity that \$8,000 must be cut from the City Cemetery budget to meet the savings goal. Tim reported that the \$25,000 for the City Cemetery was originally asked for by him, with the support of MHC Chair Jim Forkum and MHZC Chair Brian Tibbs, and put in the FY18 budget by Mayor Barry.

Menié and Tim discussed the fact that Parks is replacing an expensive lamp post at the City Cemetery, so that will not have to be paid for from our operating budget. Parks and MHC both have the NCC in their budgets, with Parks primarily maintaining the grounds and MHC preserving/cleaning the monuments.

Clay took a minute to introduce our guest, Michael Caldwell, who introduced himself as an internal medicine physician who moved to Nashville about a year ago from New York where he was a Director of Public Health. He was an art history major in college and is very interested in historic preservation, with an emphasis on health and public health, and is at the meeting to learn.

The budget conversation continued with Davis asking about the implications of the cuts to out-of-town travel. Tim responded that all travel for staff professional development was cut and anything that is done would have to be paid for personally by the staff member. Robin reported that she and other staff members have paid for their own training and attendance at conferences for the past several years. Dr. McKee asked if these cuts would be continuing for the next several years or if it is a temporary situation. Tim said that the finance department has not said, but the mayor has made it clear that he wants to tighten budgets and have departments run efficiently. We will find out more when the mayor releases his budget at the end of March. Our budget hearing with Mayor Cooper will be on February 26th at 3:30 p.m. in the mayor's media room. Tim then discussed our investment requests (attached) and performance metrics that were submitted with the budget. The 5-10 performance metrics we submitted were a draft and these will be reduced to the final 3-5 metrics by the mayor's office. Commissioner Wood asked about the capital spending plan budget schedule, but Tim said that we have not heard when that will be presented by the mayor. However, Tim said that Mayor Cooper and Kristin Wilson have said that Sunnyside is a priority. Monique Odom, Metro Parks Director, designated Sunnyside as the first priority on their critical needs list. Tim continued his budget report by giving specific details and reasoning for each investment request.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – *Tim Walker*

Menié inquired how the results of the Economic Impact Study would be communicated to Metro Council. Tim said he and PlaceEconomics presented the Phase 1 report to Mayor Briley and several Council members that was aired on Channel 3 (Metro Nashville Network). To ensure that all Council members are aware of the results of the study, Tim has asked the MHCF to fund printing of nice copies of the report to give to all Council members. We would like to present the Phase 2 report in May. Dr. McKee commented that “three mayors in three years” makes it difficult to get the message across that historical preservation makes good financial sense for the city. Clay said he is hoping to have an all-day MHC Open House in May at Sunnyside to coincide with the release of Phase 2 and to help spread awareness about our mission. We received a draft of the Phase 2 report last week and Tim, Robin and Caroline are going through it and making comments. Menié asked who was funding the project and Tim responded that we received a \$5,000 grant from the National Trust, \$13,000-15,000 from outside sources and the rest from the MHCF. Tim invited everyone to HNI's annual meeting this Thursday at 6:00 p.m. at the Hermitage Hotel to support this nonprofit which helps pay for our Preservation Awards reception every year. We are applying for a \$20,000 grant to the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area for the next phase of

Nashville Sites. Menié also reminded the Commissioners that they can support our office's efforts by giving to the MHCF. BL 2019-3, Councilman Syracuse's tax abatement bill, will be deferred for one or two more meetings to allow for time to meet with Metro Finance because they need their support for it to move forward. The goal is to put this program in place on July 1st. We received a thank you note from Gower descendant Marsha Fagnani thanking the staff and MHCF for their help with the Gower Cemetery work. She spearheaded an effort to raise money for the Gower Cemetery and they have raised about \$25,000. They have hired Dan Allen to make repairs and create a map of all the burials. They have also built a fence, done general beautification and established a fund for monthly maintenance. Five other rural cemeteries have also raised money for monthly maintenance and this money is coordinated through the MHCF. Former Council member Fabian Bedne is now in the mayor's office and Tim has spoken with him and he wants to do all he can to support historic preservation. Tim, Chair Bailey and MHZC Chair Bell met with Parks Director Odom and Parks Board Chair Michelle Steele and hope to meet again at least once a year. There are historic elements in almost all park properties, so it is important to have a good working relationship between Parks and MHC. When the budget situation improves, Director Odom said she would like to see money in the Parks budget specifically designated for historic preservation. Tim invited Director Odom and Michelle Steele to go out to Fort Negley when the work begins in mid-February and he also extended the invitation to the Commissioners.

HISTORIC ZONING REPORT –Robin Zeigler

As a nod to budget and efficiency, MHZC now receives their monthly packets from zoning staff electronically and that saves about 5,000 printed sheets.

1006 Monroe is a newly designated landmark while 1600 10th Avenue North and 2001 Lebanon Pike, the Cole House, are two more landmarks that will be coming up in February. The district of Marathon Village will be on the agenda for February. We now have a presence on Next Door which will enable us to communicate directly with the neighborhoods we represent. We are making a revision to the design guidelines for historic landmarks. Chair Bell commented on the importance of independent engineer reports when MHZC is evaluating a property for demolition, which is why we submitted an investment request for these with our FY2021 budget.

STAFF REPORTS

Scarlett distributed nomination forms for the Achievement, Commissioners', and Fletch Coke Awards, which the MHC will present at the 45th Annual Preservation Awards program in May (TBA). Caroline thanked the Commissioners who attended the Myhr House and Loveless Café historical marker dedications. The Olive Branch Missionary Baptist Church dedication will be on February 5th at 8:30 a.m. Several of the families will speak and they will have artifacts on display and a breakfast will be provided. The Turner Grammar School dedication will be on March 7th.at 10:00 a.m. We are also working on a Tennessee Historical Commission grant application for Shelby and Centennial Park. We are requesting \$28,000 for assessment and repair recommendations of ten concrete structures in the parks, as well as a conditions assessment of the Parthenon. Jessica also announced a marker dedication on Sunday, February 9th at 1:00 p.m. for Clark Memorial United Methodist Church. The Houston's Law Office marker went back up and the Nashville School of Law marker has come down because the demolition is scheduled to begin March 1st. The African American

History and Culture conference is coming up on February 14th and Linda and Jessica will be on WXAN to promote it this Friday.

OTHER BUSINESS

Jim Hoobler announced that the Tennessee State Museum is opening the 100th Anniversary of Woman's Suffrage exhibit on March 27th. Bob Allen thanked Dr. McKee for his help with speakers for the Bellevue History and Genealogy group. Clay thanked Dr. Caldwell for attending the meeting as a visitor. He also encouraged all commissioners to attend marker dedications, the HNI Annual Meeting and the Conference on African American History and Culture if at all possible. The MHC/MHZC planning retreat will be held on Saturday, February 22nd at 9:30 a.m. at Sunnyside.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, January 27, 2020.

Susie Dallas