

**ERIE CANALWAY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR
COMMISSION MEETING
November 16, 2006
River Stone Manor
1437 Amsterdam Road
Glenville, NY**

MINUTES

Call to Order:

Commission Chairman Eric Mower called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Welcoming Remarks:

Fred Miller, Executive Director of the Mohawk Valley State Heritage Corridor welcomed the Commission to Schenectady County and the Mohawk Valley. He emphasized the importance of groups joining forces and working together to achieve the multitude of tasks and goals throughout the region. The flood of June 28, 2006 which devastated the Mohawk Valley, highlighted what can be accomplished with cooperation between organizations.

Chairman Mower's Opening Remarks:

- Changes are imminent with election of new governor and the likely appointment of new heads of state departments and likely new nominations of commissioners. It is not clear yet how the new administration views the Erie Canal, Canal Corporation and Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor and effort will be made to educate and encourage a helpful attitude. The changes come in conjunction with the newly approved plan, an important time for new commissioners as commission prepares to execute the plan.
- There are also changes in Washington. In the House of Representative, Congressman Jim Walsh, who was key to passing our legislation and obtaining funding, is now in the minority, but will most likely continue to be a positive force due to good relationships with those now in the majority.

Introduction of Commissioners

Time was taken to introduce all members of the commission, representatives and Erie Canalway staff. Individuals stated who they are, where they are from, why they are at the meeting and how long they have participated in the work of the Corridor.

Swearing In of New and Reappointed Commissioners

Frank Dean, Executive Director, administered the National Park Service oath of office to all new and re-appointed commissioners.

Attendance:

Attendance was taken (see attached list), and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Budget Report:

- 2006 Final Report (see attached). Federal fiscal year ended September 30. Total new funding for 2006 was \$600,000, plus \$100,000 from HUD, carried over from the previous year. Overall, there was a slight surplus of \$2,586 as we closed out the fiscal year. The Supplies & Equipment line item appears as 555% over spent due to Federal accounting system coding, and the line item being used for one-time purchases such as office equipment, additional signage, etc. Project Development also shows as 222% over. However, other areas of the budget such as Personnel were under spent and over \$320,000 was rolled over into 2007 for the grants program, and the *Lois McClure* voyage, etc. This was necessary because Federal funds expire if not obligated.
- 2007 Budget (see attached). The base budget increased by Congress to \$750,000, with \$100,000 HUD grant means a total budget of \$850,000. Future funding may not be as robust due to possible competition from creation of ten new Heritage Areas. Line items within the budget have been adjusted to reflect overages from 2006.
- The annual audit is scheduled to start next week.

Russell Andrews moved to approve the 2006 budget, and Clinton Brown seconded. Motion was approved unanimously. Russell Andrews moved to approve the proposed 2007 budget, and Clinton Brown seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Grants Program Presentation:

Stuart Stein presented the overview of the Pilot Grants Program. The program has been in development since January of 2005. A Commission committee was appointed, comprised of Stuart Stein, Russell Andrews, Carol Greenough, Pieter Smeenk and Alan Vincent. Total funds available for grants is \$200,000. Eligible applicants are municipalities, Indian tribes or non-profit organizations. Eligible projects must be linked to implementation of the management plan, within the corridor, related to one of the four canals or two Finger Lakes and reflect the mission of the corridor. Principle excluding factor of ineligible projects is that grants cannot be used for physical improvement of real property. Individuals grants must be at least \$2,000 but not more than \$25,000. Projects must be completed within 18 months of contract. Matching funds must be a one-to-one match, but can be in-kind. Anticipated timeline includes announcement of program in November, commission approval of grant awards in April, and contracts to be signed in June. After the process of application submission and review, which may include staff site visits, the committee will present its recommendations and commission will make final decisions.

Kevin Millington from New York State Department of State presented suggestions for strengthening program including more clearly defining what constitutes local match, presenting eligible activities up front, encouraging inter-municipality applications, and requiring that projects need to indicate how it will support local existing projects and plans and what local support they have.

Hannah Blake reviewed the legislative authorization given to the Commission to conduct a grants program. She discussed models researched to assist in setting up program. She reminded the Commission that grants are not cooperative agreements. She discussed the issue of conflict-

of-interest and the need for transparency of the program, especially the rating process. She reminded the Commission of National Park Service requirements affecting projects. She discussed methods for transfer of funds and will probably issue checks. She solicited comments on creating a niche program versus encouraging creativity in projects, and the question of municipal approval and/or resolution requirement. She pointed out that the timeline is tied to Federal disbursement of funds rules and the Federal fiscal year. Most importantly, Hannah requested that a resolution to approve program, establish responsibilities of commission and give committee authority to make changes to application be passed in this meeting otherwise program would have to be pushed back another year.

Dominic Jacangelo of the Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation raised the need to indicate that the terms of the pilot grants program does not institutionalize a grants program and that criteria could be expanded in future years. He was also concerned that not including state agencies or public benefits corporations would be a problem. He wanted it made clear that it is a competitive grants program and there should be a clearly objective evaluation matrix. He raised the issue of whether or not the committee will have the ability to reduce the grant award amount from that requested in the application, should it come to a choice of giving partial awards to several applicants, or excluding a perhaps very worthy applicant. He finally wanted it made very clear what applicants who do not receive grants can apply in succeeding programs.

Bob Reilly suggested that a point system be used when evaluating applications to help ensure objectivity. He feels that the contact person should be listed within the grant application and should be a staff person so that Commissioners are not involved in the application process. He raised question of payment process so that it is made as easy a process as possible. Hannah reminded the commission that National Park Service requirements will have to be followed for funds disbursement and that, for this pilot program, the application requirements were designed by the committee to solicit applications from well-established organizations able to expedite the process. The system is a reimbursement program and for matches, funds must be in place when contract is signed.

Meg Levine recommended that the evaluation matrix be made available to applications at the time of application. She suggested that future programs ought to include improvements to real property, because it would constitute easily recognizable evidence of Corridor's contribution to localities. She suggested creating a niche or theme for each grant year. For this program, she would want to see a Web presence for frequently asked questions, as user-friendly an outreach as possible. She also thought that "in-kind" should be more clearly defined. She raised the question of letters of recommendation or support for non-profit applicants.

There was discussion of whether or not commission was ready to commit to going forward with the grants program. Frank Dean clarified the need to demonstrate action on the part of the commission--some expenditures on tangible product--since the commission had already rolled over a significant percentage of the previous year's budget, which may raise red flags with the auditing agencies. Dominic Jacangelo asserted the need to respect the committee's work and move forward with the program, adding the need to define eligible expenses by date.

Discussion moved on to details of the guidelines and the points matrix, as explained by Hannah Blake. Vicky Daly offered that making the weighting system known to the applicants would be useful to them as a checklist. She also maintained the importance of seeking municipal support by applicants, particularly as related to zoning issues. Since everything in small canal communities is canal related, she reiterated the importance of planning for “bricks and mortar” grants in the future.

Christopher Lindley suggested that, since they can be amended in subsequent years, the guidelines should be approved, despite various members’ reservations, to avoid losing a year of funding. The committee should solicit the commission’s input as applications are reviewed to help refine guidelines for future grants programs. Vicky Daly suggested a survey piece added to application to obtain applicants’ opinions of the program itself.

Carol Greenough reiterated importance of seeking municipality’s support and suggested adding a simple form containing statement of support to be signed by an elected official indicating municipality’s support.

Peter Wiles raised the issue of the distinction between non-profits and not-for-profits and need to make it clear in the guidelines which are eligible. Also suggested that guidelines be clarified to indicate that events are eligible and whether sponsorships by for-profit entities would disqualify the application.

Pieter Smeenk commented that the committee did struggle with the issue of municipality support and whether it is acknowledgment of awareness of the project, or active support (i.e. recommendation) and how much weight is given to such support.

Meg Levine presented a resolution (see attached) to accept the recommendations of the grants committee. Bob Reilly suggested that Executive Committee have final approval of program. Sharon Leighton stated that if both the criteria and the weights of the evaluation matrix are released in the application, it may reduce the element of objectivity from the process, particularly for the raters. Meg Levine responded that the rating system must be clearly established and finalized prior to the public announcement of the grants program. The resolution was passed unanimously, with Eric Mower reiterating that all communication regarding the grants program will indicate that it is a pilot program.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Eric Mower amended the agenda to move the Presentation on Commission Progress and Opportunities to the retreat. There were no commissioner comments or old business. There were no comments from the public. Meg Levine made a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting of November 30, 2005 and to accept as representative of discussion at meetings held January 26, 2006 and April 11, 2006 the summary presented hereto. The motion was approved unanimously.

Executive Director’s Report:

- The management Plan has been approved by the Secretary of the Interior and the Governor of New York State, and will be sent to the printer soon.

- Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse received \$1.2 million State Dept. of Transportation grant to purchase and remodel an adjacent building for additional classroom and exhibit space, in addition to the \$400,000 in Federal funds that the Corridor assisted them to secure to revamp museum's first floor exhibits. As one of the Corridor's primary partners, we will travel together at the end of the month to the National Canal Museum in Pennsylvania to review their newly installed exhibits..
- The primary Erie Canalway corridor entry highway signs from the Dept. of Transportation have been designed and approximately 100 of them will be located on the major highways throughout the corridor, as travelers cross our corridor boundary. They will be installed in the spring and summer.
- The Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor will be the primary underwriting sponsor for the voyage of the *Lois McClure* down the entire length of the canal corridor, a three-month trip, visiting various canal communities and festivals. Of the \$300,000 cost of the project, the corridor is providing \$75,000, and the Canal Corporation is voting whether to match that. The Corridor has sent letters seeking corporate sponsorship for the balance.
- The historic motorship *Day Peckinpaugh* continues to get attention. The boat has been cleaned and mechanically refurbished and new deck exhibits installed. A 2008 voyage along the canal is being considered.
- A meeting is planned for early December with the Empire State Development Corporation at Buffalo's Erie Canal Harbor about doing exterior exhibits in that project.
- *Pier A Update:* A meeting was set-up and attended by Congressman Jim Walsh with New York City Mayor Bloomberg in early November, trying to raise the mayor's awareness of efforts to put canal boat replica exhibit down at Pier A at Battery Park. He seemed favorable to the idea. It is a complicated situation with jurisdictional and legal issues to be clarified and untangled.

Election of Commission Officers

Motion made to accept slate of nominees, seconded and unanimously approved to elect Eric Mower as Chairman, Joseph Callahan as Vice Chairman, Meg Levine as Secretary and Peter Welsby as Treasurer.

New Business

Eric Mower noted upcoming projects to be addressed at future meetings include:

- Installing an Erie Canal Hall of Fame, which would focus on immigrants who built the canal, perhaps using the below-deck space of the *Day Peckinpaugh*.
- Bringing Pier A project to fruition, which at present is being hampered by between New York City and the leaseholder of Pier A.

- Forming an Erie Canalway Foundation to raise private money to spend on projects which could not be supported by Federal funding. The by-laws are in process and nearing completion, and will need to be ratified in 2007. A potential chair of the foundation has been approached and agreed to serve, but requests not to be named at present. The issue of keeping the foundation separate from the Commission will need to be addressed.
- Public television stations, led by WXXI in Rochester, approached the Commission with a proposal to help fund a documentary on the Erie Canal. The Commission is interested in such a project but considered that the proposed project needed to meet a higher standard as the Commission is interested in only doing very high quality documentary on canal, on a par with “The Civil War” or “Baseball.”
- Retreat needs to be planned for February or March, 2007.

Wrap up and Adjourn:

Beth Sciumeca announced that photo contest calendars were available for Commission members to take and distribute throughout their districts. Information about a tour of the historic Stockade District of Schenectady was offered, to begin after the meeting. Duncan Hay also offered to take anyone interested on board the *Day Peckinpaugh* which was docked at Lock 7.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Prepared by: Rosemary Button

Date: May 21, 2007

Approved by: Commissioner Alan Vincent

Date: June 4, 2007

**ERIE CANALWAY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR
COMMISSION MEETING
November 16, 2006**

ATTENDANCE

ECNHC Commission Members

Eric Mower, Chair
Megan Levine, Secretary
Russell S. Andrews
Clint Brown
Victoria W. Daly
Thomas X. Grasso
Carol B. Greenough
Lynn B. Herzig
Christopher Lindley
Ken Lynch
Robert P. Reilly
Judith Schmidt-Dean
Pieter W. Smeenk
Robert Shibley (pending official appointment)
Stuart W. Stein
Alan N. Vincent
Peter J. Welsby
Peter Wiles, Jr.

Liaisons to the Commission

Bob Miron, ESDC
Kevin Millington, NYS DOS
Dominic Jacangelo, NYS OPRHP
Sharon Leighton, NYS Canal Corp.

Staff

Frank Dean
Hannah Blake
Duncan Hay
Beth Sciumeca
Lori Duell
Mary Cunningham

Guests

Fred Miller, Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor
Marcia Kees, OPRHP
David Kinyon, Lockport Canal Task Force
Judy Mower

**ERIE CANALWAY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR
COMMISSION MEETING
November 16, 2006**

PILOT GRANTS PROGRAM RESOLUTION

Move that the Commission accept the recommendations of the grants committee to implement an award program for federal fiscal year 2006/2007 as described in the materials circulated at a meeting on November 16, 2006, with additional revisions to the report to include as follows:

that the program currently identifies a contact person for submission of questions from applicants;

that all questions and answers be made available to all applicants on a web site;

that the awards may be adjusted by the committee evaluators;

that there be a matrix for evaluation identified prior to the application time-line but that matrix may be held at the Commission but that the general framework of award points or percentages be made available to the applicant;

that it be made clear in the process that letters of support--including those from municipalities--will be considered as evidence of support for the project;

that the whole program be identified as a first year, pilot grants program,

that the requirements are subject to change;

that the application clearly state that it's the first effort by this Commission to improve the efforts along the canal consistent with the canal corridor's mission; and

to the extent that the committee needs further guidance, that such guidance shall be brought to the executive committee to make any decisions between now and through the course of the project until the next Commission meeting.

**Worksheet for
Commission Operations
FY 2006 - Final Report**

Total Appropriated
\$750,000

Account #	Program Area	Budgeted	Expended	Unexpended	% Exp	Comments
1761-685			To Date	Balance		
	BUDGET					
	Personnel Services:					
111A	Administrative Salaries/Benefits	\$348,130	\$151,983	\$196,147	44%	
252Z	IPA - Marcia Kees	\$17,762	\$4,534	\$13,228	26%	Unexpended balance was applied to funds remaining in FY2004 IPA agreement
	Administration:					
2110	Travel	\$40,000	\$28,935	\$11,065	72%	
233G, J	Mail Management	\$5,000	\$6,289	-\$1,289	126%	Mass mailing of rack brochures, Unigrid, annual report
233C, E	Utilities	\$4,000	\$2,654	\$1,346	66%	
241A	Public Outreach	\$30,000	\$36,400	-\$6,400	121%	Amtrak projects; increase in sponsorships/memberships
261A	Supplies & Equipment	\$10,000	\$55,466	-\$45,466	555%	With more staffing there was an increase in office supplies, furniture & equipment; gas & maintenance of additional vehicle; additional signage; printing
25	Heritage Alliance Dues	\$3,500	\$3,567	-\$67	102%	\$67 convenience check fee
252S, T	Admin Staff Training	\$3,000	\$176	\$2,824	6%	
252R	Audit	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$0	100%	FY2006 Audit
*	Congressional/NPS Assessments	\$9,563	\$9,563	\$0	100%	
252R, Z	Meetings/Workshops:	\$15,000	\$6,396	\$8,604	43%	
	Projects:					
241B	Project Development	\$145,745	\$323,451	-\$177,706	222%	Included is \$300,000 for task agreements; computer & telephone system support; website development; advertising
	ECNHC Baseline Survey	\$10,300	\$10,000	\$300	97%	
241D *	HUD Funding	\$100,000		\$100,000	0%	Plan Printing- earmark estimated at \$33,000
	Totals	\$750,000	\$647,414	\$102,586	86%	The HUD funds are the majority of the unexpended balance
	* -FY2006 Appropriations of \$650,000 are subject to Congressional and NPS Assessments.					
	- \$100,000 in HUD funding for the Erie Canalway was approved in September 2004 and is reflected in this total of \$750,000.					

**Breakdown of Expenses for FY 2006
(overages)**

Project Development

Computer Support	\$4,580.00
Legal Notice of FONSI (environmental compliance for management plan)	\$2,794.00
Website Support	\$6,204.00
Storm Windows	\$5,365.00
Telephone System Support	\$2,387.00
Subscription to E&E (electronic newsletter)	\$1,595.00
Agreements (Parks and Trails New York and Canal Society for 2006 projects)	\$300,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$526.00
Total	<u>\$323,451.00</u>

Supplies

Fuel for Government-owned Vehicle	\$504.00
Equipment (printers & computers)	\$3,377.00
Office Furniture	\$10,146.00
Printing (rack brochures, annual report, press kits)	\$10,435.00
Signs (wayside and interpretive)	\$5,323.00
Promotional Items (conference & trade show items)	\$5,039.00
Awning for Visitor Center	\$1,200.00
Printer Cartridges	\$2,311.00
CDs and Licenses for Software (Adobe Creative Suite & Backup Software)	\$1,188.00
World Canal Conference Registrations	\$1,000.00
Miscellaneous*	\$14,943.00
Total	<u>\$55,466.00</u>

Public Outreach

Amtrak Publication	\$4,677.00
Volunteers-In-Parks Amtrak Project (reimbursement for expenses & supplies)	\$2,113.00
Memberships**	\$6,405.00
Sponsorships***	\$14,450.00
Installation of wayside exhibit (Syracuse)	\$1,297.00
NY State Museum (preparation of exhibit for Day Peckinpaugh)	\$2,500.00
Distribution services for rack cards	\$2,500.00
Services for maintaining park literature at Visitor Center Exit 9 I-87	\$430.00
Canal New York Inc. (exhibit brochures)	\$350.00
Layout and design work for ad	\$1,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$678.00
Total	<u>\$36,400.00</u>

*General office supplies; fax & copier toner cartridges; photocopy paper; business cards; bulbs for PowerPoint projector; books; envelopes for mass mailing, etc.

**Examples of memberships: Feeder Canal Alliance; Erie Canal Museum; Albany County Convention & Visitor Bureau; Greater Rochester Visitors Association; Waterford Historical Museum; Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum; National Trust for Historic Preservation; Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society

**Breakdown of Expenses for FY 2006
(overages)**

***Example of sponsorships: \$495 to Canal New York for World Travel Market in London; \$2,500 to Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor Commission for Erie Canalway Alerts; \$250 to Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway Coalition for continued support toward design of partner website link & interpretive signage; \$2,500 to Travel Classics East Writer Conference-joint sponsorship with Canal Corporation; \$2,500 to Mohawk Valley Heritage Corridor for joint wayside exhibits

**Worksheet for
FY 2007 Commission Operations
November 16, 2006**

Total Appropriated
\$850,000

Account #	Program Area	Budgeted	Expended	Unexpended	% Exp	Comments
1761-685			To Date	Balance		
	BUDGET					
	Personnel Services:					
111A	Administrative Salaries/Benefits	\$197,000	\$0	\$197,000	0%	Hannah full time; Beth part time; Duncan 16 pp
111A	Additional Staff	\$90,000	\$0	\$90,000	0%	Estimate for Communications Director and support staff
	Administration:					
2110	Travel	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000	0%	
233G, J	Mail Management	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	0%	
233C, E	Utilities	\$4,000	\$0	\$4,000	0%	
241A	Public Outreach	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000	0%	
261A	Supplies & Equipment	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000	0%	
25	Heritage Alliance Dues	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000	0%	
252S, T	Admin Staff Training	\$3,000		\$3,000	0%	
252R	Audit	\$8,000		\$8,000	0%	FY2007 Audit
*	Congressional/NPS Assessments	\$11,000	\$0	\$11,000	0%	estimate - based on FY06 percentage
252R, Z	Meetings/Workshops:	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000	0%	
	Projects:					
241B	Project Development	\$291,000	\$0	\$291,000	0%	
241D *	HUD Funding	\$100,000		\$100,000	0%	Plan Printing- estimated at \$33,000
	Totals	\$850,000	\$0	\$850,000	0%	
	* - FY2007 Appropriations of \$750,000 are subject to Congressional and NPS Assessments and still needs to be passed by the full Senate. - \$100,000 in HUD funding for the Erie Canalway was approved in September 2004 and is reflected in this total of \$850,000. - \$320,000 in FY 2006 with Parks & Trails NY and Canal Society; and \$72,430 in FY 2005 available with Parks & Trails NY for Project Development					

