

## CLAYTON COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

### Meeting Minutes for November 6, 2024

The November 6, 2024 meeting of members of the Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission (CCHPC) was held at the Clayton County Economic Development Office in Elkader, Clayton County, Iowa between 9:09 and 10:25 am. Attending on site were Chair Roger Thomas, Secretary Chris Schoen, Ellen Collins, Kathy Koether, Bob Meyer and Rita Dudley. Deputy Chair Brandie Backes was absent. There were no guests.

A motion was made to approve the agenda by Collins and seconded by Koether. The motion was passed unanimously. Minutes from the September 13, 2024 meeting were reviewed. Dudley made a motion to approve the minutes and Collins seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

The current balance for the 2024-2025 fiscal year beginning in July is \$2050.00.

### OLD BUSINESS

Roger Thomas investigated a possible venue to make a display sign for the 3 founders of Elkader – John S. Thompson, Timothy Davis, and Chester Sage – to be placed in the cemetery. He shared an email that he received from *Sports World* (Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin) in response to Thomas' inquiry regarding the cost for a 24 x 24-inch white Celtec ¼-inch board signs similar to one this company had made for the CCHPC previously.

*Sports World* stated that they could produce the digitally printed, full color signs, but would need to buy the ¼-inch Celtec material in a 4 x 8-foot sheet, which would be cut to make 8 signs, each 2 x 2-feet. The cost for each of the 8 signs would be \$65. For a cost of \$80 each, *Sports World* could print a 2x2-foot vinyl decal material and apply it the sign material. To make the otherwise white background a different color and have vinyl cut lettering and flourishes, each sign would cost \$125.

The Commissioners decided to contact community leaders and Clayton County museums to inquire as to whether they would want to buy one or more of the other 7 signs for their community founders or displays. Kathy Koether will make the contacts.

Thomas reported that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) of Iowa made a determination of No Effect for the two proposed Clayton County Sheriff Safety Communications Towers. One tower is near the McGregor Cemetery and the other is near Scenic Acres.

### NEW BUSINESS

Thomas reported that he will begin to prepare the annual Certified Local Government report to be submitted to the Iowa SHPO.

The commissioners discussed ideas for marketing county museums and other organizations. Darla Ketchen of the Clayton County Economic Development Office has a grant opportunity for \$5,000 for tourism development. The grant application is due December 5<sup>th</sup>. A Museum Trail is the concept. She requested from the CCHPC matching funds and/or volunteer hours. The Commission agreed to submit a

letter of support. Collins moved that the CCHPC commit up to \$500 for matching funds. Schoen seconded the motion. It was passed unanimously.

Thomas reviewed “Best Marketing Strategies for Museums”. Points to consider include:

- Most museums have information about the community.
- How long can you keep the interest of the visitor?
- What is your target audience? Seniors? Children? Local residents?
- Tailor your information for your target audience to draw visitors.
- How do you make your museum or other destination stand out?
- Update your profile on social media with new photos, offerings, and staffing changes.
- Place QR codes on promotional materials, including displays.
- Assemble good data regarding attendance and interest from Influencers and Arrivalist data.
- Good story telling with interesting visuals and interactive materials.
- Determine what visitors take away from their experience.
- Know what other communities are doing that are successful or unsuccessful.

Collins reported that the City of Elkader is planning to have public holiday light displays set up by various local businesses and groups in the campground. People will be able to drive through beginning November 23.

Thomas said that there will be a Christmas display at the George Meier Rural Heritage Museum.

Collins stated that the Elgin Museum is hosting an open house on November 16 for the renovations made for the developing Tribes of the Turkey River exhibit.

Koether reported that she had reviewed a number of old photographs of schools near Giard with Michelle Petit in an attempt to identify which school might have flown or displayed the home-made American flag believed to have been fashioned in 1876 for the Centennial. The flag is at the Heritage Museum. No evidence could be found to determine that it had been at Moody’s School or perhaps the Swede Ridge School, both west of McGregor.

Commissioner Dudley announced that she is resigning from the CCHPC. We expressed our appreciation for her service and contributions.

The next scheduled meeting will be December 13, 2024 at 9:00 am at the Clayton County Economic Development Office in Elkader, Iowa.

Koether made a motion to adjourn at 10:25. Meyer seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted November 12, 2024

Chris Schoen, Secretary