



Cuyahoga County Monument Commission

Minutes

July 28, 2023

8:30 AM

County Administration Building, Room 5-006

Call to Order – Meeting of Friday, July 28, 2023

Patrick Hewitt called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m. Roll call showed a quorum.

Attending –

Dr. Judith G. Cetina

Patti Choby

Patrick W. Hewitt

Joseph Nanni

Jill Paulsen

Juan Quirarte

Absent –

Matt Rymer

Guests –

Annette Linden, County Planning

Mark Heidorf, County Law

Greg Palumbo, Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument

Ted Prasse, Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument

1. Minutes – May 26, 2023 meeting minutes approved. On a motion by Juan Quirarte, seconded by Jill Paulsen, to accept the minutes as written, the vote was unanimously approved.
2. Public Comments – No Public Comments.
3. Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument Presentation – Greg Palumbo, Executive Director and Ted Prasse, Commission President spoke on the history and the processes for upkeep on the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument. A publication of the Ohio History Connection that gives the timeline for the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument was presented to the commission explaining some of the process for establishing the monument. In the 1870s a group of Civil War veterans came together to advocate for the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in the center of the county seat. After various discussions, the veterans group petitioned the state to form a commission that eventually became self-appointing. The mission is to preserve the space and tell the story of the Civil War.

Control of the land and ownership of the monument has been a legal question for multiple years. When renovations were done on Public Square in 2016, it involved discussion between the County Executive, County Council, City of Cleveland, and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument group. The City of Cleveland owns the three (3) other quadrants of Public Square, and the County owns the one (1) quadrant of land, but the public owns the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument.

The funding for the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument comes through several County levies, so the financial burden is on the County for upkeep of the building and salary of the caretakers, but water and sewer is the responsibility of the City of Cleveland. Private funds raised are now kept in a Capital and Extraordinary Needs Fund that was agreed to with the County to help with emergency needs. There are now Soldiers' and Sailors' Monuments offices in the County Archives building for accessibility to the County internet services and to store records. The money obtained through the donation box is used to fund programs such as Veteran's Day events.

In response to a question, Greg and Ted said the biggest lesson learned in developing the Monument's maintenance plan is to get it started sooner rather than later and that someone needs to stay on top of it. Preparing standard operating procedures and creating a written process is key to using the maintenance plan.

A question was asked about the issue of it being illegal to desecrate monuments and that offenders could be subject to a crime and fined \$1,500.00. It has not been determined if State Troopers, the County Sheriff, or Cleveland Police have jurisdiction. A new state statute has been formed that states that any war memorials displaying items used in the service of the United States, if it has ever been on public display, can only be taken out of display for maintenance. It must then be put back out for display.

The County Monument Commission RFP will be returned soon, and it was asked if the County Monuments Commission could ask Greg and Ted for advice on the responses. Greg and Ted are willing to help and stated that the preservation society is also a good resource. The Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument group is willing to share the names of firms which may be good for the RFP. In closing the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument group asked that the small models of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument be back under their control or at least guarantee that they are well taken care of, as they were not a part of the County Insurance forms.

4. Monument Assessment and Maintenance RFQ – Matt Rymer was not able to make the meeting, but Patrick Hewitt announced that only one vendor came to the pre-purchasing process meeting.

5. Good and Welfare –

Ted Theodore is still interested in the Jesse Owens statue for an Olympic Park, and there is still interest by another group for the statue to be relocated near the Jesse Owens oak tree with the memorial track. There needs to be thought on the cost and maintenance to whoever moves the statue if it happens.

The retention schedule has been passed and will be available for anyone to see.

Membership on the board will be up in February 2024 for Juan Quirarte, Jill Paulsen, and Dr. Judith Cetina and the process for board members will need to be started.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, at 8:30 a.m. in the Cuyahoga County Administrative Building room 5-006.

6. Adjournment – With no further business to discuss, on a motion by Dr. Judith Cetina, seconded by Patti Choby, the Commission unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 AM.