

**Westampton Township
Timbuctoo Advisory Committee
Third Quarter Zoom Meeting
September 8, 2021**

The Zoom meeting was called to order by Chair, Carolyn V. Chang, Esquire at 7:00 PM. Attendees were Joyce Payne, Kent Pipes, Debbie Price, Lynda Williams and Guy Weston. Minutes from the June 8th meeting were reviewed and accepted by the Committee.

Review of the last three TAC events.

June 19th Juneteenth Day Festival in Willingboro was a successful event. Approximately 150 festival attendees stop by to see the display of artifacts and get information about Timbuctoo. 72 attendees signed up for a tour of Timbuctoo. We raffled off two carrot cakes donated by Joyce Payne and two Timbuctoo T-shirts.

July 31st Conducted the tour for the Juneteenth signups. 45 people attended the program that consisted of a welcome by the Chair, history of Timbuctoo by Guy, a reenactment by the Sixth Regiment US Colored Troops, a walk through the grounds and a display of artifacts.

August 20th Conducted a tour for 60 Educators from the Amistad Commission from the NJ Department of Education, despite the rainy weather. The program consisted of a welcome by the Chair, history of Timbuctoo by Guy, an overview of the Timbuctoo curriculum by Cheryl Alspach from Rancocas Valley Regional High School, remarks by Joyce Payne on the opportunities we have incorporating African American History in our schools and a walk through the grounds.

Procedures for Upcoming Events and Tours:

1. All request must be formerly submitted to the Chairperson with the total of how many will be attending.
2. The Chairperson will forward the request to the Committee for comments, concerns and availability of volunteers to assist with the program.

Programs such as the Amistad Commission requires support from the Westampton governing body to make sure the site is clean and tidy, have tents setup, seating arrangements, porta potty, water, etc. It's important that we have sufficient time to plan these programs

Debbie brought up concerns regarding visits to Timbuctoo that were not "organized groups". She has taken people though the site when asked about it. Most people on the Committee said they have done the same thing. Carolyn expressed concerns about liability issues that could affect the Township. The owner of the cemetery is now the Timbuctoo Historical Society. Guy and Kent will check on the Premises Liability Insurance for coverage for anyone that walks onto the site. They will get back to the Committee in a couple of weeks.

Upcoming Event and Tours:

September 12th African *Diaspora* at the Underground Railroad 12 PM to 6 PM. Due to lack of volunteers for coverage and setup/breakdown we will not be able to participate in this event.

September 25th Leisure *Town Seniors* Tour 1 PM, attendee 30. This event will be approx. 90 minutes. **Volunteers are needed.**

October 3rd *NJ Black Funeral Directors* has been postponed until Spring 2022.

Acquisition of Funds:

Carolyn had an extensive conversation with Mayor Hensley regarding expenses incurred by the Township for numerous tours. They discussed whether TAC should start applying for grants from the County or the Historical Society in Trenton in order to have monies available to take care of some of these expenses on our own. The issue would be what entity would hold the funds?

An advisory committee that's connected to the governing body of Westampton Township can't hold funds or fundraise. We need to consider changing how we operate. We couldn't be an arm of the Township or we would have to apply for funds and have the Township hold them. We would then decide what we would use the funds for. We also need to find out if the Township has a line-item budget available to assist TAC in our programming efforts.

Guy indicated that funds are available through the County that municipalities can apply for. We cannot request funds from corporate donors. We need to decide what or how many activities to have and then request the funds for it. Our liaison on the Township Committee, Anthony DeSilva, should be more involved and communicate our need to the Township Committee.

Kent stated that Timbuctoo is not a Westampton matter it is a County matter and the County Freeholders should step up and support the County wide advocacy for Timbuctoo's place in the history of Burlington County. Carolyn will talk to Linda Hynes about support from the Burlington County Commissioners.

Role of Each Committee Member:

A major concern is the educational component of the Timbuctoo curriculum into the school systems. Currently, we have JoAnn and 2 other teachers at Westampton Middle school and 2 teachers at RVRHS working on the curriculum. Joyce was asked to work with the teachers and agreed to work with them.

Inactive Members:

Carolyn has tried numerous times to contact inactive members with no success to see if they are willing to resign their seat so that the Westampton governing body can replace them with others who have shown an interest in working on the Committee. Carolyn has attempted to contact everyone on the list she was given. Lynda will contact the inactive members via letter and give them a date they must respond by.

Other Concerns:

Debbie made the Committee aware that there are other groups with similar interest such as Underground Railroad and Jacob's Chapel that have expressed interest in establishing a roundtable discussion. We all have a connection because of our history in Burlington County and we could benefit from a unified discussion. Debbie is willing to pull all the groups together.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda Williams, Secretary