

Wrightstown Township Historical Commission

Minutes

2 April 2026

Call to Order: Chair Betty Davis called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Present Members and Guests: Chair Betty Davis, Mary Lee Johnson, Beverly Wilson (departed at 2:30), and Karl Niederer. Absent: Jane DelBianco. Guest: Jane Magne, Township Supervisor.

Agenda: Additions and Changes - None.

Approval of Minutes: 5 March 2026 meeting approved without change.

Treasurer's Report: None presented.

Old Business:

1. **Exhibit in Township Building** — Betty and Mary Lee reported progress researching and planning the 2026 case exhibition of original manuscript deeds from WTHC collection. They have begun researching three (3) deeds each to identify location and the current property owners and tax parcels—a time-consuming and challenging task.
2. **Octagonal School**—
 - a. Open House feature programs for 2026 — Mary Lee and Karl reported on all five (5) feature programs for the Open House season, as follows:
 - *Octagonal Artistry*, (17 May) Wrightstown Elementary School students artwork show — Mary Lee announced distribution of publicity for the 2026 season programs to local media, presenting a list of them to the secretary for the minutes (see Attachment A). An expanded release about the program will be distributed next week. Jane Magne will confirm a date in June when the Board of Supervisors will officially recognize the participating students. Local calligrapher Robert Hurford will hand-inscribe participation certificates for the students.
— Mary Lee and Karl will staff the event 1:00-3:00 p.m. (first shift); and Betty and Beverly will staff 3:00-5:00 (second shift); need to confirm Jane DelBianco.
 - *Wrightstown Brushstrokes*, (21 June) show of adult artists' show on Wrightstown sites — Mary Lee reported maintaining contact with the three participating artists on planning, logistics, and technical preparations for displaying their works inside the school. They need to confirm the number and size of artworks they will show. Karl asked that each artist provide a digital image of one of the pieces they will show to be used in our advance publicity. Betty recommended setting up a tent for visitor sign-in, literature display, donations jar, etc.
 - *Pen & Ink*, (19 July) penmanship and calligraphy demonstration, and USA 250th celebration — Mary Lee reported all needed planning, logistics, and technical preparations for this program confirmed with calligrapher Bob Hurford.
 - *In Word and Deed*, (20 September) Bucks County deed books display — Karl announced he will visit the County Recorder of Deeds Office to choose deed books for display. Betty asked that the deed books matched the original deeds in the Commission's own exhibit in the Township Building this year. Once the originals in the exhibition are confirmed, Karl will proceed with the Recorder's Office.
 - *Tunes of the Times*, (18 October) 19th Century music program — Karl reported all

advance arrangements confirmed with the musicians (Bob and Marti Stevens, and Forest and Nancy Deal).

- b. Parking solution — Jane Magne reported no recent progress on the revised plan for the Swamp Road-access parking area for the Octagonal School, but agreed to notify the Commission of any updates from Township Engineer Cindy Van Hise.
3. **Oxford Valley Octagonal School site field trip** — Karl reported on the site visit on 12 March with historian Robert Craig, Monica Hinden (Lower Makefield Township Historical Commission), and David Marshall (Historic Fallsington, Inc.). He will post photographs and videos from the event to a Google drive for the Commission to view and upload them to the Township's storage drive for safekeeping. Betty and Mary Lee suggested creating an informational flyer about other octagonal schools once found in Bucks County (e.g., Diamond Rock, Birmingham, Dunwoody and Heybach Road), as well as in Chester and Delaware counties.
4. **Commission Report to Township Supervisors** — Karl summarized his report to the Supervisors on 16 March, which featured the 2026 Open House feature programs, and recent progress on the Wrightstown Historical Information Scanning Project (WHISP).
5. **Wrightstown Historical Information Scanning Project** — Karl reported Lisa Loeffler Fee's progress on the project continues steadily. Jane Magne suggested the Township seek a "community grant" to fund development of a public website to present WHISP scanned photographs and inventory data on layers of current and historic maps.

New Business:

1. **Community Day, Saturday, 16 May** — Betty and Karl agreed to staff the Commission's information table from 9:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m. at the Grange Fairgrounds. Check with Jane DelBianco and Izzy Vance for availability also.
2. **Additional Commission members** — Jane Magne mentioned the Supervisors would like to identify some candidates interested in appointment to the Commission.
3. **Octagonal School teaching contract** — Mary Lee presented a photocopied 1826 contract naming Rachel Twining as instructor at the Octagonal School, signed by the school proprietors and several parents, most (if not all) of whom were Wrightstown residents. An enlarged reproduction and transcription should be displayed at Open Houses.
4. **Octagonal School bunting** — Mary Lee purchased red, white, and blue bunting to fasten beneath the Octagonal School windows, at a cost of \$164.85. She will be reimbursed from the Commission's annual budget account. The consensus was to display the bunting at all Open Houses and on national holidays (Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day).

Next Meeting: Thursday, 7 May 2026

Adjournment: 2:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



—Karl J. Niederer, Secretary

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