

# STATE OF DELAWARE



## EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT DOVER

### EXECUTIVE ORDER

### NUMBER FIFTY-FIVE

### RE: CREATING THE FIRST STATE HISTORICAL PARK TASK FORCE

WHEREAS, the City of Dover has been the seat of government in Delaware since 1777 and is home to one of the most beautifully preserved capitol complexes in the nation, featuring many sites of historic and cultural interest; and

WHEREAS, in convention in Dover on December 7, 1787, the State of Delaware became the first of the 13 original states to ratify the U.S. Constitution, forever staking our claim to the nickname, "The First State"; and

WHEREAS, educating Delaware citizens and youth about the significant historical events and the diverse heritage of the City of Dover and the State can be a powerful tool in building our sense of community; and

WHEREAS, each year thousands of visitors come to Dover's historic area to enjoy its hidden treasures while more than 1 million cars drive past Dover - unaware of the rich historical and cultural offerings of the area; and

WHEREAS, attracting more visitors to downtown Dover will help existing businesses grow, create new jobs, and ensure the area's continued vitality; and

WHEREAS, many of the treasured sites in the downtown area are owned by the State, including Legislative Hall, the Governor's House at Woodburn, the Delaware Public Archives, the Delaware State Museums' Visitor Center, the State House Museum, the Johnson Victrola Museum, Legislative Mall, the Delaware Museum of Small Town Life and the Delaware Archaeology Museum, and the Biggs Museum of American Art is located in a State-owned building, and together these sites are operated by as many as six different agencies and organizations; and

WHEREAS, the State has not fully exploited opportunities to coordinate visitor hospitality services, hours of operation, educational programming, marketing, signage, and other

infrastructure in order to improve visitor experiences, enhance Delawareans' quality of life, and grow the local economy; and

WHEREAS, the Delaware Department of State, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, and the Delaware Economic Development Office have signed a Memorandum of Understanding setting forth certain commitments to improve coordination of such visitor services.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RUTH ANN MINNER, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Delaware do hereby declare and order as follows, this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of April, 2004:

1. The First State Historical Park Task Force is hereby created for the purpose of recommending to the Governor, the General Assembly and State agencies, actions that should be undertaken to develop a non-traditional "park without boundaries" encompassing the State-owned historic sites within the Dover historic district.
2. The Task Force shall consist of thirteen members, who shall be selected as follows:
  - a. A representative from the Governor's Office, to be appointed by the Governor;
  - b. One representative of the Delaware State Senate, to be appointed by the President *Pro Tempore*;
  - c. One representative of the Delaware House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House;
  - d. One representative of the Office of Legislative Council to be appointed by the President Pro Tem of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives;
  - e. A representative from the Delaware Judicial Branch, to be appointed by the Chief Justice;
  - f. The Mayor of Dover, or his designee;
  - g. A representative of the Downtown Dover Development Corporation, to be appointed by its Chair;
  - h. A representative of Dover Main Street, to be appointed by its President;
  - i. A representative of the Kent County Tourism Board, to be appointed by its President;
  - j. A representative of the Biggs Museum of American Art, to be appointed by its President;
  - k. A member of the Delaware Heritage Commission to be appointed by its Chairman;
  - l. Two residents of the Dover community, to be appointed by the Governor;
  - m. Cabinet Secretaries or their designees representing each of the following government agencies: Department of State, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, and the Delaware Economic Development Office.
3. The Governor shall appoint a Chair from among the members of the Task Force who shall serve as Chair at her pleasure. Members of the Task Force shall serve while they hold office or at the pleasure of the persons appointing them.



4. The Chair of the Task Force may form working groups that shall include members from the Task Force as well as members of the public with interest and/or expertise in the objectives of the Task Force. Each working group shall be chaired by a member of the Task Force. In addition to those agencies represented on the Task Force, all other state agencies are directed to provide reasonable support and planning assistance to the Task Force including, but not limited to, the Office of State Planning, the Office of Facilities Management, the Department of Transportation, and Capitol Police.
5. The Task Force shall develop a list of recommendations to be included with a First State Historical Park Plan currently under development by certain State agencies. A preliminary set of recommendations shall be submitted to the Governor no later than October 1, 2004. A final report and set of recommendations shall be submitted to the Governor and the Delaware General Assembly no later than March 1, 2005.
6. Recommendations shall address the following issues:
  - a. Coordinated visitor hospitality services;
  - b. Synchronized hours of operation, consistent look for park's signage, literature, and other forms of identity;
  - c. Comprehensive visitor information at all sites;
  - d. Enhanced interpretive services and complementary educational programming across sites with a focus on children and family-oriented programming throughout the park;
  - e. Marketing and partnerships with tourism industry;
  - f. Security;
  - g. Infrastructure enhancements to enable better self-guided walking trails as well as alternative transportation modes within the historic district;
  - h. Other infrastructure in order to improve visitor experiences; and
  - i. Identification of long-term goals and objectives.



  
Governor

ATTEST:

  
Secretary of State