

FYI.

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**From:** Pollman, Howard <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** Friday, January 5, 2024 at 8:04 AM  
**To:** Matt Mathias <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Re: [External] Statement Request

Hi Matt,

Sorry I did not see your email, or your JET-TV story, until this morning.

PHMC appreciates the significance of Erie and its maritime history in the Pennsylvania story and is enthusiastic about positioning the Erie Maritime Museum as a premier maritime history center. To realize this vision, PHMC is making a substantial investment in the Erie Maritime Museum Complex, including the U.S. Brig *Niagara*.

Both the museum and the ship will receive significant upgrades, with the development of new exhibits at the museum and repairs and improvements to the ship over the next few years. The elevation of the museum as a top-tier maritime history destination will draw a wider audience, educating more people about this important history and serving as a driver for Erie's tourism economy.

This vision for the museum features the *Niagara* as a centerpiece of its programming and educational curriculum. The agency's goal is for the Erie Maritime Museum and the U.S. Brig *Niagara* to deliver dynamic educational experiences that highlight Pennsylvania's maritime history to those who visit this destination.

Future sailing programs at the Erie Maritime Museum will promote *Niagara* as a destination for experiential learning and an ambassador of Pennsylvania's maritime history. While *Niagara* will spend most of her time day-sailing from her home port, Erie, PHMC plans to sail to other Great Lakes destinations several times a year and to continue to participate in Tall Ships.

PHMC will resume direct management of the U.S. Brig *Niagara*, hiring the ship's professional crew, a staffing model successfully employed from 1992 to 2009. This model will include hiring a full-time captain, chief mate, shipwright, as well as seasonal crew members. These positions will be open for all qualified candidates to apply.

As part of its increased investment, PHMC will allocate an additional \$400,000 annually to support U.S. Brig *Niagara* operations, in addition to the existing \$350,000 earmarked for maintenance and operations. This combined annual base allocation of \$750,000 underscores PHMC's dedication to sustaining the program's success.

During 2024, PHMC will embark on a multi-million-dollar Commonwealth Capital Project to tackle *Niagara*'s deferred maintenance and to make major systems upgrades. The significant investment of resources over the next two years will culminate in the ship sailing Pennsylvania's northwest coast in 2026 when the United States and the Commonwealth celebrate the nation's 250th anniversary.

PHMC envisions a very bright future for the Erie Maritime Museum and the U.S. Brig *Niagara*. Visitors

to Erie can be assured that, for years to come, they will have the opportunity to experience the U.S. Brig *Niagara*.

PHMC appreciates the enthusiasm of its volunteers and their passion for history and holds regular volunteer meetings occur at all our sites. Last night's meeting was an informational briefing for volunteers covering the plans above.

Thanks,

Howard

**Howard M. Pollman** | Director, External Affairs  
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The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission is the official history agency of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Learn more by visiting [PHMC online](#) or following us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

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**From:** Matt Mathias [REDACTED] >  
**Date:** Thursday, January 4, 2024 at 9:41 PM  
**To:** Pollman, Howard <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** [External] Statement Request

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Good Evening Mr. Pollman,

My name is Matt Mathias, and I'm a reporter with Jet 24 news in Erie, PA.

I apologize for the late email, but we're following the situation here involving the PHMC and the Flagship Niagara League's movement with staffing and the future of the U.S. Brig Niagara. We know tonight, volunteers held a closed meeting with PHMC officials.

We're working on a story tonight on that meeting and wanted to reach out to you for comment about that meeting as well as the topic as a whole. If there's anything you would like for us to put out statement wise for the PHMC, please let me know.

Thank you for your time, and have a great day.

Best,

Matt Mathias  
News Reporter