

**Minutes of the
Seventy-Fourth Meeting of the
Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
January 12, 2017**

The seventy-fourth meeting of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) was held on January 12, 2017 at the People's Resource Center, 100 Community Place, Crownsville MD 21032.

Authority Members/Designees Present: Wendi Peters, Acting Secretary, MD Department of Planning and Chair, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (arrived at approximately 11:30 a.m.); Elizabeth Hughes (State Historic Preservation Officer); Elizabeth Fitzsimmons (representing MD Department of Commerce Secretary R. Michael Gill); John Wilson (representing MD Department of Natural Resources Secretary Mark J. Belton); Marty Baker, Ph.D. (representing MD Department of Transportation Secretary Pete K. Rahn); Pete Leshner (MD Municipal League representative); Wayne E. Clark (President of the Senate representative); Amy Seitz (representing MD Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Kenneth C. Holt); Janice Hayes-Williams (Speaker of the House representative); Lisa Challenger (Governor's Appointee for Heritage Tourism); Natalie Chabot (Representative for MD Greenways); Donna Ware (Speaker of the House representative); Robert D. Campbell (Governor's Appointee for Historic Preservation); J. Matthew Neitzey (MD Tourism Development Board representative); Burton Kummerow (President of the Senate representative); Thomas Bradshaw (MD Association of Counties representative)

Authority Members/Designees Absent: Lee Towers (representing MD Higher Education Commission Secretary James D. Fielder, Jr.); Vacant (representing MD State Department of Education Secretary Karen Salmon); Rowland Agbede (representing MD Department of Agriculture Secretary Joseph Bartenfelder)

Staff Present: Bernadette Pruitt, Jennifer Ruffner, Courtney Highsmith (Maryland Department of Planning), Rieyn Deloney (Office of the Attorney General), Marci Ross (TAC member)

Heritage Area Directors/Staff Present: Liz Shatto (Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area & Co-Chair, Maryland Coalition of Heritage Areas); Carol Benson (Four Rivers Heritage Area); Shauntee Daniels (Baltimore National Heritage Area); Gail Owings (Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area); Aaron Marcavitch (Anacostia Trails Heritage Area); Brigitte Carty (Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway); Lucille Walker (Southern MD Heritage Area); Sarah Rogers (Montgomery County Heritage Area); Mary Catherine Cochran (Patapsco Valley Heritage Area); Deidra Ritchie (Canal Place Heritage Area); Amanda Fenstermaker (Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area & Co-Chair, Maryland Coalition of Heritage Areas); Juli Strohmer (Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area)

Heritage Area Directors Absent: Jen Durbin (Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area); Lisa Ludwig (Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area)

Others Present: Richard Hughes

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:43 a.m. by MHAA Vice Chair, Dr. Marty Baker. She mentioned the start of the legislative session and that Secretary Peters was required to attend a cabinet meeting in Annapolis and would be joining the meeting later.

INTRODUCTIONS

Dr. Baker introduced the newest MHAA member, Mr. Thomas Bradshaw, who has been appointed as the MD Association of Counties representative. Everyone else in attendance introduced themselves.

MHAA CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS / UPDATES

(Marty Baker, Vice Chair)

Dr. Baker mentioned that this is the start of the 2017 legislative session and additionally a busy time for the Maryland Department of Transportation and MHAA with the upcoming grant application process/ rounds.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 13, 2016

Dr. Baker called for a motion to approve the October 13, 2016 minutes. The minutes from the closed session held that day were also voted on. Mr. Leshner offered the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Authority approves the October 13, 2016 Minutes of the open and closed sessions as presented.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Clark and approved unanimously. Mr. Bradshaw abstained.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund report (Jennifer Ruffner)

Ms. Ruffner reported that as of December 30, 2016 the current balance was \$163,680.09. This included the projected amount for emergency grants for 2017 of \$100,000.00 leaving a remaining balance of \$63,680.09.

There was an inquiry with regards to the FY 2018 budget, but it has not been released yet.

Report on MHAA Regulations Review (Courtney Highsmith, MDP Legislative Officer)

Ms. Highsmith reported the following changes from the Maryland State Commission Regulatory Commission that pertain to the MHAA:

1. 14.29.02.04B – MHA Grant Program – Eligible Grantees

Removes the requirement that local jurisdictions submit applications together with all other jurisdictions within a recognized or certified heritage area that will benefit from the grant.

2. 14.29.04.04B – MHA Loan Program – Eligible Borrowers

This is an amendment to the application process and what needs to be submitted with the application. It is an onerous and often unmet provision because other jurisdictions are hesitant to sign on as a co-applicant. It is commonplace that local jurisdictions are communicating with other jurisdictions regarding possible benefits from either grants or loans awarded. This amendment streamlines the application process.

3. 14.29.02.05A(2)(b)(i) – MHA Program – Eligible Activities

Amended the requirement that a grant project must address or complete priority activities identified in the management plan approved for the certified heritage area – now reads “identified in either an approved management plan or a revision to a management plan.”

4. 14.29.02.06A(1)(b)(vi) – MHA Grant Program – General Grant Allocation Procedures

Removed the allocation criteria related to local jurisdiction contributions to grant project costs – no longer need to determine the level of contribution to the cost of the activity by the local jurisdiction in the application.

5. 14.29.02.01 – MHA Program

Update provisions referencing DHCD to the Department of Planning

6. 14.29.03.03B (13) – Certified Heritage Area – Eligible Proposals

Delete requirement that eligible proposals must provide specific baseline performance data for the heritage area in a management plan – this is not removed entirely from the process. MHAA has developed and implements Heritage Areas Program Impact Performance Measures that utilize a set of external evaluation metrics to assess annually the performance of the overall Maryland Heritage Areas Program. The implementation of these annually recurring performance measurements – of each certified heritage area and the overall program - eliminates the need for heritage area management plans to include “baseline performance data” since the annual performance measurement data provides a more accurate baseline performance.

SB 2 – Maryland Heritage Area Authority – Revision of Boundaries and Boundary Maps

This bill permits the MHAA to publish a link to a computer file posted on a website hosted by the state depicting proposed amendments or revisions to the boundary of a recognized heritage area in the Maryland Register in addition to the publication of a revised boundary map drawing or narrative description. It also requires that the Authority send a copy of each boundary map to the office of the county clerk where the recognized heritage area is located. This approach will provide the public with easier access to more detailed boundary revision information.

Ms. Highsmith, Ms. Ruffner and Ms. Hughes responded to questions regarding the regulatory changes.

Update on proposed amendment to the boundaries of the Maryland Milestones (Anacostia Trails) Heritage Area (Jennifer Ruffner and Aaron Marcavitch, ATHA Executive Director)

Mr. Marcavitch reported that no news has come from Prince George’s County regarding the

boundary amendment. Until the County approves the change, MHAA cannot act. He noted that he continues to work with organizations in Southern Prince George's County to add them in the future.

Update on proposed amendment to the boundaries of the Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area, including Allen. (Jennifer Ruffner and Lisa Ludwig, LESH Executive Director)

Ms. Ruffner reported that she and Ms. Ludwig visited Allen to discuss the proposed boundary amendment, and Ms. Ludwig is working with representatives from the Allen Historical Society and Wicomico County to identify the areas to include in the proposed boundary amendment.

Update on proposed amendment to the boundaries of the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area in Washington County. (Jen Ruffner and Liz Shatto, HCWHA Executive Director)

Ms. Shatto reported that the HCWHA continues to work on a boundary amendment with hopes of approval by the MHAA in April. If the April timeline is not met they will aim for July. While she is not certain that a grant from an organization in the new areas will be proposed in this round, this will keep options for funding in this round open.

Refinements are being made to the map that was previously shared with MHAA, but she does not anticipate big changes. The HCWHA met with the Keedysville and Funkstown Town Councils and they have formally requested by letter to be included in the HCWHA boundaries. On January 10th plans were shared with the Washington County Board of County Commissioners, and they resolved to consent and support the boundary change. It is possible that the Town of Clear Spring will come in at the last minute. Ms. Shatto would like to present it to the TAC in March, but June at the latest. Initially, all Washington County municipalities were expected to be within the heritage area boundaries but not all amended their Comprehensive Plans at the time of the HCWHA certification in 2006.

Update on proposed amendment to the boundaries of Southern Maryland Heritage Area within Calvert County to include a parcel and structure at the American Chestnut Land Trust property and additional areas of Calvert County's Biscoe Gray Farm Heritage Park. (Jen Ruffner and Lucille Walker, SMHA Executive Director)

Ms. Walker reported that the proposed amendment to the boundaries of the Southern Maryland Heritage Area within Calvert County (American Chestnut Land Trust Property and Biscoe Gray Farm Heritage Park) is progressing.

Update on FY 2018 Grant Round (Jennifer Ruffner)

Ms. Ruffner reported that the FY 2018 grants materials were released in December. Two webinars and a workshop have been schedule in January. The Intent to Apply forms are due January 27. Full applications will be due the end of February through early March – each heritage area sets their own deadline. The final submission deadline for all applications, including management and marketing applications, is April 7. A summary of the applications received will be provided at the April meeting.

Update on Marketing Working Group (Jennifer Ruffner)

Ms. Ruffner indicated that the Marketing Working Group is still planned, but has been delayed due to the staffing shortage. She looks forward to getting it back on track later in the year. Ms. Ruffner anticipates that the group will be a task force with representatives from the TAC, MCHA and MHAA. Those who are interested in being involved should contact Ms. Ruffner.

ACTION ITEMS

Request to transfer FY 2017 grant of \$14,400 awarded to the Prince George's County Parks and Recreation Foundation for "College Park Aviation Campus Exterior Interpretation & Wayfinding" project to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Ms. Ruffner reported the grant was awarded in FY 2017 and large portion of the cash match that was proposed was based on M-NCCP staff in Prince George's County. Because staff time of partner organizations must be counted as in-kind match, the project did not meet the MHAA cash requirement that at least 75% of the required match must be cash.

The Foundation is requesting that the grantee be changed to M-NCCP so the staff time can be counted as cash match (staff time of the applicant organization is considered cash match). The approval of MHAA is required to change the grantee for this project.

Mr. Kummerow offered the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Authority approves the request by the Prince George's County Parks and Recreation Foundation to transfer the FY 2017 grant in the amount of \$14,400 for the "College Park Aviation Campus Exterior Interpretation & Wayfinding" project to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Bradshaw and approved unanimously.

Waiver of boundary amendment requirement that every jurisdiction in a heritage area submit the request to amend the boundary.

Ms. Ruffner indicated that this is request for a temporary waiver of the regulations. A previous change to the regulations was made that it was believed resolved this problem, but in reviewing the language, it was determined that the change did not have the desired result. The regulations still require that every jurisdiction in a certified heritage area submit a request to amend the boundary of a heritage area, which creates an undue burden on local jurisdictions and the heritage area management entities. Until the language in the regulations can be updated to reflect current practice, MHAA is asked to waive the requirement.

Ms. Ruffner responded to questions regarding the proposed waiver.

Mr. Leshner offered the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Authority approves the waiver of the requirement contained in COMAR 14.29.03.06A that all local jurisdictions currently located within a heritage area submit applications for boundary amendments.

AND BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that applications for boundary amendments shall be submitted in accordance with COMAR 14.29.03.06.B.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Bradshaw and approved unanimously.

MARYLAND COALITION OF HERITAGE AREAS (MCHA) REPORT

(Amanda Fenstermaker and Liz Shatto, Chairs, MCHA)

Legislative Update

Ms. Fenstermaker reported that Delegate Brett Wilson is submitting legislation that will change the statute so that the Maryland Heritage Area Authority can receive up to \$6 million instead of the current \$3 million funding cap, thanks largely to the efforts of Mary Catherine Cochran and Nick Redding (Preservation Maryland). MCHA have the full support of the Partners for Open Space for the effort to “lift the cap.” The Partners also have committed to support future increased funding if Program Open Space is fully funded. The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy also supports raising the cap.

A legislative reception will be held on January 18, 2017 to support raising the cap.

Mr. Wilson explained Program Open Space. Ms. Cochran answered questions regarding the position of the Partners for Open Space. As a courtesy, it was recommended that the legislative liaisons for the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture should be made aware of the legislation to raise the cap.

Marketing Committee

Ms. Rogers, chair of the Marketing Committee, is working through a process that will help the heritage areas better identify who they are and what specifically they do on a day-to-day basis. The idea behind this process is to create a statement or brand that reflects the entire coalition and will allow them to better promote the work of Maryland's Heritage Areas as opposed to the individual brands which seem disjointed in printed and online publications.

Economic Impact Study

The coalition is moving forward in communicating with several vendors regarding a price quote for an economic impact study. They are currently in communication with BEACON at Salisbury University as well as Tourism Economics, who do the economic impact evaluation for the

Maryland Office of Tourism. They are also trying to identify ways to fund a study, including a multi-heritage area grant. Mr. Clark asked if the Department of Commerce could provide the match for a grant, but that would not be possible because MHAA grants cannot have state-funded match.

Ms. Ross reported that the Office of Tourism did a heritage tourism study around 2000 and used funds from an administrative part of the annual funding. State agencies have worked together in the past to get a study completed. Mr. Clark suggested that DNR, MDOT and MHT work together to create a marketing / tourism study, and noted that it was probably too late to develop a study for the 2019 legislative session.

Ms. Ross mentioned that in 2008-2009 there was discussion with heritage areas about doing a study including methodology. Intercept surveys would be important, because each heritage area is unique. Ms. Ross will see if she can find and share the information. Ms. Seitz noted that the cost of a study would vary greatly depending on the scope and outcomes desired.

The Department of Commerce uses a model that is a three-year agreement with Tourism Economics. That allows the state to put in 50% and the other money is from the other 25 Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs). The model is worth examining to see if it may work for the MHAA program.

Ms. Seitz indicated that from a marketing perspective that the program itself needs the same type of attention. There should be some marketing to explain the program - what it is about, what it accomplishes? MHAA staff should be engaged in the conversation.

Ms. Ware stated that she felt the economic study should be a state-led effort. Ms. Seitz said grants and MHAA administrative funds were not the appropriate source, that support should come from elsewhere.

Ms. Hughes shared that she thought the model used by the Department of Commerce with the DMOs was an interesting one. She did note that the state procurement process is quite difficult and takes a long time, and that must be considered when planning an approach. She also suggested that if this study were to be used as an advocacy piece, it would be helpful to know what the legislators would like to know.

The group discussed next steps. The heritage area directors would move forward with the call with Tourism Economics, and include Ms. Ruffner in the continuing discussions. Ms. Ruffner said she would put the economic impact study on the next agendas for the TAC and for the MHAA.

MARYLAND HERITAGE AREAS AUTHORITY MEMBER / MHAA STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Ross invited all to attend a kickoff event for FeBREWary at noon on February 3, 2017 at the Chesapeake Brewery in Annapolis on West Street. Several signature events will be held around

the state, which will be posted on visitmaryland.org within the next two weeks. She also announced that Tourism Day in Annapolis is March 3, 2017. For more information and to register, visit tourismmaryland.org.

The Department of Commerce is working on two major projects. First, they are working with Dorchester County, MD Departments of Natural Resources, MD Department of Transportation and the National Park Service on getting the Harriett Tubman Underground Visitor Center open and marketed to the public. When the New York Unit of the Harriet Tubman National Park was announced, the Associated Press picked up the story and it went global. The Underground Railroad and Harriet Tubman is huge from a tourism standpoint. The park opens to the public on March 11th.

They are also working with IPW which is the largest international travel planning show in the world. Washington D.C. is the host city this year, and will host a trade show, with major support from Capital Region USA. MD and VA will have opportunities to host hosting pre- and post-familiarization tours for media and buyers, sightseeing tours as well as clients and suppliers.

Mr. Wilson announced that DNR will be hosting its third trails workshop on March 2, 2017 at the Easton Library on the Lower Eastern Shore in collaboration and cooperation with the Maryland Department of Transportation. Mr. Wilson will facilitate a morning exercise that will examine the existing trail system and determine priority gaps. In the afternoon MDOT will follow up with various funding programs that are available.

Dr. Baker mentioned that MDOT is in the process of launching their FY 2018 grant round for transportation alternative programs. A series of workshops will be held. Deadlines will be in May for Bikeways grants and Transportation Alternatives grants, and July 1 is the deadline for Recreation Trails grants.

Ms. Hayes-Williams announced that the Speaker of the House Michael Bush and Senator John Astle are working on placing statues of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman at the State House. It has not been determined where the statues will be placed.

Mr. Bradshaw shared that Dorchester County and other counties are debating the impacts of solar farms, because the landscape of the Eastern Shore remains unchanged since its settlement 300 years ago.

Ms. Seitz announced that DHCD, through its community legacy program, smart growth impact fund and nonprofit assistance grants, awarded nearly \$700,000 for Ellicott City recovery work, as well as more than \$1 million in Neighborhood Business Works loans.

MARYLAND HERITAGE AREA DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Owings reported that the Public Service Commission's Administrative Law Judge Soder found that the proposed Mills Branch Solar project in Kent County and the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area would have an adverse effect on the historic and cultural landscape as

well as tourism in the area. Judge Soder also noted that he did not find the jobs created as having a large impact on the community and therefore denied the Mills Branch application.

Ms. Owings also reported that the Stories of the Chesapeake will have a booth at the Washington Travel and Adventure Show, where they will launch their Tastiest Catch campaign.

Ms. Benson announced that the Four Rivers Heritage Area's Pedestrian Wayfinding Signage for the City of Annapolis, funded by a FY 2014 MHAA grant, was installed around downtown this month. It is very attractive and very appreciated by Annapolitans. A Facebook post that Four Rivers posted with photographs of some kiosks and signs received numerous "likes" and "shares" and reached more than 8,100 people.

Ms. Walker reported that the "Through Piscataway Eyes" Master Plan (Phase I) has been completed. It will now be up to the Piscataway Tribe to decide on the implementation of that plan. Ms. Walker will remain available to facilitate the Plan as the Tribe deems necessary.

MHAA ADMINISTRATOR RETIREMENT – RESOLUTION AND TRANSITION

Former MHAA Administrator, Mr. Richard Hughes, retired on December 30th. He was presented with a citation from the Governor and gift presented by Secretary Peters on behalf of the MD Department of Planning and MHAA for his 37 years of dedicated service to the State.

With regards to the retirement of Mr. Hughes, Ms. Hughes shared that all hiring goes through the Department of Budget and Management. A hiring freeze exemption was submitted and approved. An advertisement is being developed for internal recruitment to fill the position.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

Dr. Baker called for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Hughes made a motion to adjourn, that was seconded by Ms. Seitz and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.