

Minutes of the
Sixty-Ninth Meeting of the
Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
October 15, 2015

The sixty-ninth meeting of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority was held at the Wisp Resort, 296 Marsh Hill Road, McHenry, Maryland 21541

Authority Members/Designees Present: Wendi W. Peters, Deputy Secretary, MD Department of Planning (representing Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Chairman and MD Department of Planning Secretary David R. Craig, Chair); Bill Pencek (representing MD Department of Commerce Secretary R. Michael Gill); John Wilson (representing MD Department of Natural Resources Secretary Mark J. Belton); Marty Baker (representing MD Department of Transportation Secretary Pete K. Rahn); Peter Leshner (MD Municipal League Representative); Wayne E. Clark (recommended by the President of the Senate); John Fieseler (MD Tourism Development Board representative); Amanda Conn (representing MD State Department of Education Interim Superintendent of Schools Jack Smith); Burton Kummerow (recommended by the President of the Senate); Rowland Agbede (representing MD Department of Agriculture Secretary Joseph Bartenfelder); Elizabeth Hughes (State Historic Preservation Officer); Lee Towers (representing MD Higher Education Commission Acting Secretary Jennie C. Hunter-Cevera); Robert D. Campbell (Governor's Appointee for Historic Preservation)

Authority Members/Designees Absent: Amy Seitz (representing MD Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Kenneth C. Holt); Donna Ware (recommended by the Speaker of the House); Lisa Challenger (Governor's Appointee for Heritage Tourism); Francis Jack Russell (MD Association of Counties representative); Vacant (Representative for MD Greenways); Vacant (recommended by the Speaker of the House)

Staff Present: Bernadette Pruitt, Richard Hughes, Jennifer Ruffner, Rieyn Deloney (Office of the Attorney General)

Heritage Area Directors/Staff Present: Carol Benson (Four Rivers Heritage Area); Jeff Buchheit (Baltimore National Heritage Area); Gail Owings (Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area); Deidra L. Ritchie (Canal Place Heritage Area); Liz Shatto (Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area); Aaron Marcavitch (Anacostia Trails Heritage Area); Mary Ann Lisanti and Brigitte Carty (Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway); Roz Racanello (Chair, Maryland Coalition of Heritage Areas and Executive Director of Southern MD Heritage Area); Sarah Rogers (Montgomery County Heritage Area); Jen Durbin (Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area); Lisa Ludwig (Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area); Mary Catherine Cochran (Patapsco Valley Heritage Area)

Heritage Area Directors/Staff Absent: Amanda Fenstermaker (Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area)

Others Present: Patty Manown Mash, Board member, Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area

CALL TO ORDER (Wendi Peters, Deputy Secretary, MD Department of Planning)

The Chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 10:01 a.m.

INTRODUCTIONS: Ms. Durben welcomed everyone to the Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area. Those in attendance introduced themselves.

MHAA CHAIRPERSON REPORT & UPDATES (Wendi Peters)

FY 2017 Budget Update

Ms. Peters reported that the Maryland Department of Planning has submitted their budget numbers and the department is working to keep level funding for the heritage areas program.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR JULY 9, 2015 (Resolution R-100)

Ms. Peters called for a motion to approve the July 9, 2015 minutes. The following motion was made by Mr. Leshner.

RESOLVED, that the Authority approves the July 9, 2015 Minutes with one correction.

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

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund Report (R. Hughes)

Mr. Hughes reported that the current balance is \$272,975.57 which primarily came from projects that were under budget. An amount of \$100,000.00 from the 2016 budget has been set aside for emergency grants. Two hundred and nine thousand dollars (\$209,000.00) was restored to the Financing Fund by the General Assembly. A budget amendment has been submitted to fund nine pre-approved grants that were on a reserve list. The amendment is moving forward through the state budget process.

There was discussion about a budget authorization for additional projects over the \$100,000 that the program already receives. Staff will report see if/what funds might be obtained over the \$3 million budget.

FY 2016 Grants Processing Status Report (J. Ruffner)

Ms. Ruffner reported approximately half of the 63 FY 2016 grants, including emergency and reserve list grants, have been processed. Twenty-three (23) are being reviewed by the legal department. Projects that were on the reserve list will not be processed until the budget amendment is approved.

FY 2017 Grant Application Revisions (J. Ruffner)

Authority staff had discussions with heritage area directors and Technical Advisory Committee members about how the grant application process and software system is working and how it can be streamlined. Based on the feedback, the application is being revised, including the

consolidation of questions, and simplification of the language. The edits will be made available and discussed at the next Technical Advisory Committee meeting. The application will then be finalized for the start of the FY 2017 grant round in January.

Report on results of initial pilot Heritage Area Performance Measures benchmarks and measurements (J. Ruffner)

Ms. Ruffner discussed the spreadsheet that was included in the Authority notebook that summarized the direct performance evaluation of the management entities (excluding the Patapsco Valley Heritage Area). The report measures financial capacity, including diversity and amount of non-state funds leveraged; activities completed from the annual work plan; and management capability. Evaluations were given for each category as well as an overall measurement for each heritage area.

Both Mr. Clark and Mr. Pencek complimented staff on their work and congratulated heritage area directors on their accomplishments. Mr. Campbell noted the value of the Diversity of Funds measure, as it demonstrates the partnerships that are formed.

Mr. Hughes noted that it was also recommended that a Return on Investment or Economic Impact Visitor Study would be completed, when appropriate.

Several MHAA members recommended for MHAA work with the Department of Commerce to coordinate the hiring of an outside group with additional expertise and guidance to do an economic impact study.

Ms. Racanello agreed that it is time for a new study to be done considering the growth of the program over the years.

Mr. Pencek agreed and asked to set a goal by January 1 for the Authority to work with the Department of Commerce to determine the scope of such a study, and what it would cost. It could possibly set the stage for budget hearings and a request for a funding increase in FY 2017 or FY 2018.

November 2015 Tour and Public Hearing for the proposed boundary amendment of the Maryland Milestones (Anacostia Trails) Heritage Area to include portions of City of Bowie, Town of Cheverly, Glenn Dale, Folly Branch Stream Valley, and the Washington, Baltimore & Annapolis Trail

Mr. Hughes reported that the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area previously submitted an application to expand its boundaries. The Authority regulations require that a public hearing is held before any action can be taken on the request. Mr. Hughes asked members to e-mail him if they would volunteer to attend an afternoon tour, dinner and an evening hearing that would be held on November 16, 17 or 18th. Mr. Marcavitch briefly summarized the tour plan.

MARYLAND COALITION OF HERITAGE AREAS REPORT (Roz Racanello)

Ms. Racanello reported that the Coalition met on September 10th. Ms. Racanello, Mr. Marcavitch and Ms. Ludwig attended the Maryland Association of Counties and the Maryland Municipal League conventions. The heritage area cardboard fans were once again extremely

popular, especially during these summer events. A map was displayed indicating the location of each heritage area which was great for visibility.

The Coalition is planning to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority in Annapolis in January, possibly the 25th, before the legislative session gets busy. Delegate and heritage area director Mary Ann Lisanti will secure a room for the event. Guests of honor will be invited. Light refreshments and cake will be served.

Ms. Racanello mentioned that she and Mr. Hughes took turns attending the meetings of the Program Open Space working group, and indicated that heritage areas did not figure prominently. Mr. Wilson mentioned that the draft was presented to the group and it received a lot of comments, and was being revised. He agreed that it did not focus on heritage areas, and that the consensus of the working group was to fully fund Program Open Space, and that programs do not need to be combined because they all focus on different things.

The need for an economic impact study was also discussed. The Coalition would like current numbers to talk about.

The National Park Service is sponsoring a “Find Your Park” free pass that is offered to every fourth grader, and the “Ticket to Ride” program as part of their Centennial Anniversary initiatives.

Ms. Racanello said that the Coalition would continue to work with Ms. Ruffner offering input on the grants application and process.

Ms. Racanello attended the Working Waterfronts program, which can provide funding to small communities to create a waterfront plan. She noted that the 30 day turn around was quite short for applications. Mr. Wilson indicated that the funding was for planning and design.

Mr. Marcavitch did some work on the heritage areas webpage.

Mr. Marcavitch announced that he and other heritage area members/staff attended the Six to Fix event hosted by Preservation Maryland. The list of sites selected included Antietam Battlefield, Baltimore’s Historic Storefronts, Dorchester County, Glen Dale Hospital, Holly Hall in Elkton and Pleasant View Church in Montgomery County. He mentioned the new enthusiasm at Preservation Maryland and that the Coalition is figuring out how to best work with the new leadership there.

Mr. Hughes indicated that Preservation Maryland is looking for volunteers to work with the Six to Fix program.

Ms. Racanello announced that two public meetings will be held on November 4 in Charles County and on November 10th in Annapolis regarding the establishment of Mallows Bay as a National Marine Sanctuary.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Desirability of designating FY 2017 grant funding Priorities (J. Ruffner)

In previous years the Authority has had funding priorities that focused on Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad, the War of 1812 and the Civil War. The Authority took a break last year those funding priorities. The Authority needs to decide if they want to establish new funding priorities, or not.

Mr. Leshar was reluctant to set statewide priorities that may not mesh well with local heritage area priorities.

Mr. Campbell suggested that heritage area directors make the decisions themselves as to whether there should be local priorities, something they already are able to do.

The group discussed upcoming events and anniversaries that might be applicable. Mr. Pencek noted that while the previous priorities were useful, he did not feel compelled to set new ones at this point in time.

After more discussion, Mr. Clark made a motion to continue to not set funding priorities until an economic impact study has been completed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kummerow, and approved unanimously.

Desirability of implementing a policy to help increase funding to organizations that have received little or no previous funding from MHAA. (J. Ruffner)

At the previous Authority meeting, a discussion as to whether or not there was a need for a policy to help increase funding organizations that have received limited grants. Ms. Ruffner is working on a summary of projects that have received multiple grants. The Technical Advisory Committee discussed the possibility of setting a cap of \$300,000 over 5 years for a particular capital project, or \$150,000 over 5 years for non-capital projects. The group discussed this issue. Mr. Campbell felt that there are lots of good proposals, and it could be dangerous to limit those. He is more concerned that grantees submit reports on time and complete their projects. Ms. Racanello suggested the need for more technical assistance for new and small organizations. Ms. Peters noted that much of that assistance would come from the local heritage areas, and that we should also identify ways to help at the State level. Mr. Fieseler suggested including a question about the results of previous grant awards in the application.

The group also noted that mini-grants were a good way for new applicants to get an initial grant, and there was discussion of increasing the amount of mini-grant funds that are available (which would mean increasing the size of the management grants, or reallocation of management grant funds toward mini-grants. Mr. Clark requested that a report on mini-grant applications that were not funded due to lack of funds be provided at the next meeting.

“Going Paperless” proposal to provide preliminary meeting materials through Google Drive with final hard-copy notebook distributed at meeting.

It was suggested at the previous meeting to go paperless by using Google drive to share documents rather than sending preliminary binders to Authority members. It is recommended that now the preliminary materials are provided online, and a hard-copy binder is provided at the meeting. This will save on printing and postage costs, and ensure that everyone is working from the most up-to-date information.

Mr. Campbell suggested leaving out redundant materials (such as membership lists and calendars) and that some larger documents could be shared at the meeting, rather than provided to each member.

Members preferred that the documents be provided in a single PDF. It was also requested that file names be clear and self-evident.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Campbell gave kudos to Mr. Buchheit and others for the Kids in Kayaks video and encouraged members to view it. He also announced that the National Parks Service will celebrate its centennial in 2016. Go to www.findyourchesapeake.com for more information.

Dr. Baker announced that on September 29th Governor Hogan and the Maryland Department of Transportation announced the results of their 2016 grant rounds for bicycle/pedestrian projects. \$14.9 million dollars will be spent across the state to support various programs. Funding was provided through the Transportation Alternatives Program, Recreation Trails Program and Maryland Bikeways Program.

Mr. Pencek announced that the Office of Tourism, State Highway Administration staff and Western Maryland officials and Lt. Governor Rutherford celebrated the re-opening of the Sidling Hill Welcome Center. He also reported on the great results/numbers from the national economic impact study for tourism activity in Maryland for 2014.

Ms. Owings announced that the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area would be holding a grants workshop on October 26, 2015 at the Chesapeake College from 9-12. Instruction will be offered on how write a grant, do your budget and a speaker will focus on how to find federal and foundation grants.

Mr. Marcavitch announced that the National Trust for Historic Preservation will be holding their annual conference in Washington D.C. on November 3-6th, and will include tours to the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area and the Four Rivers Heritage Area.

Mr. Kummerow announced that the Maryland Historical Society and the Jewish Museum of Maryland both received awards from the American Association of State and Local History. He thanked the Authority, the Bicentennial Commission and the Baltimore National Heritage Area for their support.

ADJOURN

Ms. Peters thanked Jen Durbin for hosting the meeting that adjourned at approximately 11:47 a.m.