

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETING**  
Thursday, May 15, 2025 at 10:00 AM

Pursuant to notice, the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Historical Trust was held as an in person meeting with certain members of the Board attending virtually. The meeting was hosted by the Fire Museum of Maryland located at 1301-R York Road in Lutherville, Maryland.

Trustees present: Jeffrey Buchheit, Julie Ernstein, Benjamin Ford, Albert L. Feldstein, Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., LaShay Harvey, Kristine Roome, Senator Chris West, and Rebecca L. Flora.

Area Representatives present: Dean Camlin, Dickerson Charlton, Doug Reed, Lisa Sasser, Tom Vitanza, Charlie Stek, and Harry Spikes.

Office of the Attorney General: Rieyn DeLony

MHT Staff: Elizabeth Hughes, Anne Raines, Kathy Monday, Stacy Montgomery, Bill Hersch, Dixie Henry, Carey Jones, Jordan Cline.

MDP Staff: William Kiskowski

Guests: Terry Klima

**AGENDA**

**T1                   CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Franklin Robinson called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. A quorum of voting Board members was not present so no action could be taken at the full board meeting. Ms. Hughes noted that since this had been anticipated, a meeting of the Board's Executive Committee had been advertised in advance and would take place immediately after the meeting of the full Board was adjourned so that action items could be addressed promptly.

Mr. Robinson recognized the contributions of Board member Albert L. Feldstein whose last meeting is today. A persistent advocate for western Maryland, Mr. Feldstein's depth of knowledge and passion for history has always greatly benefited the Board.

Mr. Robinson thanked Mr. Buchheit, Executive Director of the Fire Museum of Maryland, for generously hosting the meeting. Mr. Buchheit provided an overview of the history of the museum, noting that it is the third largest firefighting museum in the U.S. and the 5th largest in the world.

**T2                   APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No corrections were offered to the March 18th meeting minutes.

T3

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Terry Klima expressed his interest in seeing the Confederate Monuments included as an agenda item at each meeting of the Board. He noted that it has been six years since the Monument Relocation Committee began meeting. He inquired why the monuments had not yet been repaired and expressed concern about the impact of bronze disease on the statues. He also expressed disappointment that the monuments will be in California and not accessible for Marylanders for an extended period.

Senator West inquired when the monuments would return to Maryland and about the status of the City's review of the monument relocation RFP that was drafted by the Monument Relocation Committee. Mr. Spikes responded that he would report back on the status of the City attorney's review of the RFP.

T4

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

T100

### Capital Programs Committee

T101R

#### Historic Preservation Capital Grant Awards – FY2025

Ms. Hersch, Capital Grants and Loans Administrator, presented an overview of the Capital Historic Preservation Grant Program and staff funding recommendations. Fifty-two eligible grant applications were received by the March 17, 2025 deadline. The total funding requested is \$4,202,759. Staff are recommending funding 9 grants at a total award amount of \$699,000 which includes \$600,000 in FY25 funds and a returned grant of \$99,000 from FY2024. Most of the funding requested is for rehabilitation, with the remainder for restoration, acquisition, or predevelopment costs. Applications received represent 18 counties and Baltimore City.

T200

### Survey, Registration, Community Education & Museums Committee

T201R

#### Heritage Preservation Fund Project Selection - FY2026

Ms. Raines reported that, based on calculations made according to the Maryland Heritage Preservation Fund Disposition Policy, the Board may award funds for Heritage Preservation Fund projects totaling up to \$140,206.62 in fiscal year 2026.

Staff have submitted funding requests totaling \$160,260 as outlined in the chart provided in the Board meeting packet. Due to state and federal budget uncertainties, the Heritage Preservation Fund Disposition Committee is recommending funding only a portion of those requests at this time totaling \$66,740 as follows:

- Up to \$4,000 for MHT Board Meeting Expenses;
- Up to \$700 for the MHT Board Special Prize – Maryland History Day;
- Up to \$6,600 for the MAC Lab Collections Internship;
- Up to \$40,000 for an Architectural Survey Data Analysis Project - contractual staff position;

- Up to \$3,340 for a MAC Lab Traveling Exhibit;
- Up to \$600 for Architectural Fieldwork Symposium – honoraria for speakers;
- Up to \$500 for the Archaeology Merit Badge Workshop;
- Up to \$7,500 for MHT Staff Training Activities; and
- Up to \$3,500 for the MHT All-Staff Meeting and Staff Recognition Awards Program.

## T202            Review and Compliance Program Presentation

Dr. Dixie Henry, Administrator of the Review and Compliance Program, provided an overview of her unit's work in carrying out Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act and the Maryland Historical Trust Act of 1985 which are designed to help ensure that federal and state projects avoid, reduce, or mitigate harm to historic and archaeological properties.

At the conclusion of Dr. Henry's presentation, Ms. Raines noted that the work of this unit – which reviews over 5000 projects annually – is being impacted by various Presidential Executive Orders.

## T300            Management & Planning Committee

### T301            Investment Committee Report

Dr. Harvey reported that the Investment Committee met with Brown Advisory representatives on May 8<sup>th</sup>. She noted that while the MHT Board Preservation Fund was down 2.2% in the first quarter of the new year, it was up 3.4% in the trailing 12 months. She stated that Brown Advisory will be making certain changes to the types of bond funds held in the account but that the overall percentage of stock and bond allocations will remain the same. Brown Advisory reported that mid to high single digit returns are possible this year - not the 20%+ we have seen in the past few years – but to keep in mind that managers of funds in the portfolio have their eye on the long term.

### T302R            Heritage Preservation Fund Checking Account

Ms. Hughes reported that the Maryland Heritage Preservation Fund (the “Fund”) is a repository for unrestricted donations, bequests, and gifts to the Trust, including the proceeds from the sale or lease of any property donated to the Trust. Brown Advisory manages the Fund which is used for expenditures that are necessary or highly desirable and are not covered by funds appropriated to the Trust in the State budget. On at least an annual basis, the MHT Board's Heritage Preservation Fund Disposition Committee meets to consider proposed expenditures from the Fund which must be approved by the MHT Board.

She explained that following Board approval of expenditures from the Fund, and upon request from MHT, Brown Advisory provides a cash transfer from the Fund to MHT which is deposited into MHT's state budgeted account. This process works well when Board funds must be expended through existing state payment systems (e.g., for contractual salaries, state travel or procurements) but works less well when funds are being used for smaller expenditures (e.g. Board meeting catering costs and mileage reimbursement, all staff meeting expenses, etc.).

MHT is seeking approval of the Board for the establishment of a Heritage Preservation Fund checking account at a federally insured US Bank in the State of Maryland to assist MHT to more efficiently make payments on projects approved by the MHT Board. The amount kept in the account will be below the federally insured deposit amount. Approved signatories will include the Director and Deputy Director of MHT and the Treasurer of the MHT Board. Checks written on the account of \$1000 or more will require the signature of two of the approved signatories. Staff will report annually to the MHT Board Executive Committee regarding checking account activity.

T303 Interim Actions of the Executive Committee

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
March 25, 2025 at 9:46 AM

A virtual meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Historical Trust was held on March 24 at 11:00 AM.

Trustees present: Laura Mears, Franklin Robinson, LaShay Harvey, Al Feldstein

MHT Staff: Elizabeth Hughes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Mears called the meeting to order at 9:46 AM. She noted that the purpose of the meeting was to take action on those items discussed at the regularly scheduled Board meeting held on March 20 at which a quorum was not present.

II. January 23, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Feldstein made a motion to approve the January 23, 2025 meeting minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Dr. Harvey and approved unanimously.

III. 2025 Preservation Awards

Mr. Robinson made a motion, seconded by Dr. Harvey, to approve the following resolution. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the resolution.

**RESOLVED**, that the Maryland Historical Trust Board of Trustees approves the 2025 Maryland Preservation Awards recommendations of its Survey, Registration, Community Education, and Museums Committee. The recommendations are as follows:

**LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE**

*Outstanding Individual Leadership at the Local Level*  
Ruth Davis-Rogers (Allegany County)

**EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

*Excellence in Public Programming & Exhibits*

Beach to Bay Heritage Area for the African American Heritage Project (Wicomico County)  
*Excellence in Media & Research*  
“Recovering Identity: Northern Frederick County Cultural Resource Survey” (Frederick County)  
*Excellence in Community Impact*  
Evergreen Heritage Center for the Appalachian Time Travel Program (Allegany County)  
*Excellence in Preservation Partnerships*  
M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks, Montgomery County TEBS, UMD Historic Preservation  
Department for the Oakley Cabin AR Experience (Montgomery County)

## **STEWARDSHIP**

*Outstanding Stewardship of Cultural Sites*  
The William P. and Marjorie Doepkens Family (Anne Arundel County)  
*Outstanding Stewardship by a Government Agency*  
U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration for the N.S. *Savannah* (Baltimore City)

## **PROJECT EXCELLENCE**

*Excellence in Rehabilitation*  
The Claggett Center (Frederick County)  
*Excellence in Restoration*  
Flower Theater (Montgomery County)  
*Excellence in Sustainable Design*  
Baltimore City Public Schools and Crabtree, Rohrbaugh Associate for Montebello ES/MS (Baltimore City)

## **IV. ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 A.M.

### **T304 Budget and Legislation**

Ms. Hughes reported that the FY2026 budget has not been provided to agencies yet so all of the details of the budget remain unknown. While reductions totaling \$5.5 million are anticipated in the Historic Revitalization Tax Credit Program, FY 2026 funding for the African American Heritage Preservation Grant Program and Capital Historic Preservation Grant Program is expected to be level with FY2025. The budget also appears to include a \$300,000 appropriation which would revive the Historical and Cultural Museum Assistance Grant Program. That program has been unfunded since FY2011.

Legislation of interest includes passage of *SB980 – Natural Resources – Maryland Heritage Areas Authority-Funding and Grants* which would make a series of changes to the program including raising the annual funding ceiling to \$12 million and eliminating MHT’s ability to use up to \$300,000 of the fund to support the Non-Capital Historic Preservation Grant Program.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This bill was subsequently vetoed by the Governor on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

*HB509-Maryland Inventory of Historic Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup* was also signed into law. MHT will be convening this workgroup as early as June in order to meet the required December 1, 2025 reporting deadline.

Ms. Raines, who now serves as President of the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, reported on the status of federal budget and legislation issues. She noted that while the federal fiscal year 2025 enacted budget includes funding for State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) at fiscal year 2024 funding levels, the Notice of Funding Opportunity that allows State Historic Preservation Offices to apply for those funds has not yet been released by the National Park Service. The Maryland Historical Trust and other SHPOs rely on this federal funding to pay salaries of staff who perform duties mandated under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), which established historic preservation as a partnership among federal, state, and local governments and tribes. If this funding is not released immediately, SHPOs will be forced to cut staff, since SHPOs have already endured more than half of the fiscal year without having access to these federal funds, and most have incurred costs they may never see repaid by the federal administration. Several SHPOs have already initiated layoffs, including the Ohio History Connection (Ohio SHPO), which has announced layoffs of one third of their staff. Advocacy to Congress is needed now to address this issue.

In addition, the President's proposed FY2026 budget seeks to eliminate all funding for SHPOs. A Dear Colleague letter is currently circulating in the House of Representatives which is seeking support for the Historic Preservation Fund.

The future of the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit is also a concern as one of the top priorities of Congress and the White House is passage of a large tax package. The Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act (H.R. 2941) has been introduced in the House by Rep. Darin LaHood (R-IL) and Rep. Tom Suozzi (D-NY). This bill includes several provisions that will restore value to the Historic Tax Credit (HTC), improve access to the credit, make more projects eligible to use the credit, and boost the credit for smaller and rural rehabilitation projects. It is hoped that provisions of this bill may be picked up in the larger tax package.

#### T305            Litigation and Legal Issues

Ms. DeLony reported that the Office of the Attorney General is continuing to review actions being undertaken at the federal level which have the potential to impact state agencies like MHT. Among those issues is a suit filed to challenge the validity of the President's executive order declaring a national "energy emergency" and authorizing federal officials to use existing emergency powers to reduce the timeline for certain environmental reviews--including the NHPA § 106 review process--from 30 days to 7 days. The suit alleges that there is no actual emergency, that the Executive Order is just an Administration effort to hamstring statutorily required environmental reviews and asks the court to declare the order unlawful and block the agencies from issuing permits on an emergency basis related to the order. Another suit was filed challenge to the dismantling of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The federal district court has preliminarily enjoined the Trump Administration from firing IMLS staff and terminating IMLS grants while the Court decides the merits of the states' claims. This suit may affect the cancelled IMLS grant awarded to the Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation to support the "Engaging with Descendant African American Communities" partnership project supported by the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture and the

Maryland Historical Trust. The Commission has formally asked the IMLS to reconsider the termination, and the termination is likely blocked by the preliminary injunction as well.

#### Announcements

- Dr. Roome reported that her spring course at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) which engaged 13 students in the process of gathering oral histories about the removal of the Baltimore City Confederate Monuments was very well received. There are 16 oral histories that were collected and added to the JHU library collection. She thanked all of the Board members and staff who participated in the oral history project.

Meeting adjourned at 12:32 PM.