

Maryland Military Monuments Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday April 10, 2019
Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place, Crownsville Maryland 21032

Present:

Deputy Secretary Schrader, Commissioners Carson, Kurtz, Martel, McKown, Morrill, Rude, Schnell, Soderberg, Toomey, Villanueva, Wisniewski;

Staff: Steve Allan

Guests: David Craig, Adam Gruz, Elizabeth Hughes, Cheryl Jewitt, Anne Raines

Absent:

Chair McCord, Commissioners Hammond, Schiszik,

Deputy Secretary Schrader called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm.

- Opened the meeting by introducing herself and asked to go around the room with introductions, including guests. Each commissioner provided a short description of their interest and expertise with the Commission.
- Asked for an approval of the minutes from the January meeting. A change was requested on the top line of the last page, replacing the word "Arch" with "Cross". Commissioner Soderberg requested corrections of her last name on page 1 and 3. Commissioner Wisniewski moved to accept the minutes with amendments; Chair designate Schrader seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report

- Steve Allan summarized the financial report.
- FY18 allotment: \$17,000.
 - \$10,297 encumbered for 2019 maintenance of 16 monuments in central Maryland.
 - \$2,238 remain in the Monuments special fund, which includes \$1,200 reserved for Baltimore City paving repair at the Hammann-Costin Monument.
- Chair designate Schrader asked for a motion to approve the financial report. Commissioner McKown moved, Commissioner Martel seconded. Motion passed without discussion, except that a one-dollar difference was noted from the last minutes (\$2,237) on the second item.

Ongoing Business

- Steve Allan presented several slides illustrating the Hammann-Costin Monument trench mortar paving update. The Maryland Military Department/Maryland National Guard had taken it upon themselves to repair the brick pavers resulting from the removal of the trench mortars last year, and the resulting work is less

than desirable. However, we do not want to offend the Military Department for their act of kindness. Commissioner Schiszik had asked previously if this body had any ideas toward a solution. Commissioner Kurtz said that because we have money encumbered for the city to clean it up, we should do that. We only found out after the fact that the work was done. Discussion ensued to agree that the work performed is unsightly and not satisfactory, and while it would not be acceptable to let it stand, it is not up to the Commission to undertake the work except through the encumbrance already arranged with Baltimore City Rec and Parks. Steve will talk to Commissioner Schiszik about what to do next given the sensitivity of the relationship with the Military Department.

- David Craig provided an update on the WWI Commission, which expires on November 11, 2019. As was done last year at the State House, Maryland will participate in National bell tolling again on November 11. The World War I Commission has asked the Governor to convert the Commission to the “National War Historic Commission” to commemorate all wars. The Commission has also asked the Governor about erecting a WWI memorial in Maryland.
- Steve Allan showed a series of slides depicting the conservation and maintenance work performed in March on the FY18 monuments and tablets group in central Maryland. Commissioner Kurtz assisted with details as necessary.
- Steve Allan led the Mt. Washington All Wars Monument discussion about the completed repairs, conservation and the discovery that the ground beneath it has shifted, causing it to sink on the north side toward Smith Avenue. American flag noted to be in poor condition. Chair Schrader said that the Senator or Delegates that represent that area could be asked to look after having the flag replaced. She asked if any members of the Commission know of any damaged or worn flags to let the Commission know.
- Commissioner Wisniewski provided an update on the WWI Medallion project, as Steve Allan passed a couple of them around the room, showing the result of the collaborative design of the MD Secretary of State’s office and the Commission.
- Commissioner Wisniewski advanced a motion to award the first two of the Medallions to The Old Stone House, and the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. Commissioner Martel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- Steve Allan presented a series of slides from the FY2019 maintenance cycle reconnaissance and documentation tour in February for 16 monuments and tablets in Western Maryland. Commissioner Kurtz participated in that tour along with Nichole Doub, conservator at the Maryland Archeology Laboratory (Mac Lab). The RFP for this work is on the street now.

New Business

- Commissioner Wisniewski reported on a conversation he had with former Commission Chair Jim Adkins, now President of the Maryland Society Sons of the American Revolution about the Maryland 400 monument in Prospect Park in Brooklyn, N.Y., and said that there probably would be a bus running up there again this year to honor the Maryland 400’s role in the Battle of Brooklyn.

Discussion ensued about the history of SAR involvement with the monument since commissioning to have it constructed in 1895 at a cost of \$4,000, the current \$20,000 cost to maintain and repair, ongoing stewardship by New York City's monuments conservation group, MMMC's role in repair and repointing in 1991, and subsequent work on replacing missing bronze letters with composite material.

- Commissioner Wisniewski put forth a second motion to award medallions 3, 4 and 5 to Governor Hogan, Lt. Governor Rutherford and the Maryland SAR, respectively. The motion carried and was seconded by Commissioner Kurtz. Commissioner Wisniewski suggested inviting the TAG or her designee to Brooklyn in August along with the Chair and Chairwoman to co-present the medallions.
- Baltimore Bar Association. Located in the Mitchell Courthouse lobby interior, this monument is dedicated to six members of the Baltimore Bar who died in WWI. Commissioner Kurtz and Commissioner Schiszik got in touch with Baltimore City DGS, and met with Judge Schneider who had contacted us for help. It is hard to read because of heavy veining in the marble. It could just be a lighting issue, and isn't likely to come to us as a project. It was suggested that a conservator examine it; a list of conservators was provided by Commissioner Kurtz. The City of Baltimore should be the point of contact.
- Commissioner Kurtz presented background and rationale for undertaking the rewaxing of certain monuments and tablets. A variety of wax mixtures have been applied since we started waxing the bronzes in the 1990s, beginning with a Carnuba wax mixture that would work outside. Various wax mixtures have been employed over the years, and some don't work with others. CO2 blasting is suggested to remove the layers of wax to start fresh. Nichole Doub at the Mac Lab is putting together cost estimates to treat 43 of the 58 bronzes that we maintain. Once the wax is removed, the conservators would have to rewax them right away, which would take twice as much time as a maintenance touch up regimen, because two coats would be required, which adds to the cost. Discussion ensued about the timing of the wax removal, particularly to those monuments that have been waxed within the past 5 years. If the (MHT) Board approves the funding in early May, we can start this year. Chair Schrader suggested it would be good to have a cost estimate before we move forward and asked how many surfaces the 43 monuments have, and also if the same conservator would be doing both the wax removal and the rewaxing work. The removers would be another company, possibly the MacLab. An RFP would be needed for both. Commissioner Soderberg asked if we had enough money in our budget allocation. Commissioner Kurtz replied that the cost of rewaxing might cost twice as much. The life cycle of this project will be 30 years – the Salisbury WWI and the Mount Zion plaque will be the first two in the program. Neither of them had wax on them. Next step is to go to the MHT Board for funding. There will be no action until a cost estimate is provided.

- Commissioner Morrill put forth a motion to get cost estimates before going to the MHT Board for funding. Commissioner Soderberg seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Discussion ensued about funding from the MHT Board. Director Hughes summarized the investment account administered by the MHT Board for projects and funding needs that support the mission of the Trust. While this project sounds eligible for funding, this might not be the best year to request it, as the Board is prioritizing staff funding for interns and contractuales in support of our programs. She mentioned other sources of funding – such as Preservation Maryland, The Maryland State Arts Council - that we may want to consider.
- Steve Allan provided an update on Commission Vacancies. Two commissioners had not responded to requests to be reappointed; one Commissioner (Soderberg) is in the process of reappointment, but we have not heard back from the Governor's Appointments Office yet. Prospective Commissioner Cheryl Jewitt (in attendance as a guest) has also not heard back yet from the Appointments Office. Commissioner Dooley resigned effective April 8, 2019 via email, due to his wife's health. This leaves us with two Commission vacancies. Asked how many seats there are on the Commission, Mr. Allan thought there were 15. (There are 18).

Announcements

- Commissioner Kurtz announced that the American Institute of Conservation for Historic and Artistic Works accepted the abstract that she and the conservators submitted for a paper on the MMMC bronze maintenance program. It will be presented in Connecticut in May, featuring the conservation of 3 monuments over time – DeKalb, French and Spirit of the American Doughboy.
- The next meeting date is July 10, 2019 at 1:00 pm in Crownsville.

Chair Schrader asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Martel moved, Commissioner Morrill seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:09 pm.