

**Approved official minutes 7/28/2021**  
**Governor's Commission on Maryland Military Monuments**  
April 28, 2021 at 1:00 PM  
Teleconference

Pursuant to notice, the regular meeting of the Governor's Commission on Maryland Military Monuments was held by teleconference.

Commissioners Present: Deputy Secretary Sandra Schrader, Chair; Nancy Kurtz, Lauren Schiszik, Ellen Chase, Cheryl Jewitt, Gail Schnell, Peter Morrill, Jenny Carson, Susan Soderberg, Jari Villanueva, Alfred Mendelsohn, Andre Martel, Bryan Fischer, Dennis Rude.

Commissioners Absent: David Craig, Barrett McKown, Stephen Hammond, Anthony Wisniewski.

MHT Staff: Elizabeth Hughes, Nell Ziehl, Andrew Arvizu, Steve Allan

OAG Staff: Paul Cucuzzella

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schrader called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Mendelsohn made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rude, that the January 27 meeting minutes be approved. The Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

III. Financial Report

Ms. Hughes reported that FY2020 monument conservation work for Maintenance Group 3 has been completed. A final report documenting maintenance and conservation of the 17 monuments and tablets in the Eastern Shore/Cecil/Harford region (Maintenance Group 3) is expected to be received in advance of the Commission's July meeting.

Ms. Hughes stated that an RFP for FY2021 funds which will be used for treatment of monuments in the Western Shore Region (Maintenance Group 4) has been issued. Two bids have been received and are undergoing technical review. The contact for this work must be executed prior to June 30, 2021.

Commissioner Mendelsohn inquired what caused the loss of the FY2020 conservation funds which were subsequently backfilled by a grant from the MHT Board of Trustees. Ms. Hughes initially responded that the conservation funds were recaptured by the State because the contract was not executed prior to the end of the fiscal year. After the meeting, Steve Allan clarified that in April of last year, while the request for proposals was still underway, these funds were frozen

by the Department of Budget and Management. Like many other procurements, it was determined to be "non-essential" in the wake of the budgetary unknowns associated with the still developing COVID pandemic. Funds for the contract were ultimately recaptured as a result.

Commissioner Mendelsohn made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Soderberg, to accept the financial report as submitted. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### IV. Old Business

##### Monument Stripping and Rewaxing Treatment

Ms. Hughes reported that since its creation in 1989, the Maryland Military Monuments Program has undertaken a program of cyclical bronze maintenance in order to preserve these works which are particularly vulnerable to corrosion. To respect the historic integrity of the monuments the Commission has employed a minimal and reversible treatment program, typically water cleaning of bronze sculptures and tablets followed by the application of a specialized wax to the heated metal. The wax darkens the bronze and is an economical and maintainable coating that offers weather protection.

After thirty years of wax applications, the monuments are coated in several different wax mixtures - the earlier of which contain types of wax that do not hold up outdoors and are no longer used. At this point it is difficult to achieve integrated coatings that bond to each other and are sound enough to protect the bronze. In addition, some of the coatings appear cloudy and blanched, detracting from the appearance. Total removal of old, deteriorated wax layers and application of the most up-to-date wax mixture will ensure protection from the weather, maintainability into the future, and will enhance rather than detract from the look of the bronze.

Conservators recommend using CO<sub>2</sub> to strip the monuments followed by rewaxing. There are 59 monuments in the cyclical maintenance program of which 43 require this treatment. Approximately 15 monuments would be treated per year at a cost of approximately \$27,000 per year. Since the MMMC is funded at \$17,000 per year, an additional \$10,000 is required annually for the next four maintenance cycles in order to undertake this treatment.

Commissioner Soderberg inquired why CO<sub>2</sub> rather than crushed walnut shells is being proposed for wax removal. Commissioner Kurtz suggested that the CO<sub>2</sub> treatment was a gentler method of wax removal and was therefore a preferable approach. Commissioner Chase noted that the CO<sub>2</sub> method of wax removal is more environmentally friendly as well as being more effective and offered to provide background information about the use of CO<sub>2</sub> in the conservation process.

Commissioner Martel asked for clarification of the overall costs of this treatment and inquired about the source of funds. Ms. Hughes indicated that the projected estimate included \$27,000 per year for 4 years at a total of approximately \$108,000. Chair Schrader suggested that this work might be eligible for bond bill funding and directed staff to look into this opportunity.

Commissioner Morrill inquired if the CO 2 treatment would impact the patina of the monuments. Commissioner Kurtz responded that while selective spot repatination may be required in some cases, this is not expected to be an area of concern.

V. New Business

World War I Memorial – First Colors Ceremony

Commissioner Villanueva reported on the “First Colors Ceremony” involving the inaugural raising of the flag over the newly constructed World War I Memorial in Washington DC on April 16, 2021. The memorial will be administered by the National Park Service and is located on a 1.8 acre parcel of land located directly across from the Willard Hotel at a site known as “Pershing Park.” This place has been reimagined as both a commemorative space as well as an urban park which is dedicated to recognizing the 4.7 million men and women who served in World War I. More information on the ceremony and the memorial can be found here:

<https://firstcolors.worldwar1centennial.org/ceremony/>

The Commission thanked Commissioner Villanueva for his presentation.

VI. Announcements

The next meeting of the Commission will be held on July 28, 2021 in person in the main conference room at 100 Community Place in Crownsville, MD. Staff will endeavor to provide a virtual meeting option for members who are unable to attend in person. More information on the virtual meeting option will be provided closer to the meeting date.

Meeting adjourned at 1:41 p.m.