

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

Present:

Deputy Secretary and Chair Schrader, Commissioners Carson, Fischer, Hammond, Jewitt, Kurtz, Mendelsohn, McKown, Morrill, Schiszik, Schnell, Soderberg, Toomey, Wisniewski;

Staff: Steve Allan

Guest: Adam Gruz

Absent: Commissioners Martel, Rude, Villanueva

Chair 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.
- Asked for an approval of the minutes from the April meeting. A change was requested in the spelling of Chair Schrader's name. Commissioner McKown moved to accept the minutes with the amendment; Commissioner Morrill 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.
 - \$1,000 for John. C. Brown memorial bridge plaque
 - \$4,704 for conservation of the Mt. Washington All Wars Monument.
 - \$2,238 remain in the Monuments special fund, which includes \$1,200 reserved for Baltimore City paving repair at the Hammann-Costin Monument.
- FY19 budget: \$17,000
 - \$14,453 encumbered for regular maintenance of 16 monuments in western Maryland.
 - \$1,200 reserved for Baltimore City paving repair at the Hammann-Costin Monument.
- FY20 budget: \$17,000
- Chair Schrader asked for a motion to approve the financial report. Commissioner McKown moved, Commissioner Soderberg seconded. Motion passed unanimously after discussion about including FY 2020 in the report and by Commissioner Wisniewski regarding funding for the Medallia engraving. There is

a small reserve fund for such ancillary purposes, which is not part of the MDP or MHT budget.

Ongoing Business

- Steve Allan revisited the Hammann-Costin Monument trench mortar paving project. 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. Due to the computer systems ransomware hack that Baltimore City government has suffered, Steve has not spoken with Commissioner Schiszik, and she quite likely has not been able to conduct business in a normal manner either. We did meet after the April meeting to discuss ways of remediating the work without offending the Military Department. Discussion ensued about the possibility of staining the mortar as a quick fix in lieu of the City prioritizing the work. Commissioner Schiszik suggested working with the Department of Recreation and Parks – and asking them to power wash the brick plaza instead of staining the areas in question. Lauren will follow up with them. Commissioner Kurtz said there is a cooperative agreement already in place between the City and the MMMC.
- John C. Brown memorial bridge plaque. The bronze was reinstalled on a new concrete stele in a different location near the newly reconstructed bridge carrying Edmonston Drive in Rockville. Steve attended the installation with conservator Howard Wellman and Rockville City DPW official John Hollida in June. Commissioner Kurtz noted that the original location of the plaque was actually on the bridge. The community preferred that the plaque be placed in this spot on a new stele, and the City agreed to do that.
- WWI Victory Monument, Frederick. Steve reported on the maintenance and conservation of this eight-sided monument in May, which required almost a whole day to complete, even with 3 conservators.
- Commissioner Kurtz reprised the rationale for undertaking the rewaxing of certain monuments and tablets. Conservators had recommended starting over again after 30 years of applying a variety of wax mixtures to the bronzes, which are not behaving well with each other anymore. This would create a new baseline for the waxing program. We had originally put in an add-alternate into this year's RFP, but we didn't have the money available to complete this work. We awarded the contract for the maintenance of the 16 monuments and tablets in the regular cycle, but it gave us an idea of the cost of rewaxing. The range was from \$17,465 to \$57,288. Discussion ensued about scaffolding, which is a large expense associated with this work, and conservators without scaffolding would have to rent it. We're looking at 43 out of 59 monuments for rewaxing; not sure how many of them require scaffolding. If the MacLab was going to do the work (wax removal), they wouldn't have scaffolding, but perhaps DGS or MDOT have it. Sister agencies help each other out. We could ask Nichole Doub. Commissioner Morrill moved to pursue the additional funding for this work. Commissioner Hammond seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Discussion ensued about other ways of protecting the bronzes other than waxing, but the consensus seems to be that the bronzes were intended to be exposed to the elements, even

though bronze constantly (naturally) corrodes. Waxing protects, but does not stop this process. Harder coatings like Infracalac TM, which are solvent based, still have to be removed once they start crazing and cracking.

- Commissioner Kurtz discussed conservation of the Salisbury WWI monument at MNG Armory, which was treated for the first time by MMMC contracted conservators Howard Wellman and Ron Harvey in March of this year. It had undergone some sort of cleaning in the past, but the results were uneven discoloration.
- Commissioner Kurtz presented an overview of the MMMC and the nature of its work from its founding in 1989 when it was administered by the Secretary of State under an initial appropriation of \$100,000. The Commission currently maintains 59 monuments with an annual budget of \$17,000.

New Business

- Steve Allan reminded the group that the Maryland Society Sons of the American Revolution is organizing a bus trip to Brooklyn, N.Y. on August 18 for the Maryland 400 Remembrance at the Old Stone House and the visit to the monument in Prospect Park afterward.
- Noting that the first two awarded challenge medallions are to be presented in New York on August 18, Steve Allan reported on the status of the engraving aspect associated with the medallions. He presented an example obtained this morning from Shamrock Awards of Glen Burnie of Flexi-Brass stick on flat screen printing on a medallion for the average estimated cost of \$6 to \$8 per medallion. Direct engraving would cost \$10 each. Discussion ensued about the appearance of the finished piece and consensus was reached to explore other engraving vendors instead of screen printing in order to achieve a better quality (permanent) result.
- Discussion about what should accompany the Medallia. Either a certificate or a stand, such as the U.S. mint sells for its special coins. Will contact the vendor in Florida and enquire about stands. Commissioner Carson will look into having a certificate designed ahead of the presentation. A suggestion was made to have Governor's Citations prepared. Chair Schrader agreed that this could be accomplished. Steve will follow up with Maria to get this done. Commissioner Wisniewski asked if the Chair could be present in Brooklyn to present the two medallions, and that advance work be done to arrange for representatives of the Old Stone House and the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation to receive the medallions. Commissioner Carson will attend the event in New York on behalf of the Commission.
- Commissioner Mendelsohn moved to spend the \$30 to have real engraving done on these three coins. Commissioner Wisniewski seconded and the motion passed.
- Commissioner Wisniewski suggested that this is something we should do every year, and we should consider at least one additional annual event, perhaps in Annapolis, to commemorate and honor the work of this body, and create an

opportunity to present the other three Medallia to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor and the Sons (of the American Revolution), perhaps during the legislative session. It was suggested that a committee be set up to explore an annual event, consisting of Commissioners Mendelsohn, Carson, Fischer, Schnell, Kurtz, Wisniewski and Chair Schrader.

- Event ideas included rededication of an existing monument, an event at the Old Senate Chamber where Gen. Washington resigned his commission, or any other event in Annapolis during the legislative session. Chair Schrader remarked that it is very difficult to organize and execute anything during the 90-day legislative session due to competing events and cost considerations in the absence of a budget.

Announcements

- The next meeting date is October 9, 2019 at 1:00 pm in Crownsville.

Chair Schrader asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Soderberg moved, Commissioner Morrill seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.