

Minutes of the
Eighty-Sixth Meeting of the
Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
January 9, 2020

The eighty-sixth meeting of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) was held on January 9, 2020 at 100 Community Place in Crownsville, Maryland.

Authority Members/Designees Present:

Robert S. McCord, Secretary, MD Department of Planning and Chair of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority; Robert D. Campbell (Governor's Appointee for Historic Preservation and serving as Vice Chair for the Maryland Heritage Area Authority); Pete Leshner (MD Association of Counties representative); Burton Kummerow (President of the Senate representative); Lisa Challenger (Governor's Appointee for Heritage Tourism); Marty Baker (representing MD Department of Transportation Secretary Pete K. Rahn); Marci Ross (representing MD Department of Commerce Secretary Kelly Schulz); Nita Settina (representing MD Department of Natural Resources Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio); Janice Hayes-Williams (representing Speaker of the House); Wayne E. Clark (President of the Senate representative); Daniel Spedden (MD Tourism Development Board representative); Elizabeth Hughes (State Historic Preservation Officer); Natalie Chabot (Representative for MD Greenways); Bruce Lesh (representing MD State Department of Education Secretary Karen Salmon); Rowland Agbede (representing MD Department of Agriculture Secretary Joseph Bartenfelder)

Authority Members/Designees Absent:

Lee Towers (representing MD Higher Education Commission Secretary James D. Fielder, Jr.); Amy Seitz (representing MD Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Kenneth C. Holt); Vacant (MD Municipal League representative); Vacant (representing Speaker of the House)

Staff Present: Jennifer Ruffner, Ennis Barbery Smith, Bernadette Pruitt, Sabrina Roundtree (Maryland Historical Trust); Rieyn DeLoney (Office of the Attorney General)

Heritage Area Directors/Staff Present: Sarah Rogers (Montgomery County Heritage Area & Co-Chair, Maryland Coalition of Heritage Areas); Deidra Ritchie (Canal Place Heritage Area); Elizabeth Shatto (Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area); Julie Gilberto-Brady (Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area); Carol Benson (Four Rivers / Annapolis, London Town and South County Heritage Area); Gail Owings (Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area); Aaron Marcavitch and Kirstin Falk (Maryland Milestones / Anacostia Trails Heritage Area); Brigitte Carty (Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway); Lindsey Baker and Andrew Arvizu (Patapsco Valley Heritage Area); Lisa Ludwig (Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area); Shauntee Daniels (Baltimore National Heritage Area); Kim Folk (Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:13 a.m. by Robert S. McCord, Secretary, MD Department of Planning and Chair of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. McCord welcomed and introduced Sabrina Roundtree, Assistant Grants Manager for the Maryland Historical Trust. He noted that Ms. Roundtree is currently managing grants related to the U.S. Census that have been awarded through the Maryland Department of Planning and that she will be working with Maryland Heritage Areas Authority grants in the future.

Mr. McCord discussed the importance of the Census, emphasizing that there will be more ways to fill it out this year. People will be able to complete it online, as well as over the phone and in-person. He stressed that the Census is confidential and that absolutely no personal information is released until 72 years after the data is collected. For every person who does not complete the Census, the State of Maryland is expected to miss out on \$18,250 in federal funding over 10 years. He said that the Census is important, easy, and safe, and described the Complete Count Committees that have been established in every county.

Everyone in attendance took turns introducing themselves.

MHAA CHAIRPERSON ANNOUNCEMENTS /UPDATES (Robert S. McCord, Secretary, MD Department of Planning and Chair of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority)

Mr. Wayne Clark announced that, when he finishes his current term as a member of the Authority, he will not be seeking reappointment. He said that it is his intention to apply to serve as a member of the new Grants Review Panel.

Mr. McCord thanked Mr. Clark for his years of service on the Authority.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 10, 2019 MEETING

Mr. McCord called for a motion to approve the October 10, 2019 MHAA meeting minutes.

Mr. Pete Leshner offered the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Authority approves the October 10, 2019 meeting minutes as presented (R-100).

The motion was seconded by Dr. Marty Baker and approved unanimously.

MANAGEMENT REPORT (Jennifer Ruffner, MHAA Administrator)

MHAA Financing Fund Report

Ms. Jennifer Ruffner reported that, as of November 30, 2019, the current available balance in the MHAA Financing Fund was \$273,161.37. This reduced balance reflects that \$617,710 was awarded in Reserve Grant funding in November.

Ms. Ruffner reported that the list of grants that have been reduced or come in under budget is included in the printed report. She also noted that there is currently \$230,000 available for FY 2020 Emergency Grants. In July of 2019, the Authority set aside \$100,000 for emergency grants, while MHT finance staff had requested an additional \$130,000 for emergency grants as an “over the target request” in addition to the \$6 million appropriation, bringing the total available to \$230,000.

FY 2020 Grants Processing (Ennis Smith)

Ms. Ennis Smith reported that of the 124 grants awarded in FY 2020, including the Reserve List grants, 78 have been fully processed by MHAA staff, 37 have been sent to the grantee for signature and MHAA staff are waiting to receive the signed copies, and 9 are currently undergoing legal review. Ms. Smith thanked the Office of Attorney General staff for all their help in the process, especially with the increased funding level and corresponding workload.

Ms. Ruffner noted that MHAA staff hopes to process grant agreements in FY 2021 faster because – by that time – they expect to have additional staff in place.

FY 2021 Grant Cycle Update

Ms. Ruffner reported that the deadline for applicants to submit an Intent to Apply form is January 31, 2020, and that the deadline for Management, Marketing, and Block Grant applications, along with all final ranking form local review committees in May 1, 2020.

Ms. Ruffner reported that MHAA staff will hold a total of six in-person workshops and two webinars.

Ms. Natalie Chabot asked about workshop attendance.

Ms. Smith reported that one webinar and two in-person workshops have been held so far, with a total attendance of 36. About 50 people are signed up for the remaining workshops so far. In addition, a recorded webinar is available for viewing and has been viewed 20 times to-date.

Ms. Smith also noted that the Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives have been very helpful in sharing the grant round materials and workshop schedule with their networks.

Grants Panel Implementation Update

Ms. Ruffner reported that 69 applications and nominations were submitted, seeking inclusion on the panel. Six of these were from state agencies formally nominating their designees and two were from the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture.

Ms. Ruffner reported that MHAA staff is currently reviewing all nominations. MHAA staff will provide the Authority's Executive Committee with a list of potential panelists, and the Committee will have an opportunity to decline panelists.

Dr. Baker asked if MHAA staff will have a sense of the number of Intent-to-Apply forms received when they determine the number of panelists selected to read and score applications.

Ms. Ruffner confirmed that MHAA staff would have a sense of the total numbers when selecting reviewers. She added that the Intent-to-Apply number is always higher than the total number of full applications received.

Program Impact Study Update

Ms. Ruffer reported that Parker Phillips, the firm hired to conduct the Program and Economic Impact Study, has been hard at work with data collection and with developing metrics for ongoing program evaluation.

She directed Authority members to the matrix document that Parker Phillips provided to heritage area directors and MHAA staff to help gauge what types of metrics are feasible and useful for heritage areas and staff to collect going forward.

Ms. Ruffner said that she hopes to have an update, if not a draft report, at the April 2020 MHAA meeting.

Marketing Working Group

Ms. Ruffner reported that both the Authority and the Coalition of Heritage Areas have put forth volunteers for the Marketing Working Group and that the first meeting will be scheduled after Parker Phillips has provided a report for the Program Impact Study.

Boundary Amendments

Mr. Ruffner reported that the Patapsco Valley Heritage Greenway will be looking for Authority members to attend a tour and boundary amendment hearing in March. They have narrowed the potential dates down to March 16 or March 19, 2020. Ms. Ruffner said that the heritage area should select a date when at least three Authority members are able to attend.

There was discussion.

Ms. Shauntee Daniels announced that the Baltimore National Heritage Area is also planning to schedule a heritage area tour and boundary amendment hearing in March.

Ms. Ruffner asked that Authority members contact her regarding their availability for both boundary amendment processes.

**MARYLAND COALITION OF HERITAGE AREAS (MCoHA) REPORT
(Sarah Rogers, Co-Chair, MCoHA)**

Ms. Sarah Rogers reported that Ms. Lucille Walker of the Southern Maryland Heritage Area, Co-Chair of the Maryland Coalition of Heritage Areas, was not in attendance at the meeting because she was attending a meeting of the Partners for Program Open Space Advisory Council.

Ms. Rogers reported that all the heritage area directors have actively been taking part in the Program Impact Study with Parker Phillips.

She shared that the directors are busy working with grant applicants as part of the FY 2021 grant round.

She asked Mr. Aaron Marcavitch to provide an update regarding the upcoming legislative reception that will be hosted by the Coalition.

Mr. Marcavitch shared that the legislative reception will be held from 3 pm to 5:30 pm on January 22, 2020 in the Miller Senate Office Building, the same location as the previous years. Legislators will receive invitations. An email invitation is forthcoming to members of the Authority.

Ms. Rogers encouraged everyone to attend the reception.

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution R-200 to Ratify the November 2019 Executive Committee Email Vote

Ms. Ruffner explained that the Germantown Historical Society was originally awarded a grant for \$100,000 in July 2019, but – based on changes in the expected cost of the project and availability of cash match – the organization was only able to accept a grant of \$25,500 when the grant agreement was finalized in autumn of 2019. This meant that \$74,500 for which the Authority already had spending authorization was available immediately to MHAA Reserve List projects.

At the time when this funding became available, in November of 2019, the Authority was waiting to hear about spending authorization for the entire FY 2020 MHAA Reserve List. The first project on the Reserve List was a \$50,000 grant request from Keep Kent Scenic. As per the Reserve List policy, MHAA staff began processing this grant award. The next project on the

Reserve List was a \$100,000 grant request from the Garrett College Foundation. MHAA staff requested authorization from the Executive Committee to skip this project, since it could not be fully funded, and to move on the next project on the Reserve List, which could be fully funded with the amount available: a request for \$17,500 from the City of Brunswick for the “Berlin Cemetery Preservation” project.

The Executive Committee voted unanimously, via email, to approve this award between November 1 and November 4, 2019. The Executive Committee votes requires ratification by the full Authority.

Ms. Ruffner added that, later in November of 2019, the full FY 2020 Reserve List was funded, meaning that the Garrett College Foundation Project and all other Reserve List Projects are now in the process of receiving MHAA funding.

Mr. Clark clarified that all Reserve List Projects will be receiving FY 2020 funding, but the Authority still needs to ratify the decision of the Executive Committee. Ms. Ruffner confirmed that this is the case.

Mr. Clark made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Authority ratifies the action taken by the Executive Committee via email between November 1 and November 4, 2019 to allow staff to skip the \$100,000 reserve-list project recommended for award to the Garrett College Foundation and instead immediately fund the \$17,500 Berlin Cemetery Preservation project awarded to the City of Brunswick.

Ms. Chabot seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Ms. Chabot asked if the Reserve List Policy should be updated since it references the Technical Advisory Committee, which is no longer active.

Ms. Rieyn DeLony said that the policy may remain as it is until the next time the Authority does an overhaul of its policies.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Improving Diversity and Inclusion – Feedback from the Ethnic Commissions

Mr. McCord told the Authority that when he initially received the letter from Reverend Wilson, Chair of the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, he sent her an email response, letting her know that the letter had been received.

He said that, overall, the conversation at the meeting today and the response to the letter should not focus on the numbers of grants awarded to African American organizations that are referenced in Rev. Wilson’s letter and providing the program’s version of those numbers because

this will not be productive in moving forward. Rather, he emphasized that the conversation should be about how the Maryland Heritage Areas Program can tell all stories.

Mr. McCord said that he had been thinking about this letter and the Authority's response to it often and that he would like to form a working group to address the issues of diversity and inclusion, as they relate to the Maryland Heritage Areas Program. He said that he would like to invite anyone who wants to work on these issues to join him.

Mr. McCord said that the goals of the working group will be listening, examining the existing statutory and regulatory framework, recognizing barriers, and addressing those barriers through changes to the program, if necessary.

Mr. McCord said that he would like to offer to attend the Ethnic Commissions' meetings, listen, and address the Commissions' concerns. He said that he has talked with Keith Colston, who is on one of the Complete Count Committees for the Census and that Mr. Colston will be providing Mr. McCord with a list of all the upcoming meeting times and locations. He said that attending the meetings will allow him to understand the issues and be in communication with the Commissions.

Mr. McCord again urged everyone who would like to be involved to join him as part of the working group. He said that the working group will seek to make improvements that allow everyone to participate fully in the Maryland Heritage Areas Program. He recounted that, when he attended the ceremony to designate the Malloys Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary, the blessing conducted by the Piscataway was very moving and that indigenous peoples' history and presence in Maryland – for over 12,000 years – should be honored.

He said that the working group will make concerted efforts and real improvements in order to ensure that everyone has access to the Maryland Heritage Areas Program. He also emphasized that he has no preordained vision for what those improvements will consist of. He said that he is committed to listening first, emphasizing that he will not dismiss the concern raised by the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture's letter.

Mr. McCord asked that anyone who would like to be a part of the Working Group should send an email to Ms. Ruffner.

Mr. Clark said that he would like to be a part of the working group that will be formed.

There was discussion.

Match Requirement Changes

Ms. Ruffner introduced the discussion topic of changes to the matching requirements for MHAA grants. She clarified that, while this topic is closely related to the previous topic of discussion on the agenda ("Improving Diversity and Inclusion"), the development of the Briefing Memo put forward by MHAA staff and the Maryland Coalition of Heritage Areas predates the letter that

was received from Rev. Tamara Wilson and the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture.

Ms. Ruffner summarized the contents of the Briefing Memo, explaining that the one-to-one, dollar-for-dollar matching requirement is codified in the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority's statute (§13-1113) and that – until October of 2019 – the proportion of cash match to in-kind match had been codified in the program's Regulations. However, in the updated version of the Regulations that MHAA adopted in October of 2019, a required proportion of cash to in-kind match is not specified (14.29.03.06). This gives MHAA the flexibility to change the matching requirements for MHAA grants, if they so desire.

Ms. Ruffner directed MHAA members to the table included in the Briefing Memo, reporting that, in comparison to other grant funding sources at the state and federal level, MHAA grants' current cash match requirement appears to be an outlier. Many other grant programs listed in the table, including others administered by the Maryland Historical Trust, require no match from non-profit organizations and allow all applicants to provide any combination of cash and in-kind match.

Ms. Ruffner reported that the Maryland Coalition of Heritage Areas and MHAA staff were able to come to consensus on some suggested potential changes that would include the following:

- Allow grants under \$10,000 to meet their dollar-for-dollar match requirements with only in-kind match (and not require any cash match). This would allow smaller organizations, and groups with small capital projects (grants of \$5,000 - \$10,000) to obtain a meaningful amount of funding even if they are only able to provide volunteer support, donated services and/or donated materials as match.
- Reduce the required cash match for all other projects. MHAA could set the required cash match at 20% for all grants over \$10,000, for example.
- If there is a concern that applicants need to provide a cash match to demonstrate their ability to complete the project, or ensure they are committed to the project, MHAA could also implement a system whereby projects that exceed the required cash match level are given extra points, to encourage organizations to provide cash match even if it is not a requirement. This type of points system could be combined with a system of points to encourage applications from underrepresented communities, or for projects that address other priorities, to balance the ability of larger organizations to provide cash match, with a focus on encouraging specific types of applications and organizations.

There was discussion. MHAA members suggested several alternative approaches, including getting rid of the cash match requirement altogether and allowing any combination of cash and in-kind match for all applicants, requiring no cash match specifically for non-profit organizations, and the possibility of eventually making changes to the statute's one-to-one match requirement.

MHAA members also discussed the timing of changes to the match requirements. Since the MHAA Guidelines document for FY 2021 has already been released and grantees often start planning their projects well in advance of the MHAA's application due dates, there seemed to be consensus that any changes should take effect in the FY 2022 grant round. There also seemed to be consensus that the matching requirement changes for FY 2022 should be announced at the July 2020 MHAA meeting and in the same press materials that announce the FY 2021 MHAA grant awards.

Ms. Ruffner asked about additional information that MHAA might need before their next meeting in April 2020 in order to come to a decision.

There was discussion.

Mr. McCord stated that the Executive Committee will discuss the matter in more detail and will bring at least one draft resolution to the MHAA meeting in April. He said the Committee may present several alternative motions for consideration.

Mr. McCord directed MHAA members and heritage area directors to submit any additional input to Ms. Ruffner in writing in advance of the April 2020 MHAA meeting.

MHAA MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Baker announced that the Maryland Department of Transportation is preparing to call for applications for several grant programs: Transportation Alternatives, Recreational Trails Program, and Maryland Bikeways. She said that the letter of intent is a new requirement this year and that deadlines for applications will be in May of 2020. She added that Recreational Trails Program will have a second grant round with a deadline in January 2021.

Ms. Hughes raised concerns about the Maryland Governor's Grants Office initiative to mandate one common grant application for all state grant programs, explaining that she feared that this would ultimately result in a more difficult process for applicants. Ms. Hughes also called the Authority members' attention to proposed legislation regarding abandoned property in the possession of a museum (HB 21 and SB 88). She said that this legislation would allow for a mechanism to clear titles of museum collections items, enabling museums make decisions about how to best deal with those collection items going forward.

Dr. Baker added that the Bikeways program has increased finding this year: \$3.8 million, up from \$2 million.

Ms. Marci Ross encouraged everyone present to go see the film *Harriet* in theaters. The film's subject matter is the Underground Railroad and Harriet Tubman. She said that the Eastern Shore of Maryland has seen a recent uptick in tourists, perhaps as a result of the film's success.

HERITAGE AREA DIRECTORS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Elizabeth Shatto announced that the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area recently awarded a round of mini-grants. She said that a train derailment in Harpers Ferry may lead to an emergency grant. She shared that the American Association for State and Local History will be holding a workshop – sponsored by her heritage area – as part of their upcoming conference on April 16 and 17, 2020. The workshop will be on project management for history professionals. She added that scholarships are available to attend the conference.

Ms. Shauntee Daniels asked that the Authority members stay tuned for more details regarding the Baltimore National Heritage Area's upcoming boundary amendment. She announced that the heritage area recently produced a mini-documentary about the Baltimore City squeegee crews and how their efforts impact tourism for Baltimore City. She said that based on feedback received from the other heritage area directors and staff, the mini-documentary is in the process of being updated to include more historical and cultural context about African American economic self-reliance from the post-Civil War era to today in Baltimore City. She also announced that on February 5, the Baltimore National Heritage Area will present a Legacy Award in memory of Congressman Cummings. She invited everyone to attend this ceremony.

Ms. Julie Gilberto-Brady shared that Dorchester County is wrapping up its 350th anniversary celebrations. The Heart of Chesapeake County Heritage Area has put together a new time capsule, which they hope will be easier to open 50 years in the future. Since they had the opportunity to re-seal to existing capsule, the capsule itself will be 100 years old next time it is opened.

Ms. Deidra Ritchie reported that the Task Force studying Canal Place has had no further meetings and has provided no updates since MHAA last met. She said that the study for the River Park at Canal Place is ongoing.

Ms. Kim Folk reported that the Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area is discussing a boundary amendment and that the 95th anniversary of Deep Creek Lake is coming up in June. There will be celebrations associated with the anniversary.

Ms. Brigitte Carty reported that she is busy providing technical assistance to applicants in the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway as part of the FY 2021 MHAA grant round.

Ms. Lisa Ludwig reported that the Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area is working on new logos and branding.

Ms. Carol Benson reported that the Four Rivers Heritage Area's boundary amendment study is moving forward. She reported that the November 1, 2019 ceremony, organized by Janice Hayes-Williams, to return the Smith Price remains to Asbury United Methodist Church in Annapolis was very moving and that Secretary McCord attended.

Ms. Gail Owings announced that the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area's 2020 calendar is now available.

Ms. Sarah Rogers announced that Heritage Montgomery and Montgomery County will be getting awards for MHAA-funded projects. She said that the Warren Historic Site project is moving forward. She announced that the C&O Canal has a milestone anniversary coming up in 2021.

Mr. Marcavitch announced that Maryland Milestones / the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area will be hosting a webinar watch party for FY 2021 MHAA grant applicants. He reported that the heritage area is republishing two maps: the Rhode Island Trolley Trail and the Battle of Bladensburg Map. He reported that the heritage area is continuing to work on the Civil Rights Trail project and that six proposals from consultants have been received for the boundary amendment study that the heritage area will be conducting. He said that the heritage area is also revisiting their interpretive plan. Mr. Marcavitch reported that the Coalition of Heritage Areas will plan to attend both the Maryland Municipal League's and the Maryland Association of Counties' conferences in summer of 2020.

Ms. Lindsey Baker reported that the boundary expansion process for the Patapsco Valley Heritage Greenway is ongoing and that she looks forward to hosting MHAA members as part of the boundary amendment tour and hearing process.

ADJOURN

Mr. McCord thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their robust discussion.

Ms. Hughes motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Leshar seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. McCord adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:15 pm.