

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MEETING
Thursday, July 15, 2021 at 10:00 AM
100 Community Place, Crownsville, MD 21032

Pursuant to notice, the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Historical Trust was held in the main conference room of 100 Community Place in Crownsville, Maryland.

Trustees present: Mmes. Ernstein, Filkins, and Mears; Messrs. Buchheit, Delgado, Feldstein, Little, Parker (via conference call), and Robinson

Area Representatives present: Mmes. Linder and Sasser; Messrs. Charlton, Reed and Stek.

Ex-Officio Members: Delegate Gilchrist

Maryland Department of Planning: Sandy Schrader, Deputy Secretary; Adam Gruz, Chief of Staff

Office of the Attorney General: Rieyn DeLony, Scott Travers (intern).

MHT Staff: Casey Dehaven, Elizabeth Hughes, Collin Ingraham, Carey Jones, Whitney Mahl, Dana Marks, Kathy Monday, Greg Pierce, Anne Raines, Julianna Roman (intern), and Nell Ziehl

Members of the Public: Bernadette Pruitt, Clarence Woods.

AGENDA

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Hughes reported that no members of the public had signed up in advance of the meeting to provide public comment.

W1 CALL TO ORDER

Chair Laura Mears called the meeting to order at 10:11 AM. She welcomed returning member Dr. James Delgado to the Board. Introductions followed.

Chair Mears acknowledged the untimely death of Philip Tilghman Paca Logan, the son of Board member Barbara Paca, and expressed the Board's sincere sympathy to Dr. Paca's family

W2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Reed made a motion, seconded by Ms. Filkins, that the May 13, 2021 Board meeting minutes be approved. The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

Mr. Robinson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Reed that the March 13, 2021 Closed Meeting minutes of the Board be approved. The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

W3 COMMITTEE REPORTS

W100 Capital Programs

W101 Monument Relocation Working Group - Report

Mr. Robinson reported that the City of Baltimore was considering a proposal submitted by LAX Art, a non-profit visual arts space in Los Angeles, California, requesting loan of the three Confederate monuments under MHT easement for an exhibit at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles.

Mr. Robinson also reported that a conservator hired by the City has conducted an assessment of the monuments that are in storage and has no concerns about their condition. The conservator indicated that relocation of the Lee-Jackson Monument must be done very carefully in order to ensure that it is not damaged in transit.

Mr. Feldstein inquired if the monument pedestals remain in their original location. Mr. Robinson confirmed that they remained in situ.

W200 Survey, Registration, Community Education & Museums

W201R Resolution of Appreciation – Bernadette Pruitt

The following motion was made by Dr. Earnstein, seconded by Mr. Little, and approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION expressing appreciation and thanks to Bernadette Pulley-Pruitt for more than 34 years of service

Whereas the Maryland Historical Trust was created in 1961 as an instrumentality of the State of Maryland for the purpose of preserving, protecting, and enhancing districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in the prehistory, history, upland and underwater archeology, architecture, engineering, and culture of the State, to encourage others to do so and to promote interest in and study of such matters; and

Whereas, Bernadette Pulley-Pruitt has served the State of Maryland since 1987, when she began with the Banneker-Douglass Museum (shortly after its founding), eventually working with the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, and state commissions centered on slavery, ethnic heritage, and cultural conservation; and,

Whereas, during her tenure at MHT, Bernadette helped catalogue the MHT Library and provided support for the Office of Research, Survey, and Registration before moving to the Office of Heritage, Planning and Outreach (now Planning, Education and Outreach) in 2001; and,

Whereas, Bernadette's personal knowledge and connections to local African American families and history have informed MHT programs, educated the public (for example, through a memorable blog about her ancestors at Whitehall), and occasionally made colleagues feel like they're with a celebrity when walking with her in downtown Annapolis; and,

Whereas, Bernadette's award-winning customer service has brightened the day of vendors, suppliers, caterers, MHT Press patrons, and staff alike, and each December she takes care to decorate the OPEO offices with twinkling lights to bring joy to passers-by; and,

Whereas, Bernadette has always listened when her colleagues needed assistance and shared her perspectives and insights about MHT, cultural heritage, and life in general with each staff member in need of advice or a dose of humor; and,

Whereas, MHT staff have depended on Bernadette's excellent taste in food and design for successful events, like the Maryland Preservation Awards, and have been saved from many bad decisions over the years; and,

Whereas, Bernadette's dedication to her colleagues and to Maryland's history and culture runs so deep that she plans to volunteer with MHT's Oral History Interest Group and MHAA's Racial Equity Working Group even after she formally retires;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Maryland Historical Trust Board of Trustees wishes to express its deep appreciation to Bernadette Pulley-Pruitt for more than thirty-four years of service and to wish her a healthy, happy and prosperous retirement and a rewarding next phase of life.

W202 Maryland History Day Prize Winners

Ms. Hughes reported that the MHT Board makes a donation to the Maryland Humanities Council to sponsor two Maryland History Day achievement awards – one in the junior division (grades 6 through 8) and one in the senior division (grades 9 through 12). Winners receive a cash prize and a plaque with the name of the Maryland Historical Trust, and sponsorship is also acknowledged in the Maryland History Day program, the National History Day program, and in press releases containing the names of Maryland History Day winners. In addition, schools receive information about the Maryland Historical Trust award at the time that History Day projects are solicited for the competition.

2021 Maryland History Day recipients of the MHT Board Special Prize in Historic Preservation include:

Whistled Languages: A Mountainous Past and a Rocky Future
Category: Senior Group Documentary

Students: Brianna Simmons, Emma Weikert
School: South Hagerstown High School
Teacher: Jason Kamler

Native American Sign Language
Category: Junior Individual Exhibit
Student: Julia Southard
School: Centreville Middle School
Teacher: Thomas Hayman

Although the student winners of the MHT Board prize were unable to attend the Board meeting, a letter of thanks from Julia Southard was included in the MHT Board meeting materials.

Al Feldstein, a former Maryland Humanities Council board member, remarked on the success of the annual History Day Program and reminded Board members that History Day judges are always needed.

W203 Preservation Awards

Nell Ziehl, Chief of the Office of Planning, Education, and Outreach, provided an overview of the 2022 Maryland Preservation Awards proposal which would involve working with awardees to host a local event, similar to a press conference, to recognize their accomplishments. The awards program would be rescheduled in either the spring or fall. This new approach is designed to increase participation by local and state elected officials in the awards events and improve press coverage.

Ms. Ziehl noted that staff will continue to work with Preservation Maryland to determine whether some type of event showcasing MHT programs can be planned during the legislative session in coordination with Preservation Advocacy Day.

Board members endorsed this approach to the annual awards events and recommended that a funding stipend be offered to each awardee that could be used to pay for refreshments or other costs related to the event.

W204 JPPM Report

Greg Pierce, Director of Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum, provided an overview of JPPM activities since the May 13th Board meeting.

W205 MHT Report

Deputy Director Anne Raines provided an overview of MHT activities since the May 13th Board meeting.

W300 Management & Planning
W301 Investment Committee Report

Mr. Parker, Chair of the Investment Committee, reported on the performance of the Board's investment portfolio to date. The consolidated performance of our investments is up 5.7 % for the quarter and 7.5 % for the year, which is in line with what we would expect for a balanced portfolio. The Committee remains satisfied with Brown Advisory's management of the fund which includes ongoing rebalancing as needed.

W302 Equity Working Group Report

Mr. Parker, Chair of the Equity Working Group, reported that both Board members and MHT staff members are continuing to work together on this initiative.

Mr. Parker and Mr. Spikes were recently invited by Dale Green of Morgan State University to participate in discussions about the African American landscape at Mount Claire Mansion and how the history of that property is relevant to current events of today.

W303 Budget & Legislation

Ms. Hughes reported that she has no concerns about the MHT budget at this time. She noted that legislative proposals for the 2022 session of the Maryland General Assembly are being solicited now.

Ms. Hughes reported that research on the African American cemetery report required by the Joint Chairmen's Report for the 2021 Session is underway and is being supported by summer interns Julianna Roman, who is assigned to MHT, and Scott Travers, who is an intern with the Office of the Attorney General. Ms. Roman and Mr. Travers introduced themselves and discussed their interest in and work on the project.

Ms. Hughes reported that the Maryland Semiquincentennial Commission, created by Executive Order in January of 2021, will soon host its first meeting. Staffing for the Commission is being temporarily provided by MHT and the Governor's Office on Community Initiatives.

W304 Litigation & Legal Issues

Ms. DeLony provided updates on two current legal issues: (i) *Md. Sons of Confederate Veterans, Inc. v. MHT* and (ii) *In re Petition of Cliff Ransom, et al. for Judicial Review of Decision of MHT*. Following their First Amended Complaint filed in May, the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SOCV) served discovery requests on MHT (interrogatories and requests for production of documents). MHT filed an Answer to the Complaint, responded to SOCV's discovery requests, and served MHT's own discovery requests upon SOCV. In June, the City of Baltimore filed a Motion to Intervene. SOCV responded to the Motion, and MHT is waiting on the Court ruling on the Motion. If the Motion is granted, the City will become a co-defendant with MHT. Lastly, the Court issued a Scheduling Order: discovery and pre-trial motions deadlines will be in December, and a pretrial conference is scheduled for January 5, 2022.

In May, a group of Fells Point property owners filed a Complaint for Administrative Mandamus against MHT, challenging an April decision by the Director to permit the owner of an easement property located at 1724-26 Thames Street in Fells Point to dig four exploratory "test pits" in the interior of the structure, for purposes of making a structural assessment as to whether a rooftop deck could be placed on the easement property. The plaintiffs assert that the approval of the test pits violated the easement, and that the Court should vacate the approval. MHT filed a Motion to Dismiss and a Response to the Complaint. For the Motion to Dismiss, MHT argued that the plaintiffs lack standing because they were not a party to the administrative action (MHT's consideration of the easement property owner's change/alteration request). For the Response, MHT argued that plaintiffs allege no illegality, and the record of the Director's decision reflects that the decision to grant the "test pit" approval was a discretionary one, made through a deliberative process based on sound decision-making.

Announcements

Once the meeting's business was concluded, Chair Mears asked Board members to discuss their experiences at historic sites and communities now that many COVID restrictions have been lifted. All indicated significant activity levels and high visitor numbers at parks, historic properties, restaurants, and related venues.

The next meeting of the Board will take place on October 21, 2022; location to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.