

Minutes of the
Ninety-Fifth Meeting of the
Maryland Heritage Areas Authority
July 14, 2022

The ninety-fifth meeting of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) was convened on July 14, 2022 via web conference call and live-streaming. The public was notified about the meeting and had the opportunity to listen/watch via live-streaming.

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 Areas Authority); Mary Anne Harms (Speaker of the House representative); Pete Leshner (MD Association of Counties representative); Daniel Spedden (MD Tourism Development Board representative); Burton Kummerow (President of the Senate representative); Marty Baker (representing MD Department of Transportation Secretary James F. Ports); Lee Towers (representing MD Higher Education Commission Secretary James D. Fielder, Jr.); Elizabeth Hughes (State Historic Preservation Officer); Bruce Lesh (representing MD State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury); Nita Settina (representing MD Department of Natural Resources Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio); Dennis Doster (Governor's Appointee for Heritage Tourism); Nicholas Redding (President of the Senate representative); Elizabeth Fitzsimmons (representing MD Department of Commerce Secretary R. Michael Gill); Amy Seitz (representing MD Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Kenneth C. Holt); Natalie Chabot (Representative for MD Greenways)

Authority Members/Designees Absent:

Rowland Agbede (representing MD Department of Agriculture Secretary Joseph Bartenfelder); Janice Hayes-Williams (Speaker of the House representative); John A. Kinnaird (MD Municipal League representative)

Staff Present: Ariane Hofstedt (Maryland Historical Trust); Andrew Arvizu (Maryland Historical Trust); Rieyn DeLony (Office of the Attorney General)

Heritage Area Directors/Staff Present: Lucille Walker (Southern Maryland Heritage Area and Co-Chair, Maryland Heritage Areas Coalition); Brigitte Carty (Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway and Co-Chair, Maryland Heritage Areas Coalition); Sarah Rogers (Montgomery County Heritage Area); Deidra Ritchie (Passages of the Western Potomac Heritage Area); Elizabeth Shatto (Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area); Amanda Fenstermaker (Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area); Carol Benson (Chesapeake Crossroads/Four Rivers /

Annapolis, London Town and South County Heritage Area); Meagan Baco (Maryland Milestones / Anacostia Trails Heritage Area); Lisa Challenger (Beach to Bay Heritage Area); Kim Folk (Mountain Gateway to the West Heritage Area); Aaron Shapiro (Patapsco Valley Heritage Area)

Additional Individuals Present: Kevin McDonald (Chair of the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grants Review Panel); Aadila Bhabha (Symphonic Strategies)

CALL TO ORDER AND MHAA CHAIRPERSON ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Robert McCord convened the meeting at 10:05 and welcomed the Authority to the meeting.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

Mr. Andrew Arvizu conducted a roll call to confirm MHAA members' attendance. With 16 members present and 3 members absent, there was a quorum present, and a two-thirds majority.

Appointment of Vice Chair as Required by MHAA Bylaws, Article V, Section 2

Mr. Arvizu explained to the Authority that one candidate, Mr. Robert Campbell, had put their name forward for reelection as the Vice Chair of MHAA.

Mr. Pete Leshner made a motion to approve Mr. Campbell's nomination.

Ms. Liz Fitzsimmons seconded the motion, which carried unanimously with no abstentions.

Mr. McCord thanked Mr. Campbell for his service to the Authority.

Mr. Campbell thanked the Authority for the opportunity to continue serving.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM January 9, 2022 MEETING

Mr. McCord asked for discussion of the meeting Minutes from the April 14, 2022 meeting of the authority.

Ms. Mary Anne Harms made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Authority approves the April 14, 2022 Minutes as presented.

Ms. Elizabeth Hughes seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously with no abstentions.

Introduction of New Program Administrator: Ariane Hofstedt

Mr. McCord introduced MHAA's new Program Administrator, Ms. Ariane Hofstedt. He explained that she brings a wealth of knowledge to the program including over 20 years of experience both serving non-profits and as a private consultant.

Ms. Hofstedt greeted the Authority and stated that she was very excited to be working with MHAA.

MANAGEMENT REPORT (Ariane Hofstedt, MHAA Administrator; Andrew Arvizu, MHAA Assistant Administrator)

MHAA Staffing Update

Ms. Hofstedt updated the Authority on the status of MHAA's second assistant administrator position, explaining that the second round of interviews had been completed and a candidate was expected to start between the end of July and the beginning of August.

MHAA Financing Fund Report:

Ms. Hofstedt shared that MHAA's Financing Fund contained \$12,348 and shared that a detailed breakdown of the fund can be found on the Authority's Google Drive. Further, for Fiscal Year 2023, MHAA received its full six-million dollar appropriation from the state.

Fiscal Year 2023 Grant Round:

Ms. Hofstedt explained that the grant review process for the year had been completed and that MHAA staff has prepared the Grant Review Panel's recommendations for approval by the Authority. In total, 107 grants for \$5.1 million dollars. Ms. Hofstedt thanked everyone involved in the process, including the grants review panel and Maryland Coalition of Heritage Areas.

Ms. Hofstedt introduced Mr. Kevin McDonald, the chair of MHAA's Grants Review Panel.

Racial Equity Working Group:

Ms. Hofstedt introduced Ms. Aadila Bhabha to provide an update on Symphonic Strategy's ongoing consulting efforts pertaining to racial equity within the Maryland Heritage Areas Program.

Ms. Bhabha introduced herself and updated the Authority on Symphonic Strategy's plans. First, she laid out the background of Symphonic Strategies sharing previous similar projects that the firm has worked on. She then introduced three other team members, Dr. AJ Robinson, Ms. Megan Arendall, and Mr. Jashawn Fredericks.

Next, she described the project's scope of work and deliverables, explaining that the purpose of the project is to assess diversity, equity and inclusion across various aspects of MHAA. Specifically, Symphonic will be creating a racial equity report with a special focus on the experience of African Americans. She explained that the scope of work covers three key phases: assessment, reporting, and planning, all of which work towards the report which is anticipated to be completed in September.

Ms. Bhabha shared that the initial phase of the document review has been completed and the majority of future work will involve focus groups and one-on-one interviews. Ms. Bhabha shared the various focus groups and plans for interviews over the next two months. Particularly, Ms. Bhabha will be analyzing discrepancies between heritage areas in regard to the grants review process. Further, five specific focus groups will be used to expand the scope of Symphonic's analysis, including past grantees and those not given a grant by MHAA.

Ms. Bhabha then shared an outline of the next steps, including interviews, a review of feedback, a draft report, and further feedback and revisions.

Ms. Bhabha asked the Authority for questions on the plan.

Ms. Harms asked for an example of one or two issues that spurred this study.

Mr. Arvizu explained that back in 2020, MHAA received a letter from the Governor's Commission of African American History and Culture that called into light discrepancies in MHAA's previous funding trends, specifically when it came to African American focused grants and organizations. This letter resulted in MHAA establishing the Racial Equity Working Group, which determined that an outside facilitator would be needed to address these concerns.

Ms. Bhabha added that Symphonic has been working closely with the MHAA Racial Equity Working Group to address these issues.

Mr. Campbell asked for further clarification on the timeline, since the timeline seemed short.

Ms. Bhabha explained that Symphonic planned to complete the interviews and focus groups by the first week of August. At the moment, Symphonic has already completed its initial document review and has included that research into a package. This means that the final product will just be a combination of the already completed work with the new data gathered from the upcoming interviews.

Ms. Bhabha then shared the input that the Racial Equity Working Group provided on how to handle the interviews, including who should participate and what they should be asked.

Ms. Marty Baker asked Ms. Bhabha how much of the report would be document review, in addition to the interviews.

Ms. Bhabha explained that MHAA staff has provided a great deal of data for review, which is being broken down and analyzed. Further, she made an open request for further documentation to review, with a specific focus on the grants review process.

Ms. Hofstedt asked Ms. Bhabha if she had conducted a larger analysis of the program's policy documents.

Ms. Bhabha had confirmed that this analysis took place earlier on in the process.

Marketing Working Group

Ms. Hofstedt shared that the Marketing Working Group has been on hold to account for the expected proposals from the Racial Equity Working Group. Ms. Hofstedt hoped to restart the Marketing Working Group as soon as those recommendations are in place and shared that the Marketing Grants Review Panel had provided useful insight into marketing-related challenges facing MHAA.

Grant Accessibility Survey

Mr. Arvizu reminded the Authority that this fiscal year saw a 30% decrease in grant applications. This was the first decrease in the total number of applications since the program's appropriation was increased to \$6 million. To better understand this trend, MHAA has put together a survey of past grantees who did not apply in this grant round.

Mr. Arvizu highlighted a few preliminary findings from the survey. First, many people found the application system to be too complicated. Second, many people identified the match requirement as a major barrier to entry.

Mr. Arvizu concluded that they will continue to collect responses on the survey and that they hope to have a more comprehensive report by the next MHAA meeting.

MARYLAND HERITAGE AREAS COALITION (MHAC) REPORT (Lucille Walker and Brigitte Carty, Co-Chairs)

Ms. Brigitte Carty introduced the Coalition Report, updating the Authority on the June meeting of the MHAC. She explained that MHAC will be attending the Maryland Association of Counties meeting in August to promote the program. Further, she shared that Ms. Shautnee Daniels and Mx. Megan Baco attended a meeting of the Maryland Municipal League in June to promote the program.

Ms. Daniels explained that the MML meeting was a great success. She then updated the Authority on progress within the Baltimore National Heritage Area, including a new Heritage Walk, a new Mount Vernon Culture Walk, and the premier of *Voice of the Balck Butterfly* at the newly opened Peale.

Ms. Shatto shared several of the projects from the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, including major restoration to the Newcomer House, the heritage area's visitor center. Additionally, she encouraged the Authority to join a webinar with Mr. John Marks of the American Association for State and Local History titled *Reframing History*. Finally, she discussed the completion of a six-year strategic plan, from 2022-2028, that had just been implemented in the heritage area.

Dr. Carol Benson shared several updates from the newly-renamed Chesapeake Crossroads Heritage Area. First, she discussed the opening of a new permanent exhibit at the Historic Annapolis Museum. Second, she mentioned the ribbon-cutting for the newly renovated Woodlawn House at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. Finally, she shared that the heritage area has been having an intense discussion of heritage area themes, in preparation for CCHA's new five-year plan.

Ms. Lucille Walker updated the Authority on the ongoing efforts to create a national heritage area. The required legislation is pending a vote, having passed in both the House and the Senate. Additionally, Ms. Walker discussed plans for Maryland's 400th Anniversary. Specifically, she discussed the formation of the Maryland Rediscovery 400 initiative which is aimed at telling untold stories about Maryland's past, working directly with Piscataway people and Southern Maryland's African American community. She shared several archeological findings and presentations that supported this initiative.

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution R-200 approve Funding Requests: FY 2023 Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Management, Marketing and Block Grants (collectively referred to as the “Resolution R-200 Grants”)

Ms. Hofstedt explained that FY 2023 contained a total of 29 Management, Marketing, and Block Grants totaling \$1.6 million.

Mr. Leshar moved the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Authority approves funding for Resolution R-200 Grants consisting of thirteen FY23 management grants, five FY23 marketing grants, and eleven FY23 block grants, as detailed and in accordance with the amounts and terms set forth in the chart titled “Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant Requests: Fiscal Year 2023” (the “Chart”), attached hereto and made part of Resolution R-200 for the management and marketing of certified heritage areas (CHAs), including Anacostia Trails (Maryland Milestones), Annapolis, London Town and South County (Chesapeake Crossroads), Baltimore National, Beach to Bay, Canal Place (Passages of the Western Potomac), Heart of Chesapeake Country, Heart of the Civil War, Lower Susquehanna, Montgomery County, Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West, Patapsco Valley, Southern Maryland and Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Areas.

Mr. Kummerow seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Resolution R-300 to Approve Funding Requests: FY 2023 Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Capital and Non-Capital Grants and Reserve List Grants (collectively referred to as the “Resolution R-300 Grants”).

Ms. Hofstedt explained that for FY 2023, the MHAA Grants Review Panel recommended 78 project grants for a total of \$3.4 million. She then introduced Mr. McDonald to discuss those recommendations.

Mr. McDonald thanked the Authority for the opportunity to serve on the MHAA Grants Review Panel. He explained the grants review process and thanked his fellow panel members for their dedication and thorough review. He then asked for any questions from the Authority about the recommendations for funding.

Mr. Leshar asked what proportion of grants were left unfunded this year.

Ms. Hofstedt shared that there was a total ask of \$6.4 million, leaving 61 grants to go unfunded.

Mr. McCord thanked Mr. McDonald for his superb work as the Chair of MHAA’s Grants Review Panel.

Ms. Harms asked about the recusement process, which Mr. Arvizu briefly explained.

Mr. Spedden made the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the Maryland Heritage Area Authority approves funding of Resolution R-300 Grants consisting of (i) the 38 capital projects and 40 noncapital project grants for projects and activities within the CHAs (not including the grants approved by separate resolutions for projects in which Authority members have an interest), as detailed and in accordance with the amounts designated on the Chart as “Full Funding” or “Partial Funding”, and the terms set forth in the Chart attached hereto and made part of Resolution R-300; and (ii) if additional funding becomes available through an additional spending authorization of funds in the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund, the additional 61 grants designated as the “Reserve List Grants” on the Chart, in the order in which they appear in the final ranking set out in "FY23 Grants Review Panel Chart – Final Recommendations”

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this approval is contingent upon sufficient funding being made available in the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MHAA staff is authorized to prepare any documents necessary or useful in order to carry out the grants approved by the Authority in conformance with the terms set forth in the Chart. Staff is further authorized to make minor adjustments to the scopes of work, timetables, and budgets set forth in the Chart and the grant applications, including the allocation of Authority grant funds to specific line items in the project budgets, and the required amounts of matching funds. Such adjustments shall be made in compliance with MHAA statutes and regulations, and shall not materially alter the work, activities or products of the grant project as approved by the Authority.

Mr. Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with no abstentions.

The following FY23 grant applications were presented for a separate vote because they involve members of the Authority that needed to be recused. Resolution R-400 to Approve Funding Requests: FY 2023 Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant to the Historic Sotterley Inc. For the “Restoration of Sotterley's Agricultural Buildings” project.

Ms. Baker made the following Motion:

Resolved, that the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority approves a grant to the Historic Sotterley Inc. For the “Restoration of Sotterley's Agricultural Buildings” project under the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant Program, as detailed and in accordance with the amounts and terms set forth in the Chart attached hereto and made part of Resolution R-400.

Mr. Spedden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with an abstention from Ms. Harms.

Resolution R-500 to Approve Funding Requests: FY 2023 Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum for the “Digitizing CBMM's Collection” project.

Mr. Kummerow made the following motion:

Resolved, that the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority approves a grant to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum for the “Digitizing CBMM's Collection” project under the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant Program, as detailed and in accordance with the amounts and terms set forth in the Chart attached hereto and made part of Resolution R-500.

Mr. Lee Towers seconded the motion which passed unanimously with one abstention from Mr. Leshner.

Resolution R-600 to Approve Funding Requests: FY 2023 Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant to the Sultana Education Foundation, Inc. for the “Construction of the Nature Center at the Lawrence Wetlands Preserve” project.

Ms. Baker made the following motion:

Resolved, that the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority approves a grant to the Sultana Education Foundation, Inc. for the “Construction of the Nature Center at the Lawrence Wetlands Preserve” project under the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Grant Program, as detailed and in accordance with the amounts and terms set forth in the Chart attached hereto and made part of Resolution R-600.

Mr. Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with one abstention from Mr. Leshner.

The following boundary amendments were put forward for administrative approval.

Resolution R-700 to Approve a Request by the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area and Carroll County to amend the boundary of the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area.

Mr. Arvizu introduced a request to amend the boundary of the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area to include portions of the Northwest Trail between Taneytown and the Pennsylvania border.

Ms. Elizabeth Shatto provided additional context to the request, discussing the heritage tourism significance of the trail and proposed additional sites.

Mr. Kummerow made the following motion:

Resolved, that in accordance with Sections 13-1008(10) and 13- 1111(m) of the Financial Institutions Article of the Code of Maryland, and COMAR 14.29.02.05C, the Authority approves— the boundary amendment request dated June 16, 2022 submitted by the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area and Carroll County, to expand the boundaries of the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area to include Route 194 from the Taneytown municipal limit to the Pennsylvania state line.

Ms. Fitzsimmons seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with no abstentions.

Resolution R-800 to Approve a Request by the Southern Maryland Heritage Area and Charles County to amend the boundary of the Southern Maryland Heritage Area.

Mr. Arvizu introduced a request by the Southern Maryland Heritage Area to include the Rich Hill Farmhouse.

Ms. Walker discussed the property further and explained that the site was originally intended to be within the heritage area.

Mr. Campbell made the following motion:

Resolved, that in accordance with Sections 13-1008(10) and 13- 1111(m) of the Financial Institutions Article of the Code of Maryland, and COMAR 14.29.02.05C, the Authority approves— the boundary amendment request dated July 8, 2022 submitted by the Southern Maryland Heritage Area and Charles County, to expand the boundaries of the Southern Maryland Heritage Area to include the Rich Hill farmstead.

Ms. Harms seconded the motion which carried with no abstentions.

New Business and Announcements

Ms. Hughes shared that Preservation Maryland and the Maryland Historical Trust had been working on a report for the Governor's Commission on African American History and Culture to assess challenges facing the preservation of African American burial sites in the state.

Ms. Baker reminded the Authority about the upcoming month of “Walktober” an initiative to promote non-driving forms of transportation across the state.

Ms. Fitzsimmons shared that September will be the 4th International Underground Railroad month, marking the bicentennial of Harriet Tubman’s birth.

Mr. McCord promoted the Maryland 250th commission and discussed enlisting the help of Maryland’s Heritage Areas.

Adjournment

Mr. McCord wished the Authority a happy Bastille Day and adjourned the meeting at 11:26.