

HISTORIC ST. MARY'S CITY COMMISSION
March 19, 2016
MINUTES

Commission Members Present: William George, S.J., Commission Chair; Lawrence Leak, Vice Chair, Sam Baldwin, Ernest Bell, Kelsey Bush, Laura Cripps, Jim Desmond, William Grube, Diana Harley-Penny, Michael Loughran, Todd Morgan, Jean Russo, Danielle Troyan

Staff: Regina Faden, Executive Director, George Connelly, Doug Hunter, Silas Hurry, Joe Kangas, Henry Miller, Porzia Purves, Recording Secretary.

Guest: Carolyn Laray, St. Mary's County Tourism, Erin Millar, Attorney General's Office Representative (on phone)

Fr. George called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Fr. George asked for a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion by Jean Russo, seconded by Ernest Bell.

Fr. George reminded the Commission Board the September 19, 2015 minutes were approved via email; copies have been placed in folders, and asked if there were any comments or changes at this time, a motion to approve the Minutes as presented Motion by Jim Desmond, seconded by Todd Morgan. Motion was approved.

Fr. George began by introducing Ms. Carolyn Laray of the Department of Economic Development, Division of Tourism to review the St. Mary's County strategic plan for tourism. Ms. Laray explained the process of how the strategic plan came to be, and the message is "Tourism needs to be important to the community." St. Mary's have 700,000 visitors annually, they spend \$140M. Ms. Laray explained we want to carry the message to the state legislators. Ms. Laray explained the County has decided to look at the items that we are going to diversify for the economy, what can be done to keep our audience here, turning day visitation into overnight visitation. Dr. Cripps asked what benchmarks are in place to align with the strategic plan.

Mr. Baldwin the Foundation spoke with Carolyn when planning Beerfest; Beerfest hits a younger demographic and keeps the visitor here overnight.

Fr. George and Dr. Leak thanked Ms. Laray for all she has put into this strategic plan, and asked, how can the Commission board assist?

ACTIVITY REPORTS

Finance & Administration & Governmental Relations

Dr. Faden explained that DNR would like to transfer title of the Branham Property to HSMC for the fee of \$1.00 or less. A resolution from the Commission accepting the land transfer must be approved by the board. Dr. Leak motioned to accept the resolution; seconded by Dr. Russo. The motion was approved to accept the Branham property.

Dr. Faden reported our budget is in the positive, and staff is working on keeping 2% of our budget aside. HSMC is currently experiencing a downturn in events revenue but once the construction is complete we should see an increase.

The Anne Arundel project is moving along HSMC has 41% of the building and we have requested the state to put money in the budget for our share of expenses. Dr. Leak congratulated Dr. Faden for lobbying for the money it has been put in the budget and the legislative session did not remove the funds.

Dr. Faden asked Dr. Leak to discuss a joint board opportunity during the Fall meeting to bring both the HSMCC and the BOT of SMCM together for a joint lunch and tour of the new Anne Arundel Facility. Dr. Leak will take the lead in coordination and the board agreed to move our Fall meeting to October 15, 2016.

Fr. George asked Mr. Connelly to speak on behalf us an upcoming fundraising idea and updated the board on the UNESCO project. Mr. Connelly explained that HSMC has an opportunity to have the Dove docked in Baltimore for visitation to the public, and a gala fundraiser. All members of the board will be asked for input for invitations and a white sheet will be prepared. For UNESCO, we have prepared a prospectus and are asking assistance from each Commissioner as we move forward requesting letters of support from esteemed elected officials. The letters must be on official letterhead and highlight the importance of Historic St. Mary's City. A letter has already been drafted with the assistance of Dr. Henry Miller. The letter has been approved by the AG's office.

Mr. Desmond asked what is the benefit to HSMC for UNESCO? Dr. Faden explained HSMC would receive prestige. Mr. Connelly suggested all board members reach out to all their contacts. Fr. George asked would previous U.S. Ambassadors, former Presidents, Cardinals all would be valuable. Mr. Connelly suggested if it would make it easier, just forward the contact information to him and he will reach out. Dr. Cripps explained this is an exciting opportunity for HSMC, be certain to use outstanding keywords such as "cultural landscape, etc." Dr. Miller added the criteria to the sites integrity, the view shed, the St. Mary's River all of this is important to the County as well.

Dr. Faden added there was testimony for the Pier Bond Bill, adding thanks to Senator Miller and Delegate Waugh for sponsorship of bond.

Research

Dr. Russo began her report by explaining how impressed she is with the staff. The Committee report is included in your folders. The staff is working on a number of things. The Anne Arundel hall move looks like July 1. MHIC has been delayed by one year in the capital budget. HSMC has applied for grant money from NEH for the MHIC.

The Lead Coffins have been returned to the chapel site after 24 years. Much praise was given the maintenance staff for their assistance with this project. Additionally, the human remains have not been returned, Dr. Owsley will be doing additional investigation, once complete they will be reinterred.

Permits have been done for the new Pavilion and Chancellor's Point. The Plantation Roof has been repaired. The Slave quarter repairs are underway.

Dr. Faden is investigating other partners for field school and undergrad programs with other institutions. At this time we have four students signed up for the HSMC field school. Dr. Faden added we have received \$5K from the Ark & Dove Society to fund scholars.

Dr. Russo reported an IMLS grant has been submitted for digitalization of collections; a student intern is currently working on this project. As a reminder April is Archaeology Month and HSMC is the focus.

Education and Marketing

Education

Dr. Faden reported school tour reservations are good for the Spring. We have had quite a bit of success with the Mother Goose Program, this program was sponsored by "Grow Up Great" a PNC initiative. The program was free to Title 1 schools.

Cedarville Band was invited to offer a training session for our interpretive staff during the winter season.

HSMC will be hosting the regional ALHFAM conference in April 1-3, 2016.

Maryland Day 2016 will feature Henry Miller as the guest speaker,

HSMC Foundation

Mr. Baldwin has been elected Foundation President. Mr. Baldwin reported it is his goal to find ways to raise individual and corporate money for HSMC. Beerfest planning is going well. The Foundation has increased advertising to D.C. and Baltimore. In October 2015, the first Fall fundraiser Lady Baltimore's Ball was very successful and the Foundation is committed to making it an annual event.

