

HISTORIC ST. MARY'S CITY

A MUSEUM OF HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY AT
MARYLAND'S FIRST CAPITAL

HISTORIC ST. MARY'S CITY COMMISSION COMMISSION MEETING

Saturday, March 15, 2025

Campus Center 205

St. Mary's College of Maryland

St. Mary's City, MD 20686

10:00am – 3:00pm

Topic: HSMCC Board Meeting

Time: Mar 15, 2025 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85426055269?pwd=ibkbmomzuPtLBVOSZGFze5tOObea4A.1>

Meeting ID: 854 2605 5269

Passcode: 6QrWCs

Attendees: Tim Heely, Bonnie Green, Cindy Kramer, Adrienne Mathis, Linda Kohler, BJ Hall
Judy Fillius, Heidi Fleming, Bill Drew

Virtual Attendees: Rosemary Hinkle, Chris Longmore, Kyle Harmon, Julie King, Hess Stinson

Staff: John Seidel, Peter Carroccio, Travis Parno, Joe Kangas, Doug Hunter, Michael Bellis,
Victoria Hanson, Porzia Purves

10:00 Welcome and call to order Meeting opened 10:05 a.m.

I. Approval of Minutes Rear Admiral, Tim Heely, Chair
Chairman Heely asked for a motion to approve the minutes: Ms. Mathis moved; Ms.
Filius seconded.

II. Chair's Report Rear Admiral, Tim Heely, Chair

- a. Budget Testimony Update – Chairman Heely reported the team attended four budget hearings, but we don't have the final budget in yet.
- b. Bylaws – with the assistance of Elena Langrill we are bringing the Commission Bylaws into alignment with the following committees:
 - Research and Site Development
 - Programming and Public Affairs
 - Planning and Governmental Affairs
 - Finance and Administration

Chairman Heely added the committee names are in line with the legislation.

P.O. BOX 39, ST. MARY'S CITY, MARYLAND 20686

Wes Moore, Governor John L. Seidel, Ph.D., Executive Director Rear Admiral Tim Heely, USN (retired), Chairman

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III. Committee Updates

a. Administration

Ms. Fleming

Met Thursday, March 6, 2025. Budget revenue is down. The Travel budget was questioned, Dr. Seidel reported the reasons concerning the travel budget. The group questioned the number of staff that participated in the SHA conference and how it affected the travel budget. Dr. Seidel noted that all attendees were presenting papers and representing HSMC. Ms. Mathis spoke to the point that the SHA conference speaks to the level of professional growth.

Ms. Green indicated that we need to do a better job getting the word out.

Mr. Hunter reported there are also a few positions that are not filled that have a positive impact on the budget for this year. Ms. Fleming stated we don't balance a budget with unfilled positions. Dr. Seidel agreed, but noted that because budget projections are done so far in advance and unexpected events depressed this year's revenue, we are managing to the bottom line and constantly adjusting spending proactively to ensure a balanced budget.

Mr. Hall added there were a couple of budget items that have not been paid out and asked for an explanation. Mr. Hunter explained outside contractual services and projections.

Ms. Fillius asked about the MOU's with St. Mary's College, and payments; Mr. Hunter stated those payments are included in Contractual Services. Dr. Seidel informed the board there are a number of MOU's with multiple departments at SMCM and the HSMC currently is working with SMCM to bring them into a single, umbrella MOU. He added that Mr. Carroccio is a fierce negotiator, and that we are trying to revise the MOU by the end of this fiscal year.

Ms. Fleming reported we need to be more proactive with fundraising. Dr. Seidel stated we are on pace to beat last year's school tour bookings. Membership is up, and we now need to boost philanthropy and improve the revenue all around. Chairman Heely, added that he understood that there is an issue with obtaining chaperones for school groups. Ms. Mathis stated partnerships with the local county schools would be a proven concept.

Ms. Fillius asked about the DoIT contract, Mr. Hunter and Mr. Kangas explained the fund source and the infrastructure.

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b. Education

Ms. Mathis

Ms. Mathis reported that the committee met on March 11, 2025 and discussed the tours and bookings; there is interest in increasing the number of tours. The Education Department has hired 8 new guides. The MHIC exhibit planning is moving forward. We are spending down the NEH grant as rapidly as possible, but are likely to lose a significant portion of the grant through recission.

Dr. Parno reported there is a contract being put in place with the Indigenous community for a large mural on a prominent wall in the MHIC.

Ms. Mathis reported the museum will be deaccessioning two cows and purchasing new ones.

There are three staff attending and presenting at the ALFHAM conference. There is a concept for our committee focus on.

c. Grounds

Mr. Drew

Mr. Drew reported buildings and grounds are doing just fine. Mr. Drew reported that he attended a very positive event featuring Dr. Parno.

d. Planning

Ms. Walker

No report given

IV. Foundation Report

Mr. Chris Longmore, President

Mr. Longmore is looking at bringing the number of board members up; we are actively seeking new active members. We will meet in June and hope to have some new members on board by then. We had discussed having the *Maryland Dove* sail to St. Michaels in a Spring 2025 fundraising event, but the timing didn't line up and we will look to the Fall for that event

V. Executive Director's Report

Dr. John L. Seidel

Dr. Seidel reported on the OLA audit, which is done every four years. He anticipates only one significant finding, which is finalizing the MOU between HSMC and HSMCF. He continued with highlights of his Quarterly Report to the Board. Ms. Green spoke to the Maryland Stadium Authority Phase 2 hotel study and community engagement, noting that it needs to be done sooner than later. Dr. Seidel agreed. He also explained that this is one of many projects being tracked in what is called "The Big Rocks Projects." We are happy to share that with the Commissioners.

Dr. Seidel updated the board about the emergency mold remediation. Remediation of the Brome Howard House and the PR Building will begin in April, to be followed by Hammett House and Admin. Mr. Kangas explained that the PJ's (project justifications) for other mold remediation will move forward. Ms. Green asked what is the plan for the Inn following the mold remediation? Dr. Seidel indicated this is part of the new business discussion, but it is needed for staff offices for the near term. Ms. Kohler asked if the \$900K will cover the entire remediation project. Mr. Kangas stated that more funds will be available if needed for completion.

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Dr. Seidel reported on the ED House (Westerly), and the Chase House (Chancellor's Point). There is \$700K for Chase and \$600K for Westerly in the FY 2025 budget. The Commission then received back the Branham House. Instead of replacing the Chase House, we have suggested putting an open air pavilion at Chancellor's point for a cost of \$300K and then using the money left along with the \$600K to bring the Branham House up to speed, feeling that is a better investment. Any left over funds would go back to Westerly. This is the proposal currently in front of DBM. However, DBM generally doesn't fund revenue-generating construction. We are currently speaking to this situation with DBM. Ms. Green asked to see the letter that states staff will be unable to live in any homes owned by the Commission. There was discussion of staff living in substandard homes.

Ms. Fleming – if you have tenants living in houses with mold there is a lot of liability. Ms. Fleming stated this should be on record there is liability with the situation in buildings owned by HSMCC. Dr. Seidel concurred, but explained that HSMC has no explicit knowledge of mold currently in any tenant housing. However, we are being cautious and will be doing inspections to better understand this and then take any necessary steps.

Capital projects, including conversion of VC to an Education facility, the maintenance facility, and site improvement funds were slowed down in the FY 2026 budget. Site improvement funds were zeroed out due to not spending encumbered funds.

Ms. Fleming we are all going on record here that if there is a mold problem in any home we rent, the tenants need to be removed. We need to check these homes.

Dr. Seidel agrees and this is a concern and a health priority. Mr. Kangas is working on the inspectors, but it's also a procurement situation.

Ms. Fleming stated this needs to be addressed immediately. Mr. Carroccio noted that we are addressing it, but there is a specific process that we are required to follow, and it does not move as quickly as we would like.

VI. New Business

Dr. John L. Seidel

Dr. Seidel spoke to the site being open twelve months. Currently St. John's is open three days a week in the winter. The new VC will be open year-round, the education complex will be open 12 months, and Farthing's complex as well will be open as well. He asked the board to give him their thoughts on the options for extended opening.

Dr. King asked about the Sunday schedule, Dr. Seidel stated historically Sunday is the least visited day. Dr. King stated to include the days in the study.

Dr. Parno added being opened 12 months lends to the importance of our capital projects. Capital is key component to being open 12 months.

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Ms. Fillius, once the Chapel is open on Sunday, is it going to be used for services? The answer is no, there will be no regular services, as this is an exhibit, although weddings and the occasional mass may be held there.

Dr. Seidel reviewed the Capital program with the Master Plan. The objective of the overview is to review the staff vision for where HSMC should be in 2024, on comparison with what is called for in the Master Plan.

He noted that parking will be a major challenge once the new MHIC is opened.

Mr. Hall asked about signage - how are people going to know they have arrived at St. Mary's City?

Mr. Kangas reported there are a number of new signs as well as a monument sign, plus the building will have a large sign (already installed).

The group began discussing branding and the order in which we do first.

There was additional discussion as Dr. Seidel continued with a review of the plan.

Mr. Hall asked who decided the name "Liberty of Conscience?" Dr. Seidel explained the history of the notion.

There was a discussion regarding the visioning & capital objectives for 2034.

Ms. Kohler asked if we are partnering with a contractor for a hotel? Mr. Carroccio explained that this will be determined in the planning and design process, but that we anticipate a public-private partnership. HSMC should not run a hotel. Ms. Fleming stated St. Mary's College would love to have the hotel; it's a benefit to them not necessarily for HSMC. Dr. Seidel noted that successive master plans have all called out the necessity of a hotel for HSMC. The current professional leadership agrees.

Mr. Bellis stated that in terms of tourism, without the hotel it's hard to keep people to stay on site for any extended period of time.

Mr. Hall asked for a one pager on what the plan is.

Ms. Kohler stated we need to know how are we going to fund this growth, beyond the hotel. In the current model, it depends upon state funding.

Ms. Fillius asked if there has been a Fort to 400 meeting yet. And, what are our priorities to get done before 2034? No recent meetings have been held. The current discussion is all about our priorities, building from both the master plan and the staff visioning.

Mr. Drew asked, is there a preliminary dollar amount? Dr. Seidel stated there were some figures in the current capital plan, but not for everything.

Dr. Seidel will put together a priorities list, timeline, and the costs that we can estimate.

Mr. Hall asked about the county being involved with the Fort to 400 collectively.

Mr. Bellis was asked to give a quick review of what he's accomplished since he's begun.

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He reported on the application of Remind to get messages out quickly. He reported a significant amount of work has gone into the purchasing the donor management system. The goal is this would be a whole house management tool. The HSMC Foundation has agreed to purchase this application, we are waiting for the go ahead letter from the Treasurer's Office.

He discussed premier sponsor Patuxent Dental, membership, and donor base options.

He added the volunteer coordinator has bought in 80 new volunteers; in addition, we have instituted a volunteer application called Volgistics. Dr. Seidel added that the departments have been asked to find creative ways to use volunteers. There was additional discussion of the new events and re-imagined annual events. Much of the work is directed to building staff and systems for an ambitious fundraising campaign.

VII. Closed Session

Rear Admiral, Tim Heely, Chair

VIII. Adjourn

Next meeting July 12, 2025