

HISTORIC ST. MARY'S CITY COMMISSION
March 23, 2018
MINUTES

Commission Members Present: Fr. Bill George, Commission Chair; J. Ernest Bell, Kelsey Bush, James Desmond, Michael Dougherty, Margaret McFarland, Diana Penny, Jean Russo, Andrea Steele, Michael Whitson

Commission Members Present Via Conference Call: Larry Leak, Commission Vice-Chair; Kelsey Bush, Laura Cripps

Staff: Regina Faden, Executive Director, Peter Friesen, Doug Hunter, Silas Hurry, Joe Kangas, Henry Miller, Travis Parno, Porzia Purves, Recording Secretary.

Guest: John Bohanan, Peter Himmelheber, Chris Kaselemis, Director of Economic Development; John Martin, Carl Widell

Guest via Phone: Ms. Elena Langrill, Assistant State's Attorney

Fr. George called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Fr. George called for the approval of the agenda as received, Michael Whitson asked for an amended Agenda to include changing the order of reports, Larry Leak asked to amend the agenda to include the nomination and vote of the Board Chair. The **Agenda was approved with changes unanimously.**

Fr. George asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of October 14, 2017 Motion by Ernie Bell, seconded by Michael Dougherty, **MOTION WAS APPROVED.**

Dr. Leak asked for the Chair to step out of the meeting in order that the Commission vote on the position of Chair. Father George was unanimously elected Chair of the HSMCC Board.

Fr. George returned to meeting once again called the meeting to order.

Committee Reports:

Governmental Affairs, chaired by Margaret McFarland

Dr. Faden introduced John Bohanan, representative of Cornerstone, a copy of the report will be included in these minutes. Mr. Bohanan thanked the Foundation, Commission and staff for their hard work and effort, reminding the board the hope was to effect change in the operating budget for HSMC. At this time the Governor has added \$256K to the budget with \$56K for the current FY18. For FY19 two positions have been funded for a total of \$130K this includes fringe and turnover, and an additional \$69K for contractual services. For the Dove \$2 M has been approved and \$550K for the new Pier. Review of the report and discussion. Father George asked who were the legislators who really spoke on behalf of HSMC, Mr. Bohanan reported Adrienne

Jones, Ed DeGrange, and Senator Miller. He would also supply the list to Fr. George. Dr. Leak asked about the fundraising portion which HSMC is responsible for regarding MHIC? Faden replied that this will be question will be answered when the final capital budget is published. Father George thanked John Bohanan and Cornerstone, and Dr. Faden and staff.

Director's Report:

Dr. Faden introduced Chris Kaselemis, Director of Economic Development for St. Mary's County. Mr. Kaselemis explained two years ago the SMC hired a tourism consultant. The goal was "How do we move SMC to the next level, keeping people here overnight vs. day tripping?" The study found people who stay overnight spend about \$500 vs. a day trip of \$60. The focus is on the southern end of SMC, and we asked for support from the County Commissioners. This led to the creation of a non-profit Foundation Tourism Board, linking the county's accommodation tax.

Mr. McAllister thought this his excellent way to emphasize the uniqueness of this county with the 17th Century and Base Technology. Ms. McFarland added it is amazing the number of people in Maryland who know nothing about St. Mary's City, and have never been here. We need a tag line "Merry in St. Mary's" as an example. Mr. Desmond asked if commercials like those produced by Colonial Williamsburg bring anything to the site. Discussion continued, Mr. Kaselemis reviewed the timeline and process. The board thanked Mr. Kaselemis for his time and information.

Committee Reports

Finance & Administration chaired by Michael Dougherty

Mr. Dougherty reported the minutes from the F&A meeting, minutes were included in Commissioners' folders. He highlighted a few items. Mr. Kangas submitted a list of critical maintenance items totaling \$4M, and included 28 items. The list will be included with these minutes. Mr. Dougherty explained we need to take care of the basics including, restrooms, parking lots, visitor amenities such as water fountains, etc. Dr. Faden added we will submit a request again next year.

Mr. Dougherty added a personal note, stating he is a member of the board as well as a volunteer. He suggested to the members of the board to get to know the staff, visit the sites, introduce yourself to the interpreters and consider becoming a volunteer as well.

Research chaired by Jean Russo

Dr. Russo reported the Research notes are included in Commissioners' folders. She highlighted a number of items of interest, including work on the Tenant House, the staff are currently awaiting to receive two additional bids, and would like to award the contract by the end of March.

Field school for 2018 will be on the North side of the Leonard Calvert House. Announcements have gone out, and the assistant has been hired.

Dr. Parno has been auditing a GIS class and the commission has received their license for GIS surveying.

Three capital projects for SMCM are underway. The Stadium is wrapping up. The change to the Old State House Road will require some archaeology, and the North Field Walkway will also need archaeology.

The staff reported the Commission Book is moving forward once again. The University Press of Florida is interested in publication and looks to distribute in 2020.

Finally we have an Ark & Dove scholar working on Medical Practices of the 17th C. in Maryland. He will be using Dr. Carr and Dr. Walsh's information and we are looking forward to his final report.

A full report will be submitted with minutes.

Education & Marketing chaired by Danielle Troyan

Dr. Faden reported on behalf of Ms. Troyan. She highlighted the following items. General visitation to programming events is up 26%. The staff is seeing that social media is playing a large part in this increase. School tours are currently down 7%. Mr. Friesen, Director of Education, has reached out to all Social Studies Coordinators throughout the state.

The staff worked on the new orientation film. We will preview it following the meeting. This was made possible with funds from the HSMC Foundation and a grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. She suggested that if Commissioners were out at the Plantation that they meet five new employees in the form of three new pigs and two new cows.

Regarding Business Enterprises, the Inn is currently down. We have seen a downturn in the amount SMCM uses the Inn. They are not bringing in as many visiting scholars as before. We have hired the new Events Manager, Mary Bohanan. She kicked off with the 2018 Bridal Show, one of our best to date, she had 40 vendors and 80 brides. We are happy to have Mary on our team.

We also would like to take the opportunity to thank the Foundation for funding the new website. We will begin the process immediately. Dr. Faden added that Mr. McAllister had done a great job with the Foundation bringing new members, and coordinating with staff. This year we have staff working together with the Foundation on their two large events, Beerfest and Lady Baltimore Ball.

Ms. McFarland asked if we are reaching out to all the school districts as well as all private and parochial schools? Dr. Faden reported we will follow up with all schools.

Foundation Report chaired by John McAllister, Foundation Chair

Mr. McAllister introduced members of the Foundation Board in attendance today, Burt Kummerow, Peter Himmelheber, John Martin, and Carl Widell. Mr. McAllister reported the Foundation board met earlier today, and agreed to fund the new Website and seed money for the Maryland 400. This year they have funded the Cornerstone Lobbying Firm, \$13K for the Slave Quarter, GIS Equipment, 2 people movers, the Introduction video and the Haunted Ship. Our events this year are Beerfest set for June 23rd, and Lady Baltimore's Ball October 27th. Both events are still seeking sponsorship. If anyone is interested or know anyone please contact us. Today we thanked Bonnie Green for 20 years of service to the HSMC Foundation Board.

Mr, McAllister introduced Burt Kummerow, board member and Maryland 400 planner. Mr. Kummerow explained it is not too early to begin the planning for the 400th Anniversary of Maryland's founding. They are hoping to launch the Maryland 400 website in October of November, they are raising seed money and the Foundation has agreed to support the event by funding a portion of the seed money. The earlier one gets started the more exciting the event will become. They are planning four kick off events around the State, Baltimore, Annapolis, Frederick and St. Michael's.

Father George agreed it's a great idea to start early.

Father George asked the board to think about how best to assist the foundation in raising money.

Father George asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting so that the board could watch the new orientation video.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. McAllister at 5:01 p.m. and seconded by Mr. Bell. The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Porzia Purves