



Historic Preservation Commission

Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2021

This meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was held at the Parks, Recreation & Tourism (PRT) Office at 1224 Progressive Drive on June 10, 2021. Chairperson Knight called the meeting to order at 5:06 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made.

Members Present:	Mr. Gerald Martin; Mr. James "Ervin" Young; Ms. Amelia Wallace; Ms. Jennifer Knight; Dr. George Reed
Members Absent:	Jason L. Miller
Staff Present:	Park Planner Ana Elezovic; PRT Director Mike Barber; Planning Administrator Mark Woodward; Historical Services Manager Jessica Cosmas

ROLL CALL

Ms. Elezovic called the roll. Attendance reflected a quorum with 5 voting members present, 1 voting members absent.

MINUTES:

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Chairperson Knight asked if there were any corrections to the May 13 minutes as presented. There were no corrections. The minutes stand.

HEARING OF CITIZENS:

None.

REPORTS:

a. Committee Reports:

- **Historic Registry** – The Historic Registry presentation was deferred to July based on the availability of the intern who completed the project.

b. **Staff Reports:**

- **Jessica Cosmas** – The role of Historical Services Manager was recently filled by Jessica Cosmas. Ms. Cosmas introduced herself to the commission and provided a brief summary of her previous work experiences.
- **Mike Barber** – Mr. Barber shared that the event celebrating the installation of the Historic Marker at the Owens-Melvin home on May 26, 2021 went well.

Mr. Barber provided an update on the Historic Village at the Dismal Swamp. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) and the City of Chesapeake was approved and described the grant of \$ 3,000,000.00 from DHR to the City for the development of the site to include a commemoration to the Underground Railroad. The Purchase Orders (PO) to facilitate and execute the relocation of the Cornland School to the Glencoe site have been approved and issued as well. Mr. Barber shared the procedure to move the school, including the plan to schedule it on an early weekend morning and the addition of police escorts to avoid any oncoming car traffic.

- **Ana Elezovic** – Ms. Elezovic discussed the popularity of the video series released in honor of Historic Preservation Month. The series seems to have had a positive effect on social media metrics. The Chesapeake Historic Preservation Commission page on Facebook has increased views and likes following the introduction of the video series.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- **Historic Preservation Month Video Series** – Given the popularity of the video series as presented by Ms. Elezovic, Commissioners and staff discussed topics for future videos. Commissioner Wallace suggested maintaining a list of subjects to develop videos. Commissioner Knight suggested a video sharing the Historical Marker titled “Seven Patriot Heroes” (near the entrance to Naval Support Base off of Ballahack Road) in conjunction with Juneteenth.
- **Commission City-Wide Tour** – Commissioners and staff discussed potential autumn dates for the tour.
 - **Action Item:** Ms. Elezovic will send out poll to determine what date works best for Commission Members.
- **Bear Quarter Sign** – Mr. Barber shared an anonymous letter he received that expressed disappointment in the recently installed sign. Commissioners and staff discussed possible edits to the sign, including the description of the final resting place of a local figure. Mr. Barber said a new sign will be made as desired.

HEARING OF BOARD MEMBERS:

- Ms. Amelia Wallace – Commissioner Wallace shared some findings from a recent trip to the Wallace Memorial History Room in the Chesapeake Central Library. Ms. Wallace has been transcribing the records of the Deep Creek Canteen and Depot and found a “Tony” listed. Ms. Wallace is curious if this “Tony” is the same “Uncle Tony” who served as a guide to Poet Thomas Moore during his trip that inspired *A Ballad: The Lake of the Dismal Swamp*. Ms. Wallace hopes to spend more time on this research topic.
- Ms. Jennifer Knight - Commissioner Knight mentioned that the “St. Bride’s Church” Historical Marker appeared askew.
 - **Action Item:** Mr. Barber will reach out to Public Works traffic maintenance contacts in order to straighten sign.
- Dr. George Reed - Commissioner Reed invited all members of the commission to purchase tickets and/or promote a premiere Juneteenth event on Saturday, June 19, 2021 at the Chesapeake Convention Center featuring a lecture by local historian Dr. E. Curtis Alexander and a concert by local musician and radio personality Jae Sinnett.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Media & Other Promotional Opportunities** - The Commissioners discussed the quality of local print media and its ability to cover history related events and stories. Dr. Reed said he intends to contact local media outlets like the “Chesapeake Clipper” and the “New Journal & Guide”
- **Disaster Preparedness** - Commissioner Martin brought up concerns on protecting the Cornland School as Hurricane Season approaches. Staff said they would investigate the matter further.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 PM.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, July 8, 2021 at 5:00 PM at PRT Office at 1224 Progressive Drive.

Minutes submitted by Jessica Cosmas, Secretary