

Minutes for Hampton 2019 Commemorative Commission

August 7, 2018 – 4:00 p.m. at Hampton History Museum

Attending: Ann Bane, Steven Bond, Terry Brown, Luci Cochran, Billie Einselen, Colita Fairfax, Brittany Foster, Mary Fugere, Larry Gibson, Jimmy Gray, Simeon Green, Hugh Harrell, Kemi Layeni, Glenn Oder, Dionne Redding, Claude Vann, Bill Wiggins, Audrey Williams, Annette Oakley

Excused Absence: Aaron Firth, Rob Shuford, Vanessa Thaxton-Ward, Raymond Tripp

Absent: Jonathan McBride, Ryan Fontes-Taylor, Bill Harper

Guests: Tony Gabriele, Pamela Holley, Philip Adderley (Contraband Historical Society), Calvin Pearson (Project 1619), Beth Austin (Hampton History Museum), Donnie Tuck (Hampton Mayor)

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Lt. Col. Claude Vann. He welcomed commissioners and guests, and asked everyone to introduce themselves. Roll call was completed.

ACTION: Claude Vann asked members to review the minutes from July and let him know if there are changes. A motion was made by Billie Einselen to approve the minutes for July 3, 2018. Bill Wiggins had one modification under Old Business – Making of America Tour; that we have not formally voted upon or approved our participation. After some discussion, Billie Einselen restated the motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded and motion carried.

Ground Rules:

Claude Vann stated the following ground rules:

- Commission moves through process/discussions in a timely manner
- Give everyone an opportunity to say something
- Exercise courtesy to one another

Co-Chairs Report:

Billie Einselen reported on the Teachers Institute, thanking Ann Bane and her group for hosting the three-day workshop. She stated it was a great event; the information was excellent and the Daily Press coverage could not be surpassed. Ann Bane commended Dr. Fairfax for getting the presenters, as well as efforts by Mary Fugere and Brittany Foster. She stated the feedback was exceptional. Billie Einselen stated Colita Fairfax and Claude Vann were present each day and added a presence of leadership. Brittany Foster mentioned the feedback has been tremendous and teachers are already making changes with the curriculum for next year based on information that was presented. Claude Vann stated Janet Roach from Channel 13 came out each day to cover the event, and he has received a lot of positive feedback. He thanked all involved in this effort. Bill Wiggins shared he feels there should be consensus of accuracy with the presenter's information and with those putting together lesson plans, in particular with the Triangular Trade. Ann Bane stated she has confidence in Ms. Dietz with any content changes that may occur, and will share this input with her. Brittany Foster added that twenty-three teachers and two librarians participated in the event.

Education Committee:

Colita Fairfax reported on the K-12 Pilot Institute and hopes to generate external funding for 2019. She stated the committee needs to come together to discuss scheduling events for 2019, to include symposiums and ideas for community round tables. Claude Vann stated he and Reverend Green

discussed a February timeframe to recognize issues in the local area and bring people together, to include local ministers.

Commemoration Committee:

Bill Wiggins shared that the committee discussed ways to assist and support planning with Brittany Foster, as well as the concert portion of August 24, 2019. Luci Cochran shared that Glenn Oder contacted Kathy Spangler. She followed up and they are fully in support of having Rhiannon Giddens performing here; Ms. Giddens is not fully committed yet, but it is looking positive. She thanked Glenn Oder for his help. Bill Wiggins suggested Luci Cochran send the links of performances to the committee.

Bill Wiggins mentioned the committee also discussed that the Naming Ceremony should not be based on racial/ethnicity; all are welcome to participate in the ceremony, which is about reconciliation and healing. Glenn Oder stated the visitor center building is under construction for the dedication ceremony and things are going well.

Terry Brown inquired about the criteria for the Naming Ceremony. Bill Wiggins responded that one must have a definite ancestral relationship with some part of the continent of Africa. Calvin Pearson stated it requires DNA evidence or some type of historical documentation to prove one has ancestral connection to Africa. He stated this is a serious ceremony and not to be taken lightly. Terry Brown feels it's a wonderful element to the event, but shared concerns about the ceremony being in a public setting, with these types of criteria. Steve Bond agreed and shared there are people who want to participate, but cannot prove lineage. He mentioned many people arrived in bondage and their records were destroyed and to exclude those individuals who cannot prove lineage doesn't seem right in a public space. Calvin Pearson stated there can only be five names given during the ceremony. Steve Bond mentioned there is also the question of public funding of the event. Larry Gibson asked whether public funds were used for the event and Calvin Pearson shook his head no. Larry Gibson stated some will never be able to come up with their original place of being, but can belong to a place they feel spiritually connected to. Luci Cochran stated the committee discussed inclusion and that's a powerful statement. Bill Wiggins stated it's a spiritual connection; all can come forward, it's not meant to exclude anyone. Steve Bond stated the application does not reflect on what was discussed and agreed upon. Larry Gibson stated next year's application will be more holistic for everyone.

Bill Wiggins mentioned the committee also discussed the Day of Healing. Terry Brown stated they are looking at Sunday, August 25, 2019 for the event.

Marketing Committee:

Mary Fugere stated they have engaged Meridian and their public relations for 2019. She discussed with Meridian a campaign around the profile of, for example, an African American women, an elderly person, a youth and a child, and she would like to work with multiple races. She stated the media placements have the potential to be very impactful. Mary Fugere stated the series would begin in January through August. She reported the Association of African American Museums will be at the Hampton Roads Convention Center this week and will visit various places, such as Fort Monroe, Hampton University, Tucker Cemetery, and take a Harbor Tour.

She stated CVB has a Press Tour August 22-26, which includes heritage sites in Hampton. She stated they represent a variety of outlets and publications. The State also has a press tour around the same time, so they are bringing the groups together for an evening event on Thursday, August 23 at Mango Mangeaux.

Mary Fugere stated they have a need for volunteers on Saturday, August 25th at Fort Monroe at the 2019 table. She mentioned she brought visors to distribute, which can be worn by event volunteers.

She stated the presentation has been finalized and they now want to reach out to community and civic groups to deliver the presentations. Please let her know if anyone has a group to present to.

Budget Committee:

Claude Vann stated Luci Cochran has cautioned that there needs to be a cause for people to donate. He feels, based on feedback he received, the cause would be the Teacher's Institute.

Old Business:

Tucker Cemetery:

Claude Vann reported the Governor would be coming here on August 24th to sign a land easement legislation at 11:00 a.m. at the Tucker Cemetery. Shuttle service should be available and he is working on an alternate site if there is inclement weather.

Project 1619:

Bill Wiggins mentioned Reverend Myers is not doing well. He stated in regards to funding for Project 1619, he wanted to get clarity. Mary Fugere stated that the cost of marketing/advertising requested by Project 1619 exceeded the amount spent by the CVB last year, and that additional funds were not available this year. Last year the event support exceeded \$10,000 for relatively poor attendance. She is unsure whether this is the best use of public funds.

PowerPoint Presentation: Colita Fairfax stated at the K-12 Teacher's Institute, she and Claude Vann used the presentation talking points for the first time. They will also use the talking points for the Association of African American Museum conference, as well as a piece from the National Park Service, Visitors Center and will show a video clip.

Making of America Tour: Colita Fairfax stated due to the Teacher's Institute, there is no update on the tour map at this time. She and Brittany Foster will work it and give an update to the Commissioners in September. She asked Commissioners to be thinking about sites to include in the tour and email her.

New Business:

Aberdeen Gardens Proposal: Claude Vann shared that the proposal is a documentary on Aberdeen Gardens with David Barr, a noted playwright. The cost for the documentary is \$125,000. Some of the cast of people would include Margaret Wilson, Reverend Andrew Clary, and Jimmy Eason. Claude Vann inquired if the Commission wants to support this proposal and if so, at what level.

ACTION: Bill Wiggins made a motion to consider the proposal, individuals look at it and we respond appropriately. There was some discussion, specifically regarding the budget. There was no second. Motion failed.

There was mention of this possibly being done through a grant process and private sponsors. It was also mentioned that foundations in Virginia may fund it as well. Colita Fairfax suggested the Commission form more partnerships and widen discussions about community. Aberdeen is a clear example of a successful

outcome. She also mentioned Aberdeen has supported the 2019 School Essay Contest. She feels we should support the project.

ACTION: Colita Fairfax made a motion that the Commission support Aberdeen Garden's documentary without any responsibility to provide fiscal support, as we do not have funding at this time. Terry Brown seconded. After some discussion a vote was taken and motion passed.

Around the Table:

Glenn Oder suggested the master budget be on the agenda at each meeting. Colita Fairfax agreed and asked all to bring their budgets to the next meeting.

Colita Fairfax stated the official PSA to notify the public of our intentions for next year will be completed soon. It was discussed to support an announcement in June/July of next year.

Terry Brown stated the NPS signed off on a contract to have a film made at Fort Monroe next year. He stated he has tours every day at 11:00 a.m. He also stated part of his strategy for next year is to put together a brochure to highlight all of the programming in progress. He will share with the Commissioners once finalized.

Billy Einselen gave kudos to the Teacher's Institute and she is glad it will be repeated next year.

Steven Bond reported that both he and Mayor Tuck will be in Knoxville, TN attending Cities United and unable to attend the African Landing Day. He assured the Commission that this is not a reflection of their support, as they are in full support of the event.

Hugh Harrell stated the Weyanoke Association would have its 20th Annual Coming Together event in Henrico County on Saturday from noon until 4:00 p.m. He stated he has fliers for those interested in attending.

Bill Wiggins stated members of the Contraband Historical Society will be presenting to the Signature Events Committee on how they hope to be part of the celebration. He mentioned they are trying to assemble as many descendant families present in the area.

Adjournment:

Claude Vann adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by Annette Oakley, 8/23/18