

Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture

Public Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 2, 2023

Banneker-Douglass Museum

84 Franklin Street

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The following Commissioners were in attendance: Lori Bradford, H. Russell Frisby, Janice Curtis Greene, Jaelon Moaney, Philip J. Merrill, Brian Morrison, Hakeem Tijani, Reggie Turner, Elinor Thompson, Kennedy Wilson, and Chair Edwin T. Johnson.

The meeting was called to order at 11:07 a.m. by Chair Edwin T. Johnson.

Proof of Public Notice

Accepted by general consensus.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Johnson asked for a motion to be made in accepting the minutes of August 7, 2023. Commissioner H. Russell Frisby made a motion to accept the minutes. Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene seconded the motion, and the motion was carried.

Welcome

Chair Johnson welcomed the public and the MCAAHC Commissioners to the Banneker-Douglass Museum (BDM).

- He gave his additional time for his welcome over to Commissioner Elinor Thompson, Anne Arundel County Commissioner and Executive Director Chanel Johnson, who both hosted the meeting.
 - Commissioner Elinor Thompson took the time to recognize the various organizations that were in the meeting.
 - She then passed the mic to Ms. Chanel Johnson, Executive Director of the Banneker-Douglass Museum and the MCAAHC.
 - Executive Director Johnson welcomed everyone to the BDM Maryland's Official Repository of African American History & Culture.
 - She thanked the public for their support, looks to visit many of the various heritage sites and shared that if the various sites have not applied for the MCAAHC's African American Heritage Preservation Grant this round, she looks forward to seeing their application next year.

Chair's Report-Chair Edwin T. Johnson

Chair Edwin T. Johnson took a moment to recognize Chair Lady Emeritus Lyndra (neePratt) Marshall who was in attendance.

- He shared that it is important the MCAAHC and public recognize that the work doesn't start anew each year but the MCAAHC is built off of the work the previous great leaders of the MCAAHC that have paved the way for the commission's initiatives that are being done now.
 - Chair Johnson said that he appreciates the chair emeritus support and will continue to recognize and celebrate these great leaders.
 - He took the moment to recognize Commissioner Kara Hunt who just gave birth to a baby boy.
 - Chair Johnson also recognized the BDM staff for giving a polished look in their work on the 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington in Annapolis, Maryland that took place August 26th.
 - The march was given from the U.S. Marine Corp Naval Stadium to the City docks in downtown Annapolis.

- Chair Johnson also commended the BDM staff on a successful series program on “The Radical Voices of Blackness Speaks of Resistance and Joy.”
- Chair Johnson said that he and Executive Director Johnson had the pleasure of meeting with Governor Wes Moore and his chief of staff in getting the various initiatives that he would like to see done during his administration.
- On September 29th, Chair Johnson had the opportunity to represent the MCAAHC by being the Master of Ceremony for the Governor’s International Underground Railroad Proclamation ceremony in downtown Baltimore, Maryland.
- Chair Johnson shared that his legacy with the MCAAHC is to add the name of Harriet Tubman to the Banneker-Douglass Museum so that it will be named the “Banneker-Douglass Tubman Museum.”
 - The paperwork has been submitted and completed for this endeavor to begin to take place.
- A meeting was had about the MCAAHC’s website where the MCAAHC Commissioners will be updating their personal pictures and bios.
 - Chair Johnson shared that this will give the MCAAHC a very refined look preparing the various things that are on the horizon for the MCAAHC.
- He shared that the month of October will be very busy for the MCAAHC Commissioners.
 - Emails have been sent regarding updates and changes to the MCAAHC by Laws that have been sent via email.
 - October 12th there will be a special meeting to vote to move forward with these changes.
 - Chair Johnson said that there is a lot of language that carries over from when the MCAAHC was under the Governor’s Office of Community Initiatives.
 - It was also brought to his attention from Commissioner Hunt and Commissioner Frisby that some of the bylaws from previous years are no longer compliant with today’s practices and standards of the committees.
 - Chair Johnson asked that the MCAAHC Commissioners be prepared to vote on that day.
- Chair Johnson shared that there was some confusion about the dates of the MCAAHC’s Black Symposium.
 - October 12th and 13th are the dates of the symposium that lines up with the Quarles Institute’s program.
 - The date was, at one time, switched to October 26th and 27th.
 - The date of the symposium will be taking place October 12th and 13th at MSU.
- Chair Johnson said that the MCAAHC’s kick off to “The Year of Civil Rights “will take place on October 26th.
 - He shared that there are a lot of anniversaries that are coming up where the MCAAHC has already celebrated:
 - 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington.
 - 60th Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King’s, “I Have a Dream Speech.”
 - Chair Johnson admonished the public to get ready for more exciting programs for anniversaries to come.
- In rounding off his report, Chair Johnson said that there was a restricting process at the Reginald Lewis Museum where the MCAAHC has one seat on that board.
 - Commissioner Frisby is the representative for the MCAAHC on that board and he will be looking to hold his position on the board until June 2024.
 - Commissioner Brian Morrison has expressed his interest in filling that position once the position is open.
 - Chair Johnson recognized Commissioner Hakeem Tijani, Baltimore City Commissioner who arrived at the meeting.
- Chair Johnson said that he gave the MCAAHC Commissioner’s a challenge to at least have one organization to come visit the BDM for a visit.
- Chair Johnson shared that the MCAAHC was birthed out of Morgan State University (MSU).
- He said that Senator Verda Welcome was a co-founder of the MCAAHC and was also alum of MSU.
- Professor Benjamin Quarles was a scholarly rock star who is posthumously a foremost authority and scholar on Frederick Douglass on the MSU campus who assisted Senator Welcome with what was then called the Maryland Commission on Negro History and Culture.
- Chair Johnson said that it was appropriate that the MCAAHC hosts its first public meeting on this campus.

- He said that as we approach the 60th anniversary on the March on Washington, Martin Luther King, Jr. received an honorary doctorate from Morgan State University.
 - On June 2, 1958, Chair Johnson shared that there are excerpts of Dr. King’s, “I Have a Dream Speech” at MSU.
 - Students of MSU heard excerpts of this great speech 5 years before Dr. King gave it on the mall.
 - Chair Johnson also shared that Malcolm X debated MSU Professor Dr. August Myer on Black Nationalism vs. Integration on March 28, 1962.
 - Vice Chair Johnson then turned the floor over to Executive Director Chanel Johnson.

Director’s Reports

Executive Director Chanel Johnson

Executive Director Johnson thanked Chair Johnson, the MCAAHC, and the public for allowing her to give her Director’s Report.

- She took the moment to recognize the MCAAHC staff member Ms. Taylor Means, Research Grant Specialist who will be working with the MCAAHC as well as the BDM.
 - Executive Director Johnson took a moment to recognize her small but mighty staff: Ms. Jan Lee, Director of Marketing; Ms. Sabriyah Hassan, Director of Programs; Ms. Shelly Holland, Chief Financial Officer as well as LeRonn Herbert, Administrative Manager of the BDM and the Special Assistant for the MCAAHC.
 - Executive Director Johnson shared that for years the MCAAHC worked on getting their operational budget increased.
 - The budget of the BDM went from \$600,000 to \$1.6 million as well as the increase of the MCAAHC’s African American Heritage Preservation Grant from \$1 million to \$5 million.

Director’s Report - October 2023

Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture/Banneker-Douglass Museum

Submitted by Chanel Compton –October 2, 2023

August & September -Visitation & Engagement

Channel	Followers/Subscribers	Reach/Views
Onsite Visitation	659	1,378
Website (BDM + MCAAHC)	–	5,090
Facebook	2,631	10,999
Instagram	1,977 (+1%)	1,121
YouTube	182 (+1%)	554 (+36%)
LinkedIn	172 (+14%)	95
Totals	4,962	19,237

Marketing & Communications Highlights:

- In August and the months leading up, BDM and MCAAHC supported the Caucus of African American Leaders' 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington, which was held on August 26, 2023. We provided support with marketing, graphics, social media, and press/media relations with the help of several volunteers, Marc Apter, Gabrielle Wilson, and Barbara Julius.
- In September, BDM hosted global visitors through our relationship with Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County.
- BDM hosted Christian Dose, an international writer from Germany, who was on assignment with German travel magazine *360° Nordamerika*.
- LeRonn Herbert provided a docent guided tour to guests of the Capital Region USA (CRUSA) Global Travel Exchange.
- A very big thank you is extended to our Summer 2023 Marketing & Communications interns: Zhuri Cannon and Derrick Yeboah!
- Jan Lee, Director of Marketing & Communications Director, is now designated as EEO Officer for the agency.
- LeRonn Herbert, Administrative Manager is also the Fair Practice Compliance Officer and ADA Coordinator for the agency.

Upcoming:

- Website merge for BDM and MCAAHC in progress; working with State of Maryland IT Portfolio manager
- Fall 2023 Marketing & Communications Internships
- Hiring Marketing Coordinator

Media Coverage:

- '25 Best Things to Do in Anne Arundel County, MD', *Travel Lens* (Sep 17, 2023). <https://www.travellens.co/things-to-do-in-anne-arundel-county-md/>
- '38 Best Things to Do in the DC Area This Week: H Street Festival, Oktoberfest at the Wharf, and DC Comedy Festival', *Washingtonian* (Sept 11, 2023) <https://www.washingtonian.com/2023/09/11/things-to-do-in-dc-september-11-17-2023/>
- '7 things to do in Annapolis in the next 7 days', *The Baltimore Banner* (Sept 28, 2023). <https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com/culture/things-to-do/annapolis-baygrass-music-festival-M36G45QM7RBSLE3MH5BALTAOEE/>
- 'Patrice Drago: Momentum from Art Walk continues in the galleries around Annapolis', *The Capital* (Sept 1, 2023) <https://www.capitalgazette.com/lifestyles/ac-ce-patrice-drago-column-sept3-20230901-wobinirc6zf4phqfmc2ulwol4m-story.html>
- 'Patrice Drago: The 33rd Annual Annapolis Art Walk is coming up, so plan accordingly', *The Capital* (Aug 3, 2023) <https://www.capitalgazette.com/opinion/columns/ac-ce-patrice-drago-august-gallery-annapolis-20230803-iy55bqwq5bhe7igc7o3pz4hobq-story.html>

The Gallery

THE CAPITAL GAZETTE.COM

Momentum from Art Walk continues

By Patricia Briggs

Summer doesn't end until the third week of September, and I plan to do one every last day of it. There will be plenty of time to head out for a summer excursion to coffee shops and galleries, flea markets and pop-up art events, your favorite ice cream spots.

The month promises to continue the excitement generated by last month's Art Walk, a success by every standard. You can create a front page of a national cultural, weekly cultural arts magazine, or visit and talk with locally celebrated artists and see artwork work by a nationally renowned artist and public art artist.

I encourage you to join what I hope is a meaningful and visible discussion with Myrtle Beach's vibrant current and historical art scene.

Stand there? I have to acknowledge that each gallery this month has something to offer. There's something to see in the art, the artist, and the context and collection of related members of our vibrant and thriving art community.

Whoever conceives you need, you will come away from the exhibit like the group with new perspectives, if not a new sense of momentum.

The Annapolis Art Alliance presents "So Good So Bad" by artist Robert Rauschenberg, Sept. 1-10, 10-5 p.m. at the Annapolis Art Alliance.

Presenting a group of artists through their work, including colorful, bold, expressive abstracts by Robert Rauschenberg, Sept. 1-10, 10-5 p.m. at the Annapolis Art Alliance.

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Hughie Lee Smith, "Warrior's Return," oil on canvas at Bannister-Douglas Museum



John M. Endow, "Three's a Crowd," oil on canvas at Annapolis Art Gallery



Karen Britton, "In Blue," acrylic on canvas at Myrtle Studios



J.G. Proulx, "Calmness in the Caribbean," acrylic on paper, 10x10, at the Annapolis Art Alliance



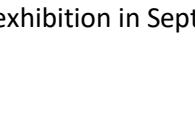
Warren Hyman, "Men O' War," spray paint, ink on canvas, Chesapeake Gallery at Maryland Hall



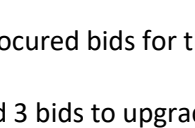
Alan Barry, "Creating a World," oil on canvas at J. Fine Art Contemporary



John M. Endow, "Three's a Crowd," oil on canvas at Annapolis Art Gallery



Holly Dugan, "Abstraction," acrylic on canvas at Main St. Gallery



Megan Lewis, "I Don't Know John Wayne," oil on canvas at Bannister-Douglas Museum



Lee Gordon, "The Bay," acrylic on canvas at Annapolis Art Gallery



Karen Britton, "In Blue," acrylic on canvas at Myrtle Studios



J.G. Proulx, "Calmness in the Caribbean," acrylic on paper, 10x10, at the Annapolis Art Alliance



Warren Hyman, "Men O' War," spray paint, ink on canvas, Chesapeake Gallery at Maryland Hall



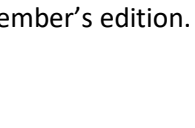
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Megan Lewis, "I Don't Know John Wayne," oil on canvas at Bannister-Douglas Museum

Paula through the end of October.

ANAPOLIS ART ALLIANCE continues the exhibition by MFAA artist Lee Gordon and Michael Schuppert through Sept. 26. Lee Gordon's work has been a photographic since he was a child, he spent his childhood in a room full of film and equipment, the possibility of digital photography. The medium in itself, which is a new experience or medium, allows the subject to be shown in a way that is not captured by the stream of consciousness captured by the stream of consciousness created by the artist.

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The Annapolis Gallery Association monthly column, *The Gallery*, features various pieces from *The Radical Voice of Blackness Speaks of Resistance and Joy* exhibition in September's edition.

Facilities and Administration

- **Maintenance work**-BDM has procured bids for the fixing of the HVAC system in the Mt. Moriah AME church or FY 24.
- **Security Camera** - BDM received 3 bids to upgrade the current security cameras. A selection will be made within the week.
- **MD Network** - BDM has upgraded the Comcast internet router and Software-Defined Wide Area Network device. BDM is currently working with the MD DOIT Team on a Statement of Work to procure Wireless Access Point devices (WAP). WAP devices are required to get Wi-Fi throughout the museum.
- **Office Clean Out** - NAPCO Group Incorporated removed and discarded items from the office space on the first floor, cleaned the carpet, added new ceiling tile and painted an office.
- **Volunteers:** 4 Volunteers gave a total of 18 hours.
- BDM Museum-several areas in the museum lights have gone out. New LED lighting is looking to be placed throughout the museum by vendor Chesapeake Lighting.

VISITATION

Visitor Groups	August
Other Group Visits	Crosswind Family Docent Tour, Mack Family Docent Tour, Isabella Chillcoat Group, The Seasholtes, Pro Tram, Hammond Harwood Museum, Heather Ersts-Visit Annapolis, Putmon Family, The Baileys, Sievers Family, Hudson Brown Family, Wakeman Family, Peace thru Culture, Idriss Family, Bartley Family 3, Matthews Family, Chair 10 Group, The Boyds,. 57 visitors.
Individual Visitors	543 visitors
BDM Events	BDM Juneteenth Program 60 visitors
Total Visitor	660 visitors

Visitor Groups	September
Other Group Visits	Providence Center, Pathways School, Artworks, Roger Mandell Group, Bowie High School, Leadership Anne Arundel. 188 visitors
BDM Events	Historic Annapolis/BDM "Constitution Day" 80 visitors "The Radical Voices of Blackness Speaks of Resistance & Joy" Closing program 42 visitors
Individual Visitors	408 Visitors
Total Visitor	718 visitors

August & September Programs

August 15th-17th

Art in the City: Banneker-Douglass Museum Youth Leadership Program in NYC!

From August 15th-17th young participants from BDM and HACA's after school program traveled to the borough of Brooklyn in New York City, where they worked with NYC based peers to complete an arts and culture project.

- The youth created a mural with the word "welcome" in Arabic, to not only beautify a previously graffiti-marred building front, but to serve as a symbol of unity and inclusivity in the wake of New York's ongoing migrant crisis.
- Additionally, during their time in city, the students fully immersed themselves in the rich arts and culture that NYC has to offer.
 - Participants attended the highly acclaimed Book of HOV exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum, dined at the world famous Juniors Restaurant and concluded their trip with a meditation session at the newly constructed Brooklyn Bridge Park.
 - This immersive experience was a collaborative effort between the museum, the **Brooklyn Arts Council**, **Masjid Abdul Muhsi Khalifah**, and the **Art So Brooklyn Youth Program**.
 - Students and volunteers were led by Maryland-based teaching artist **Nikki Brooks** and Brooklyn-based teaching artist **Ladie Ovila**.

- This experience was an extension of the inaugural BDM art and history after-school program, in partnership with the Housing Authority of the City of Annapolis, supported by Anne Arundel County and BGE.



BEFORE





SATURDAY, August 26th

March on Washington Re-enactment and Community Art Project

The 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington Maryland Commemoration, organized by the Caucus of African American Leaders (CAAL), Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC), Banneker-Douglass Museum, and the United Black Clergy hosted a two-day event in Annapolis, Maryland.

- The event included a March reenactment, a youth program, and a commemorative civil rights mural at Banneker-Douglass Museum led by artist Nikki Brooks.
 - On this bright and beautiful day, intergenerational participants, led by the Morgan State University Marching Band, gathered in the spirit of their predecessors to highlight the plight of marginalized communities around the nation while celebrating the beauty of our people.



Wednesday, September 13th

Constitution Day Panel Discussion

Banneker-Douglass Museum partnered with Historic Annapolis and the Center for Civic Engagement to host a Constitution Day program to the Maryland youth winners of the “We The People” contest.

- Students came from various parts of Anne Arundel County.
- A panel discussion, was moderated by Gilda Daniels, a University of Baltimore law professor and author.
 - Her book was based on the Constitution and Civil Rights Act.
 - The day was filmed and edited by Historic Annapolis and will be shared with Anne Arundel County Public Schools as a resource for their teachers' Constitution Day lessons.

Monday, September 25th

Reception, The Wiz

On the evening of September 25th, the Governor of Maryland and First Lady Moore gracefully opened the doors to their home that they so affectionately like to refer to as “The People’s House”, for a reception in honor of Broadway's *The Wiz*.

- The invitation was extended to youth from BDM’s afterschool program.
- The young people, chaperoned by Executive Director Johnson, Director Hassan-Ismail and HACA staff member enjoyed the affair.
 - Mr. LeRonn Fisher spent the evening hearing from Governor and First Lady Moore, the Hippodrome executives, performers, and creators of this hit play.
 - Award winning songstress Ms. Deborah Cox and reality television/music executive Mrs. Kandi Buruss were in attendance.
 - Programs like this are a part of the Moore administration’s promise to celebrate and amplify the arts throughout the state of Maryland.



SATURDAY, September 30th
Closing Reception and Artist Talk

On this artful day in Annapolis, visitors came together to bid farewell to the museum's year-long art exhibit: "The Radical Voices of Blackness Speak Joy."

- Aside from a final viewing of the exhibit, attendees also heard from some of the exhibit’s artists during the artist talk panel.
 - Artists in attendance included: Oletha DeVane, Jerrell Gibbs, Phylicia Ghee, Edward D. Ghee, Sr., and Wendel Patrick.
 - The event was moderated by Guest Curator and world-renowned gallerist, Myrtis Bedolla.

UPCOMING PUBLIC PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Program	
Wednesday, October 25th Year of Civil Rights Launch Event, Banneker-Douglass Museum	During this launch event, The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture will announce their plans to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act with a year filled with commemorative programming that will aim to educate Marylanders and visitors on our great state and its rich African American history and culture. Special guest speakers include: Governor Wes Moore, Dr. Vedet Coleman-Robinson and Dr. Edwin T. Johnson .
Thursday & Friday, October 26th & 27th 6th annual Quarles Conference, Morgan State University	In partnership with the Benjamin Quarles Institute located at Morgan State University, the Maryland Commission will present a scholarly lecture pertaining to this year’s conference theme: Lynching, Resistance and the Pursuit of Justice.

MCAAHC Financial Report Commissioner Reggie Turner

Commissioner Reggie Turner gave a financial report that:

- FY24 an appropriation of \$1.6 million was applied to the MCAAHC capital budget.
- The appropriation balance as of August 31st was \$1.4 million.
 - Once all permanent staff has been on boarded, the monthly expenditures will increase.
- Commissioner Turner shared that a FY 2023 Capital Grant was received through the Maryland Department of General Services of \$75,000.
 - \$55,000 is the remaining balance.
- He also shared that \$3 million was received FY24 Capital Budget through Maryland Department of General Services.
- Commissioner Turner shared that he and an accountant are working on the financials for the Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation.

MCAAHC African American Heritage Preservation Grant Report (AAHPG)

Commissioner H. Russell Frisby began his report by sharing that the AAHPG was designed to preserve Maryland's African American Heritage tourist sites.

- He shared that this year is a very historic year where up to last year, the AAHPG was \$1 million in scope.
 - A maximum allotment of \$100,000 could have been given at that time.
 - This year, the AAHPG has been increased to \$5 million where an allotment of \$250,000 can be given towards African American Heritage sites.
 - The bad news is last year there was approximately 40 applications submitted for the grant with an ask of \$5 million.
 - This year, the AAHPG has an excess of 100 applications with an ask of \$20 million.
 - The great news is that the AAHPG Committee has 10 members with Commissioner Frisby as president and Commissioner Phillip J. Merrill as vice president.
 - The committee is working in conjunction with the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) as well as the legislature on this process.
 - Each commissioner is given a number of sites to do an initial review.
 - The committee will be meeting November 8th and 9th to share their report for the MCAAHC Commissioners for their final recommendation.
- Commissioner Frisby asked that the public please remember that this is a heritage preservation grant and only fund historic heritage sites.
 - He shared that there are a number of heritage sites that get upset because they don't receive funding because they do not meet the qualifications for applying for the grant.
 - Commissioner Frisby asked the public keep this in mind as they consider this grant program.

Ancestral Remains Cemetery Research and Preservation Committee Report, Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene and Commissioner Elinor Thompson

Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene shared that she wanted to remind the MCAAHC and the public that the original name of the committee was the "Human Remains Committee."

- She shared that "human remains" sounds clinical but these individuals had real names, who worked, they love and they died.
- Commissioner Greene shared that these individuals were of African descent and were our ancestors.
- This is why the committee chose to change their name to the "Ancestral Committee."
- Commissioners Philip J. Merrill and Ada Pinkston are a part of this committee.
 - Commissioner Greene led in a libation ceremony before she gave her report.
 - The committee brought pictures of their ancestors and is also working with the Maryland Historical Trust and the Cemetery Preservation organization.
 - These organizations have identified ancestral remains that have been found in four separate cemeteries in four separate counties.
 - Soil has been collected from Twin Oaks Cemetery in Wicomico County where they individuals have not been identified.
 - The committee is taking on the responsibility of being family of these individuals who have not been identified.

Statewide Book Drive Report, Commissioner Kennedy Wilson

Commissioner Kennedy Wilson shared that she and Commissioner Jaelon Moaney serve on the Statewide Book Drive Committee.

- The committee has reached out to all 23 counties of Maryland as well as Baltimore City.
- In addition they have reached out to all county public libraries of which nine have responded back.
- Prince George's County, Caroline County, and Allegheny County have declined in being a part of this initiative.
- Ten counties have not responded where the committee has reached out to them with telephone calls in addition to emails.

- A couple of questions have been presented to the committee that the committee is seeking advice from the MCAAHC. The questions are:
 - ◆ How is the committee going to collect the donations after the book drive?
 - Commissioner Wilson said that since she placed as chair of this committee that she gave the date of February 29, 2024 as the last day to receive these donations.
 - ◆ What will be the arrangement of the pickup of these books?
 - Commissioner Wilson said that she doesn't have any problem picking up the books at the various counties.
 - ✓ The committee's next meeting has been set up at the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore, Maryland on Wednesday, November 8, 2023.
 - ✓ An email address has been set up for communications for the book drive at MCAAHCbookdrive@gmail.com
 - Deadline for the book drive is February 29, 2024.

Chair Edwin Johnson gave room to Commissioner Tijani that the Black Symposium will take place at Morgan State University Thursday, October 26th and Friday, October 27, 2023.

- The keynote speaker will be Mr. Charles Chavis.
- Students of MSU will be making a presentation on the African Diaspora.
- It is free and will be at the James Guilian College of Arts.

Executive Director Chanel Johnson shared that she sits on the Maryland 250 board and the Crownsville Hospital board.

- They are working on having an executive director where they will be working on the black experience in the State of Maryland.
- She shared that the black ancestors will be heard, respected and information shared to the public regarding those African Americans insane that were treated at the Crownsville Hospital.

Mr. Lou Fields, President of the African American Tourism of Maryland

Mr. Fields thanked the MCAAHC and the public for the opportunity to speak at the public meeting.

- He shared that in 1996 he and Mr. Stephen Pace founded this organization due to the gaps in information that was not shared between the State of Maryland, Baltimore County as well as Baltimore City.
- The information that the African American Tourism of Maryland would increase travel, visitation, and funding increasing the impact of African American history in the state.
- For 30 years, Mr. Fields has worked and produced many projects that have brought forth the awareness as well as the significance African Americans have played in the State of Maryland.
 - ◆ From those projects, March 10th was established as Harriet Tubman Day in the State of Maryland.
 - There has been a 20 year celebration of Harriet Tubman in the State of Maryland.
 - This led to the State of Maryland having a \$21 million dollar museum for Harriet Tubman.
 - Mr. Fields also was able to get Harriet Tubman established in Washington, DC.
- Mr. Fields shared that the prior to Covid as well as prior to 2000, the State of Maryland African American tourism sites struggled to be finance and to stay open.
 - ◆ Unfunded museums in Maryland survived on missions, donations, and grants.
 - ◆ Funding was cut.
 - ◆ Staffing was cut back.
 - ◆ Donations were cut back
- He shared that the State of Maryland has three African American funded museums. They are:
 - 1) Benjamin Banneker Historical Trust and Park-Baltimore County.
 - Banneker-Douglass Museum-Anne Arundel County.
 - 2) Reginald Lewis Museum-Baltimore City.
- Mr. Fields said that the problem is that there are 25 African American sites but only five are funded by the state.

- ◆ Many are still underfunded to this day and are struggling.
- ◆ \$42 million was set aside for assistance in helping organizations throughout the State of Maryland but none of the tax dollars went towards African American institutions.
- ◆ Mr. Fields with his organization has established the 2023 Maryland Office of Tourism report.
 - It is 28 power packed pages of information that is very resourceful.
 - He asked that everyone review the document that is on line.
 - Mr. Fields also asked to share this document with one's local senator, delegate, as well as the governor.

Dr. Travis Parno, Acting Executive Director of Collections of the Ancestral Research and Preservation Committee, St. Mary's City

Dr. Travis Parno shared that he works at St. Mary's City, a State of Maryland supported city where St. Mary's was Maryland's colonial capital.

- *He shared that St. Mary's City is a living history museum, is 1.5 hours away, have over 800 acres of property, 2.5 miles of shoreline, curate 6.5 million artifacts and have identified 300 archeological sites.*
- *Dr. Parno said that one of the sites that he was recognizing in his presentation was the 1660's Chapel that was built by the Jesuits.*
 - ◆ *This chapel was a moment for religious tolerance in the State of Maryland.*
 - ◆ *Ahead of building this chapel, remains were found as a burial ground for the colonial capital on the land.*
 - *300 individuals were found buried on that land around the chapel.*
 - *62 individuals were exhumed and studied by Historic St. Mary's City and the Smithsonian Institute of Natural History.*
 - *Genetic evidence is being extracted from those burials and continuously studied with cutting edge technology determining where these individuals came from before they arrived to Maryland.*
 - *Dr. Parno shared that this leads up to an archaeological project called Chancellor's Point.*
 - ✓ *It was brought to their attention that archaeology was on that site in the 1970's.*
 - ✓ *As the land eroded, artifacts showed up and became present.*
 - ✓ *It showed that people had been living at the site going back to the 1600's.*
 - ✓ *The land passed through several owners who farmed the land but there is a lot that is still be discovered.*
 - *Two burials was found on this site.*
 - ❖ *A tree fell down on one of the bodies and fracture a skull.*
 - ❖ *A tooth was also found that a tooth was shaved down into a narrow point to be used as a weapon.*
 - ❖ *The style of how the tooth was used goes back to customary practices that go back to West Africa.*
 - ❖ *Dr. Parno said that the organizations shared that they had several options:*
 - ❖ *1) The remains would not be disturbed.*
 - ❖ *2) archaeology being done after it was found that the individuals were of African descent (one was a female buried in her 20's with light frail build the other was a male with a strong build with both pointing towards the bay as a potential sign of the symbolism experiencing a "new day" or "the rising sun."*
 - ❖ *Dr. Parno said that the organization is steadily preservation and the evaluation of this site with curriculum development to grades K-12 as well as graduate school studies.*
 - ❖ *Commemorations will be done to celebrate, preserve, respect and share this great history.*

Mr. Edward Deane, Lower Shore Preservation Cemetery-Silent Cemetery Dorchester, Maryland

Mr. Deane thanked Commissioner Elinor Thompson for the opportunity to speak at the public meeting.

- He shared that the reason everyone was at the meeting is because of their love for history.
- Mr. Deane said that his organization is a 501 c3 that preserves historic cemeteries.
- *He shared that he was born and raised in Dorchester County and then moved to Wicomico County where he has lived for 58 years.*
- *Mr. Deane publicly promised that he was going to do something after hearing that his ancestor's remains were disappearing into the Chesapeake Bay.*
- *Four years later with over 2 dozen projects, the organization made a strong statement in short period of time.*
- *The organization's mission statement can be complex but is summed up into 3 words: awareness, education, and action.*
- *The awareness to this subject matter has placed the organization on several newspaper publications, magazine articles and television programming.*
- *Lower Shore Preservation Cemetery is looking to do onsite hands on educational programming,*
- Ms. McLeod came to the meeting to share some information so that the MCAAHC has a knowledge base of a situation that they later may take position on.
- There is an urgency taking place with our HBCU's that was thought to be resolved a year and a half ago but is still there.
- A battle is taking place over due process of the constitution in how HBCU's are treated.
 - ◆ It took 15 years to get a law passed to make amends for the discrimination of all of the HBCU's but it took one year to break the law.
 - ◆ Ms. McLeod passed the mic to Ms. Sharon Y. Blake, spokesperson who gave a presentation.

Chair Johnson then called for a motion to adjourn the MCAAHC Public meeting. Commissioner H. Russell Frisby made a motion for adjournment, it was then seconded by Commissioner Hakeem Tijani and the motion carried.

The public meeting was adjourned at 1:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

LeRonn Herbert, Special Assistant