

Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture

Public Meeting Minutes

Monday December 5, 2022

Banneker-Douglass Museum

84 Franklin Street

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The following Commissioners were in attendance: Maya Davis; H. Russell Frisby; Vice Chair Dr. Edwin T. Johnson; Janice Curtis Greene; Cheryl McLeod; Elinor Thompson; and Chair Rev. Dr. Tamara E. Wilson.

The meeting was called to order at 11:11 a.m. by Chair Rev. Dr. Tamara England Wilson.

Proof of Public Notice

Accepted by general consensus.

Welcome

Chair Rev. Dr. Tamara England Wilson thanked the public for attending the public meeting and then turned the floor over to Vice Chair Dr. Edwin T. Johnson to give the formal welcome.

Vice Chair Dr. Johnson wished everyone a very Merry Christmas, Feliz Navidad, Happy Kwanzaa, Happy Ramadan, as well as Happy Holidays to everyone.

- He thanked the public and commissioners for coming to the MCAAHC Public Meeting at the Banneker-Douglass Museum.
 - Vice Chair Dr. Johnson shared that he hoped the public and leaders who came to the museum had the opportunity to take a look at the new exhibit, “The Radical Voices of Blackness Speaks of Resistance and Joy” as well have taken in the new state of the art renovations that have been made in the Mt. Moriah African Methodist Episcopal Part of the Church.
 - He shared that the MCAAHC Commissioners are superheroes where they preserve, promote, protect defend and illuminate Maryland’s African American History & Culture.
 - Vice Chair Dr. Johnson admonished the public to make the museum the place to visit during the holidays.
 - He shared that African American History is a gift that keeps on giving.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Rev. Dr. Tamara England Wilson asked for a motion to be made in accepting the minutes of the October 3, 2022 meeting. Vice Chair Edwin T. Johnson, shared that he had one change that needed to be made. He said that on page 6 of the minutes, under the Black Symposium section, the title should be changed from the “Louis Diggs Center for Racial and Justice” should be change to “DuBois Diggs Center for Racial and Justice.” Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene accepted the minutes with the minor correction. Vice Chair Dr. Edwin T. Johnson seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Special Presentation

Ms. Abigail Cipparone, Administrative Manager to Congressman Kweisi Mfume, made a presentation from the U.S. Capital regarding Bill H.R. 8971.

Congressman Kweisi Mfume and Senator Ben Cardin partnered on this initiative where the bill confers that a National Council on African American History & Culture within the National Endowment for the Humanities be established to preserve, protect, and promote African American History & Culture across the United States of America.

- A council of 12 individuals will be appointed by the President of the United States with the Senate’s approval and consent.
- Ms. Cipparone, shared that the members of the council will be individuals that are:
 - Selected as private citizens of the United States of America.

- Will be recognized for their broad knowledge and expertise and commitment to the preservation and celebration of African American History & Culture.
 - Are not employees of the Federal Government and have established records of distinguished service, scholarship and creativity.
 - The council will have a chair and a vice chair position.
 - Each council member will be appointed to a 5 year term.
 - These positions are paid positions based on hours worked.
 - Yearly annual report will be produced each year sharing the great work that has been done.
- Ms. Cipparone thanked the MCAAHC for being the first commission to support this endeavor on a federal level.

Director's Report

Executive Director Chanel Johnson Director's Report for the months of November-January. Director Johnson shared this great detailed and information shared below.

The Banneker-Douglass Museum was recognized on the front pages of the Baltimore Sun as well as the Washington Post on "The Radical Voices of Blackness Speaks of Resistance and Joy." She also took a moment to recognize her small and mighty staff.

BDM Visitation

- The BDM's public engagement has continue to garner a great following.
 - Month of October
 - October BDM onsite visitation: 347 visitors
 - October BDM website visitation: 1,000 sessions
 - Month of November
 - November BDM onsite visitation: 562 visitors
 - November BDM website visitation: 1,256 sessions

BDM Social Media Engagement

- Facebook: 1,986 Likes (+1.3%), 2515 Followers & 12,765 (+96.6%)
- Instagram: 1,811 Followers (+5.8%)
- YouTube: 158 Subscribers (+8.9% from previous month)
- LinkedIn: 51 Followers; 562 Post Impressions

BDM Media Coverage

- The Radical Voice of Blackness Speaks of Resistance and Joy
- Capital Gazette (November 23, 2022)-Annapolis artist, Tawny Chatmon is a voice of "Black Resistance and Joy at the Banneker-Douglass exhibit"
 - Capital Gazette (November 15, 2022)-PHOTOS: <https://www.capitalgazette.com/photos/ac-cn-tawny-chatmon-banneker-douglass-exhibit-vg-20221115-zwkpihxlczddpk2m577gmt-photogallery.html>
 - Baltimore Fishbowl (November 8, 2022)-Bmoreart's Art Picks: November 8-14 <https://baltimorefishbowl.com/stories/bmorearts-picks-november-8-14>
 - Eye on Annapolis (Oct. 29, 2022)-Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County Has GREAT Suggestions for November' <https://www.eyeonannapolis.net/2022/10/visit-annapolis-anne-arundel-county-has-great-suggestions-for-november/>

BDM & Chanel Mentions

- Capital Gazette (November 1, 2022)-"On Maryland's 158th anniversary of emancipation, Annapolis recognized as slave port "site of memory" <https://www.capitalgazette.com/news/ac-cn-annapolis-county-has-great-suggestions-for-november/>
 - Bay Weekly: <https://bayweekly.com/tubman-statue-bigger-than-life/>

- Baltimore Fishbowl: <https://baltimorefishbowl.com/stories/sculpture-of-harriet-tubman-by-baltimores-joyce-j-scott-to-be-displayed-at-banneker-douglas-museum/>
- BmoreArt: <https://bmoreart.com/2022/08/bmorearts-picks-august-30-september-5.html>

Special Projects

- End of the Year Appeal Development Committee for Marketing and Communications.
- Update Business Cards & Signature Blocks
- Continued Marketing, Communications, and Sponsorship Management for the The Radical Voice of Black Speaks of Resistance and Joy Exhibition.
- BDM/MCAAHC Website Merge
- 2022 Annual Report

Building Report:

- Number of Volunteers: 9
- Total Volunteer hours: 68 hours per month
- Mt. Moriah AME Church compressor repair purchase order has been submitted.
 - Cost for replacement is \$16,000.

BDM Capital Repairs & Upgrades

- Installation of new pine wood flooring
- Restoration of pine wood flooring
- Upgrade of sound system
- Installation of new track lighting
- Installation of new exhibit walls
- Installation of 98-inch TV Monitor

Up Next

- MCAAHC Symposium Promo - October 27-28, 2022 at Morgan State University.
- “The Radical Voice of Blackness Speaks of Resistance and Joy” Exhibition - November 9, 2022, 6:30-9:00 p.m.
- “The Radical Voice of Blackness Speaks of Resistance and Joy” Reception - November 10, 2022, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
- Kwanzaa Celebration, Saturday, December 10, 2022, 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
- Banneker-Douglass Museum After School Program, January-June 2023, 2 Days a week

Annual Appeal

- Annual Goal \$200k
- Raised: \$58,041
 - Supporters Like You Make Our Work Possible
 - Donate at www.bdmuseum.maryland.gov/donate

Officer’s Reports

MCAAHC Chair Rev. Dr. Tamara England Wilson

Chair Rev. Dr. England Wilson gave her report where she shared that she was proud of what she saw happening at the Banneker-Douglass Museum. From walking into the museum, to the installation of the new exhibit, she was blown away and impressed with what all was done to the museum next level.

Chair Wilson thanked Executive Director Johnson and her staff on behalf of the MCAAHC body as to the great work that they have done.

- Chair Wilson recognized as well as thanked Executive Director Beryle Hall, President of the Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation for all that she and the foundation have done in raising funds towards the BDM's Donor's Reception.
- Chair Wilson shared that she and the MCAAHC Commissioners have made history where the MCAAHC has been invited to join Governor-Elect Wes Moore for his inauguration ceremony at the front of the Maryland State House grounds on Tuesday, January 18th.
 - The public is invited to attend as well.
- The MLK Day of Service will be taking place across the State of Maryland.
 - The MCAAHC Commissioners will be joining the BDM at the museum with the Legislative Black Caucus for their MLK Day of Service on Monday, January 16, 2023 at the Banneker-Douglass Museum.
- Chair Wilson shared that the MCAAHC was able to share the African American Heritage Preservation Grant with 13 candidates throughout the State of Maryland.
- She also said that the MCAAHC is also transitioning towards their independence in the State of Maryland.
 - The MCAAHC and the BDM will be procuring staff, preparing a budget, and attending the State of Maryland Legislative Session that takes place in January.
 - The commission will be going to the Legislative Session to ask for more funding to secure and make sure that the MCAAHC as well as the BDM are on par with other agencies across the State of Maryland.
- Lastly, Chair Wilson has been asked to chair the March on Washington Commemoration for the State of Maryland.
 - She said that she has reached out to several MCAAHC Commissioners and has opened the door for the public to volunteer for the many committees that are under this celebration.

MCAAHC Vice Chair Dr. Edwin T. Johnson & Commissioner Herbert Frisby- Finance Committee & the African American Heritage Preservation Grant Report

Commissioner H. Russell Frisby shared that the FY 2022 financial goal of the MCAAHC is to raise \$200,000.

- To date, the MCAAHC has raised \$58,000 with the goal of reaching \$90,000 by the end of the year.
- Commissioner Frisby thanked the Arts Council of Anne Arundel County, PNC Bank, the Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation, BGE, as well as others for their contribution.
 - Commissioner Frisby admonished the commissioners and public to continue to give towards the great work that the BDM doing so that it can continue to further its causes.

Vice Chair Dr. Edwin T. Johnson brought greetings on behalf of the African American Heritage Preservation Grant Committee (AAHPGC).

- Vice Chair Dr. Johnson asked that the MCAAHC Commissioners look over the proposed questions for the African American Heritage Preservation Grant for FY 2024.
 - He shared that the funding, moving forward, has been increased from \$1 million to \$5 million for the AAHPG.
 - Some discussions were had by the committee on how the AAHPGC could make things more transparent, user friendly, efficient, and affective.
 - The commission has developed and drafted four new questions as to how this would help the committee to do their work more expeditiously.
 - The four questions asked were:
 - Have you previously submitted applications for the AAHPG under this or another project name?
 - If yes, enter the number of years that application has been submitted and whether project was awarded and how much was the award?
 - Have you completed the projects that have been awarded and if not, list the status of the project and the remaining award balance?
 - If you are uncertain about the balance, then contact the MCAAHC or the Maryland Historical Trust prior to filing and additional application.
 - Have you received additional grant funding from another source?

- If yes, please disclose the amount and the source as well as the additional funding already awarded.
- Vice Chair Dr. Johnson shared that these questions are being asked to find out if there is a need as well as to also find out if the grant applicants are already receiving funding from another area.
 - Vice Chair Dr. Johnson as well as the AAHPGC would like to keep things equitable with all applicants so that there isn't duplication of funding.
 - Commissioner Frisby, thanked Vice Chair Dr. Johnson for these questions because as the grant grows in monetary value, more applications will come in where certain criteria need to be met to keep and maintain the scope of how the AAHPG works.
 - Chair Wilson asked Executive Director Johnson to share information regarding the new hires that will go along with the AAHPG.
 - Executive Director Johnson shared that the MCAAHC is working with the Maryland Department of Budget and Management to hire a grant specialist as well as a contract specialist for the \$4 million grant funding increase.
 - Commissioner H. Russell Frisby asked for a motion to be made in accepting the four questions, with any corrections, to be sent out as an email to the MCAAHC Commissioners to vote on and be presented to the public that look to apply for the AAHPG. Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene seconded the motion and the motion carried.
 - Vice Chair Johnson acknowledged the MCAAHC that the AAHPG Committee has secured funding for Worcester and Washington County.
 - 13 out of 33 projects were awarded from this grant cycle.

Vice Chair Dr. Johnson took a moment to recognize Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene who was acknowledged as the Official Griot for the State of Maryland from Governor Larry Hogan.

Committee Reports

BDM Committee-Commissioner Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene

Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene, Vice Chair of the BDM Committee she shared that she is so happy to report on the work of this committee.

Commissioner Greene shared that the BDM Committee is preparing for the 2022 BDM/MCAAHC Symposium

Theme: The Pursuit of Organizational Health, Healing and Wholeness in the African American Community

Date: Thursday and Friday, October 27th and 28th.

Location: Historic Morgan State University Student Center Ballroom in the 200 Suite Room

There were two days of powerful information given by the MCAAHC's partners for this affair.

- She publicly thanked Vice Chair Dr. Johnson for his tremendous support in making the connection and collaboration with the DuBois Diggs Center for Racial Justice, Benjamin Quarles Humanities and Social Science Institute at Morgan State University.
- Commissioner Greene also thanked Mr. George Collins, President of the International Association of American Fire Fighters for his attendance and help with this great affair.
- A youth component that was combined in the symposium.
- The breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals were provided by Sodexo Caterers of Morgan State University.
- Commissioner gave a special thanks to the University Student Center staff and all of the guest speakers for this affair.
- She shared that the panel discussions were well received and any challenges that were had, was immediately resolved without any guests noticing anything.

Registration

Pre-registration totaled 108 individuals but not all attendees checked their name upon arrival.

- There were 45 individuals who registered on site that attended both sessions.

- The Benjamin Quarles Humanities and Social Science Institute registration sheet had 138 registrants.
 - A conclusion was made that in reviewing these registration sheets that there actually was a significant number of attendees there rather than registered.
 - It was deduced that there were well over 200 students.
- The sessions were well received by the public and students.

Challenges:

Some pre-registered attendees checked their names on the pre-registered list, some signed in and some did both making it difficult to count.

- Dr. Brewer's registration volunteers for October 28th were not totally aware of the joint activities.
 - They were only concerned with the Panel Discussions.
 - The link they were given for onsite registrations was not working.
 - They were told to see me and Dr. Brewer did not arrive until lunch.
- The registration volunteers on the lower level of the Theater left before the panel discussions concluded so that attendees who entered at that level in the afternoon did not sign-in and are omitted in the count
- Most of the Symposium Adult attendees were pre-registered; however, using joint sign-in sheets for the October 28th activities makes it difficult to really distinguish who attended what.
- Four workshop presenters were unable to present and the committee was not notified until the 2 weeks prior to the event. One presenter dropped out the night before the event.
- Because of transportation issues, the expected high school attendees did not attend.
- There were occasions that workshop presenters had no audience, especially the workshop geared to youth.
- There weren't any high school youth for the campus and admissions tour.
- Many MCAAHC Commissioners were present for the Black Symposium.
 - Thoughts and strategies are being worked on to engage the commissioners the more.

Workshops & Panel Discussion:

Although attendance was light the workshops were well received.

- The flexibility and patience of the presenters is to be applauded.
 - The presenters were excellent and had on time relevant materials facing the challenges and changes African Americans are facing.
 - Commissioner Greene was unable to attend the panel discussions; however, she received two paper evaluations that showed an excellent response.

Positives:

- The MCAAHC was able to work way under budget due to consolidation of some processes that was not needed.
- Additional lunches that were available from the Black Symposium on Thursday was given to the homeless students of Morgan State University.
 - Commissioner Greene is looking at meeting with Vice Chair Dr. Johnson to find out how the MCAAHC can assist with helping facilitate a need that the Morgan State University students have.
- Several MCAAHC Commissioners were recognized for their additional volunteer assistance in making the symposium a great success; these individuals were: Commissioner Steven X. Lee, Commissioner Adi Nkwonta, Commissioner Cheryl Mc Leod, Commissioner Wali Gill, Chair Rev. Dr. Wilson and Vice Chair Edwin T. Johnson.

Commissioner Maya Davis

Commissioner Maya Davis reported that the PR Committee has developed an evaluation survey on how the MCAAHC can come up with better way of doing public relations strategy planning as well as how to meet the needs of the commission's audience, their constituents from each of the commissioner's counties as well as the City of Baltimore, Maryland.

- She passed out the questionnaires to the MCAAHC Commissioners and asked if Vice Chair Dr. Johnson would read them aloud.

Commissioner Cheryl McLeod

Commissioner McLeod shared that she has been attending the various activities and events that the MCAAHC is involved with.

She has been attending:

- The Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation hearings across the State of Maryland.
- The Emit Till Alert System meetings, where within this system, there are many African American Leaders that are a part of this process.
- Additionally, she is on the March on Washington Program Committee.
 - Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene shared that she would like to participate on the March on Washington Committee.

Commissioner Elinor Thompson

Commissioner Thompson said that she has been doing anything that she can to support the MCAAHC and would also like to participate on the March on Washington Committee.

New Business

Staff Report-Ms. Jan Lee, Director of Marketing

- Ms. Jan Lee, Director of Marketing for the Banneker-Douglass Museum gave a report on the MCAAHC and BDM's website. Additionally, she is on the March on Washington Program Committee.
- She shared that both web sites are being merge for the ease of use now the museum has an independent status from the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives and is now under the auspices of the MCAAHC.
 - She is working with the Maryland Department of IT and a marketing consultant where they are looking to have version of the website changes readily available by MLK Day on Monday, January 16th.
 - Vice Chair Dr. Johnson shared that he will be connected Executive Director Johnson and Director Lee to Dr. Mark Burns, a Morgan State University Professor of Geography, who will supply students to volunteer to help map the projects of the MCAAHC.

MCAAHC Protocols

Chair Wilson shared to the MCAAHC and the public that the MCAAHC Commissioners have been appointed and confirmed by the Governor.

- She and Vice Chair Dr. Johnson talked about the role of an MCAAHC Commissioner while sharing a power point slide.
 - The role of an MCAAHC Commissioner is to:
 - 1) Attend MCAAHC regular, annual, and special meetings.
 - Per the MCAAHC bylaws, must attend at least 50% of the regular meetings per year to be in good standing.
 - **Note: Failure to attend two consecutive meetings is cause for dismissal.**
 - 4) Serve on at least one MCAAHC committee (standing or special) Mandatory
 - 7) Support the Banneker-Douglass Museum by:
 - Assisting with publicizing exhibitions and programs.
 - attending BDM events
 - facilitating a program in one's area of expertise,
 - securing subject-matter experts for programs, and
 - Being willing to provide remarks.
 - 8) Participate in fundraising efforts.
 - This information was shared with the MCAAHC Commissioners that were present as well as shared on video before the public so that all MCAAHC

Commissioners have access to this objective information and recommit themselves to the charge and the work of the commission.

Chair Wilson then called for a motion to adjourn the MCAAHC Public meeting. Commissioner Herbert Frisby moved that a motion be made to adjourn the public meeting. Vice Chair Dr. Edwin T. Johnson seconded and the motion carried.

The public meeting was adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

LeRonn Herbert, Special Assistant