

Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture  
Public Meeting  
Minutes of February 4, 2019

A public meeting was held on Monday, February 4, 2019 at the Banneker-Douglass Museum, 84 Franklin Street Annapolis, Maryland 21401.

The meeting was called to order at 11:04 a.m. by Chair Dale Glenwood Green. The following commissioners were in attendance: Iris Leigh Barnes, Lynn Bowman, Maya Davis, Vice Chair Rev. Dr. Tamara England Wilson, H. Russell Frisby, Malcolm Funn, Janice Curtis Greene, Marilyn Hatza, Edwin T. Johnson, Melvin Kelly, Steven X. Lee, Cheryl McLeod, Elinor L. Thompson, and Reggie Turner.

**Proof of Public Notice**

Accepted by general consensus.

**Welcome**

Ms. Chanel Compton, the Executive Director of the MCAAHC and the Banneker-Douglass Museum (BDM), greeted and thanked the public for coming to the Banneker-Douglass Museum: Maryland's Official Repository of African American History and Culture joining the MCAAHC for its public meeting. She shared that Senator Verda Welcome Freeman Hall, the space that the public meeting was being held in, was closed for almost a couple of years, due to repairs to the roofing and walls on the mezzanine level. Director Compton said it is great to see that this area is now open celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MCAAHC featuring Laurence Hurst, the MCAAHC's first artist in residence as well as eight other African American Maryland based artist.

**Minutes of December 4, 2018's Meeting**

Chair Dale Green called for a motion to accept the minutes of the December 4, 2018's MCAAHC meeting. Commissioner H. Russell Frisby made a motion to accept the minutes with the amendments requested. Commissioner Melvin Kelly seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Director's Report**

Ms. Chanel Compton, the Executive Director of the MCAAHC and the Banneker-Douglass Museum (BDM), began her report by introducing her staff. She first recognized LeRonn Herbert, Special Assistant for the MCAAHC and Administrative Manager of the BDM, where she said that he recently received a promotion and is the longest tenured employee of the BDM where he has served both entities for eight years. Director Compton also recognized her new staff: Ms. Sabriyah Hassan, Director of Programs; Ms. Schillicia Howard, Curator of Collections; and Mr. Robert James, Director of Marketing and Communications.

Director Compton said that the vision for 2018 was to: bring new MCAAHC Commissioner's and BDM staff on board, advocate for State of Maryland budget increases and initiatives for the MCAAHC and BDM, reach out to the public for more donor and grant initiatives, build more educational outreach and public programming, as well as provide comprehensive teacher training.

Director Compton also shared that the long term goals are to: establish an endowment for the MCAAHC and the BDM, increase the \$1 million African American Heritage Preservation Grant, update BDM's permanent exhibit, as well as restore and update the BDM's collections room. One can find more information about the year of 2018 by reviewing the annual report that is posted on the museum's website.

Director Compton shared that on February 14, 2018, the MCAAHC and the BDM collectively established the Bicentennial Celebration of Frederick Douglass where Governor Larry Hogan proclaimed that this was the year of Frederick Douglass. For the entire year, the MCAAHC and BDM dedicated programs, events, and exhibits celebrating and amplifying the birthday and legacy of Frederick Douglass throughout the State of Maryland.

Director Compton said that in conjunction with the Bicentennial Celebration of Frederick Douglass, Ms. Sabriyah Hassan devised a youth conference that was totally governed, produced and directed by youth. Young people throughout the State of Maryland came to the BDM sharing their gifts, talents, thoughts, and ideas on looking at what Frederick Douglass did as a social crusader and seeing how do we build and grow as a society from there.

Director Compton shared that the BDM has produced a “Douglass Reading Room” in the temporary gallery room sharing thoughts of what would Frederick Douglass’ home be like if he were alive today. Greg Morton, Guest Curator and owner of Frederick Douglass’ Fells Point created this exhibit showcasing three of Frederick homes. These homes were: Frederick Douglass’ Fell’s Point home, his Anacostia home, and his Highland Beach Summer home.

Director Compton shared that the BDM is broadening its digital archives through the collection’s department for one to do extensive research based on the collections and visual resource materials the museum has to offer. She also said that the BDM has partnered with the Frederick Douglass Initiatives (FDI) organization by working with Kenneth Morris: the great, great, great, grandson of Frederick Douglass. The FDI published one million copies of the autobiography of Frederick Douglass and the museum co-sponsored this incentive by purchasing 300 books and giving them out to youth that visit the BDM over the year.

Director Compton said that in June 2018, the BDM had a summer program called, “Frederick Douglass Comes to Life” where Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene came as a Harriet Tubman reenactor with a Frederick Douglass reenactor. On that day, youth performers, presentations, quilt making stations led by Dr. Joan M.E. Gaither and others from the MCAAHC and public gave of their time and talent working with the public on this festive day.

Director Compton shared that every year the MCAAHC works with the Maryland Humanities Council in which the MCAAHC gives an award to two students. This year two students gave a rap performance on Harriet Tubman. These students also performed at the “BDM Community Day” affair where they did very well.

Director Compton said that the BDM was able to reach the highest tracked visitation of 9,043 individuals since 2011. She said that the museum currently has a staff of four individuals where in the past the museum had seven individuals. Next year she looks for stronger and greater visitation numbers. She also said that the MCAAHC and the BDM received: a Maryland Heritage Area award for the work of producing the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial programing, the Cross Botany Award from St. Mary’s County for their “Struggle for Freedom” exhibition for enslaved African American’s that lived there as well as the MCAAHC and the BDM received the 2018 Maryland Office of Tourism Leverage Partnership Award for the Bicentennial Celebration of Frederick Douglass.

Director Compton said that the MCAAHC and the BDM was offered the opportunity to be a part of a workforce development partnership training where the BDM worked with the National Trust of Preservation and the National Museum of African American History and Culture. All groups came together focusing on community building, funding raising, and stewardship.

Director Compton said that in 2018, the MCAAHC awarded 12 African American Heritage Grants throughout the State of Maryland. She took a moment to share that with the disparity of funding, only 1% of funding goes towards the preservation of African American institutions. In the future, the MCAAHC looks to increase their funding to \$5 million a year with its African American Heritage Preservation Grant. Director Compton said that there are a lot of deserving applications who should receive funding from this grant but the grant is only but so large at this time. Applying for the African American Heritage Preservation Grant is a very competitive process and the MCAAHC hopes to be able to provide financial support hopefully as the grant funding increases over the years.

Director Compton admonished the public to come out on Saturday, February 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and join the MCAAHC and the BDM as they have their culminating affair for the Year of Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Celebration at the BDM. Governor Larry Hogan; Kenneth Morris great, great, great, grandson of Frederick Douglass and many other dignitaries will be there to join in this great occasion. Last but not least, Director Compton asked that the public join the MCAAHC for its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on June 29, 2019 at the BDM. She said that the BDM will be celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on February 24, 2019.

### *MCAAHC Chair Dale Green*

Chair Dale Green began his report by sharing that it was a great endeavor to celebrate everyone in this great year of 2019.

Chair Green took a moment to recognize a few dignitaries that were present at the meeting; they were: Honorable Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford; Mr. Winston Wilkinson, Chief of Staff, Governor's Office of Community Initiatives; Mr. Kweisi Mfume, President of the Board of Regents at Morgan State University, as well as Rev. Dr. Francis Draper,

Chair Green said that this is his eighth year and final term on the MCAAHC that ends June 2019. He also said that his term will consist of two MCAAHC public meetings where the next meeting he will chair will take place in Baltimore City and the last meeting will be on the Eastern Shore. Chair Green said that it has been a very rewarding experience serving as a senior member, in years served, of the prominent MCAAHC. He said that he was originally appointed by Governor Martin O'Malley and then reappointed by Governor Larry Hogan. Chair Green said that he served as an MCAAHC Commissioner, Vice Chair and now Chair of the MCAAHC. He said that he was also honored to be the third professor from Morgan State University to serve as an MCAAHC Chair following the great legacy of one of the founders of the MCAAHC: Dr. Benjamin Arthur Quarles who was a professor from Morgan State University.

Chair Green said that this year, the State of Maryland will be celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MCAAHC. He said that it was very important to reflect upon five decades, 50 years of golden history of the MCAAHC—a half a century of preserving Maryland's African American History & Culture. Chair Green said that the MCAAHC is the first African American Commission of the United States of America founded in 1969. He said that today, the commission calls special attention to Senator Verda Welcome who is founding member who established the MCAAHC and Dr. Benjamin Quarles who are the two founding members of the MCAAHC.

Chair Green said that the MCAAHC represents one of nine commissions in the whole United States where the MCAAHC is a 21 seated commission that covers all counties in the State of Maryland including Baltimore City. He also said that the MCAAHC is the only commission that has six public meetings a year; oversees the Banneker-Douglass Museum, Maryland's official African American Museum; and has a \$1 million dollar African American Heritage Preservation Grant. He said that the commission is very proud of these elements. Chair Green said that the African American Heritage Preservation Grant is part of the legislation that was passed in 2010 of which the commission oversees and was reauthorized in 2015 the Hogan-Rutherford Administration in perpetuity. He said that the MCAAHC is a joint partner with the Maryland Historical Trust.

Chair Green said that last year Governor Larry Hogan gave a proclamation proclaim that, "2018 is the Year of Frederick Douglass" where the State of Maryland, the MCAAHC, and the BDM recognized and celebrated Frederick Douglass' 200 birthday. He shared that it was the BDM formerly known as the Mt. Moriah AME Church that Frederick Douglass gave his dedicatory speech. Chair Green said that the State of Maryland received numerous awards at the local, national, and international levels.

### *MCAAHC Vice Chair Rev. Dr. Tamara England Wilson*

Vice Chair Rev. Dr. England Wilson shared that she it was her pleasure to report in the very room named after Senator Verda Freeman Welcome one of the founders of the MCAAHC as well as Dr. Benjamin Quarles where the commission celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. She shared that the theme this year is: "We Rise." Vice Chair England Wilson said that the theme is simple, powerful, and elegant all at the same time. She said the goal is to elevate the mission of the commission which is to discover, document, preserve, collect and promote African American heritage.

Vice Chair England Wilson said that in staying true to the theme of "We Rise" a team of 13 noted African American scholars were assembled from around the State of Maryland to help with this great celebration. She shared that the Honorable Kweisi Mfume is one of the distinguished chairs who is a part of the MCAAHC's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. In addition to the various MCAAHC public meetings that will take place across the State of Maryland, Vice Chair England Wilson said that there will be new components introduced concerning the programming that will be taking place at the BDM as well. She said that in May the MCAAHC will kick off the "We Rise" Youth Conference where youth from the ages of 13-17 from across the State of Maryland will engage in approaches to real world situations youth face. The conference

will be held at the BDM by the youth and the BDM staff that will consist of history, art, culture for building communities with innovation and social justice.

In addition to this, a “We Rise” After School program has been initiated for the Forest Park High School in Baltimore City where they will explore and research African American history. The students are working to design a photo exhibition that will premiere at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the MCAAHC. Vice Chair England Wilson said that there will be a Verda’s Place exhibition that begin March 8<sup>th</sup> and run through December 28<sup>th</sup>. This café themed exhibition is designed to show places where Senator Welcome was not unwelcomed. The exhibit will feature bars, night clubs where male legislators could attend but she could not. Photographs and archival documents will be on display in this exhibit. The exhibit will also share why Senator Welcome was a beloved figure in Maryland. At the exhibition opening exhibition reception Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene will be premier as Senator Verda Freeman Welcome.

Vice Chair England Wilson said that while the commission has the BDM as the State of Maryland’s Official Repository of African American History and Culture, the commission also has a “Museum on the Move” traveling exhibit of artifacts from the BDM’s collections. She shared with the public that if one is interested in a traveling exhibit from the museum to be spotlighted at your church, organization or museum, please contact the BDM for more information. Vice Chair England said that while the commission has the BDM as the State of Maryland’s Official Repository of African American History and Culture, the commission also has a “Museum on the Move” traveling exhibit of artifacts from the BDM’s collections. She shared with the public that “Verda Place” exhibit will be a part of this initiative. If one is interested in a traveling exhibit from the museum to be spotlighted at your community imitative, organization or museum, please contact the BDM for more information.

Vice Chair England Wilson shared that on June 29, 2019 the BDM will be hosting the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the MCAAHC. She said that the commission will be highlighting all of the achievements of the MCAAHC Commissioners, talks will be shared about the legacy of past commissioners and supporters. Vice Chair England Wilson admonish all to come to this event that one does not want to miss.

Vice Chair England Wilson said, in finishing her report, which many may be asking how the commission is going to pay for all of these events. She shared that the MCAAHC has an initiative to raise \$500,000 to not only to support theses affairs but to also help provide funding that goes towards the BDM’s programs and events. Vice Chair England Wilson asked that the public support the commission’s endowment to further cause of supporting the MCAAHC’s endeavors. She shared that the MCAAHC has sponsorship levels of: Verda Welcome level of \$100,000, Scholar level of \$75,000, Trailblazer level of \$50,000 and even more.

Chair Dale Green took a moment to recognize the Honorable Kweisi Mfume and Dr. Tony Francis Draper, CEO of the Afro Newspaper who both joined the meeting.

## **Report of Commissioners**

### *Commissioner Herbert Frisby*

Commissioner Frisby gave a report that as Chair of the Administrative and Finance Committee, the committee is excited about the “We Rise” program but that the program needs some financial legs to stand on. He said that the board had an all-day retreat speaking of the financial infrastructure raising funding for the MCAAHC and the BDM. Commissioner Frisby said that any funds raised would go and be secured under the Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation for they are a 501 (c) 3 organization where the MCAAHC needed an organization to produce financial transactions. He shared that the MCAAHC and the BDMF will be working closely to make this a seamless process to deposit funds, handle financial transactions and dispersements of gifts and other business endeavors. Commissioner Frisby said that he and Director Compton met together and have spoken with the BDMF executives about setting up a financial plan handle the \$500,000 they will be receiving.

In finishing his report Commissioner Frisby asked his fellow commissioners that they join with him in giving \$250 each towards the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Celebration that will be closing with a great celebration on Saturday, February, 9, 2019.

*Commissioner Marilyn Hatza*

Commissioner Hatza shared with Chair Dale Green, the MCAAHC Commissioners, and the public that she was yielding her time to Commissioner Iris Leigh Barnes.

*Commissioner Edwin T. Johnson*

Commissioner Edwin T. Johnson gave his report that he did an interview on WBAL's Black History Month segment in keeping with the celebration on the accomplishments and legacy of Senator Verda Freeman Welcome. He shared that the segment will air sometime in the month of February.

*Commissioner Cheryl McLeod*

Commissioner Cheryl McLeod gave a report sharing information on the "Undesign the Red Line" exhibit that is being showcased at the Howard County Library. She said that this is an interactive exhibit where individuals-blacks talks about the racism they faced in the past 1930's which led to unfair treatment in purchasing homes. The exhibit was so popular that it has been extended from the month of January to the month of February.

Commissioner McLeod took a moment to recognize Dr. Joan M.E. Gaither of which she said that she has a fantastic quilt exhibit that Dr. Gaither produced at the Arena Players in Baltimore, Maryland. Commissioner McLeod said that the Arena Players is the oldest and only working African American Theatre in the United States of America.

*Commissioner Elinor Thompson*

Commissioner Elinor Thompson began her report sharing that she has been working with The Equal Justice Initiative Committee that is connected to the works of the Maryland Lynching Memorial project. She also shared that she is working on programming with the Universal Lodge in Annapolis, Maryland. Commissioner Thompson said that the Universal Lodge is on the National Registrar of Historic Places. She said that collectively she and the Universal Lodge are working to have the Stanton Center-a former Rosenwald School, the community at large, and the Banneker-Douglass Museum to come together and develop programs for the youth.

*Commissioner Steve X. Lee*

Commissioner Steven X. Lee began his report by asking how many individuals who attended the meeting were native Marylanders? He then asked the public, "How many of you have forefathers that served in the American Revolutionary War?" Commissioner Lee shared that hundreds of free African American men served in the American Revolutionary War. He then asked the question, "Where any of you taught this in your public Maryland Education?" Commissioner Lee said that he was not taught in his school where it appeared that African Americans did not exist in this history. He said that the Maryland Legislative Black Caucus kicked off this year, a bill Commissioner Lee introduced last year, to recognize African Americans that fought in the American Revolutionary War. He said that the bill was introduced and approved in the house and is now moving forward to the senate to be approved. Commissioner Lee ask each person in attendance to stand up and preserve our own African American History. He said that if we don't, no one else will.

*Commissioner Reggie Turner*

Commissioner Reggie Turner began his report by sharing that he on Saturday, February 2, 2019 he attended a panel discussion in Washington County on a book entitled, "From James Brown to John Brown" by Author, Ed Maliskas. This program delved into the lost history of John Brown's Farm. Many individuals shared their memories of dancing to James Brown on John Brown's farm. From this event, the Henderson Family, a prominent family in Hagerstown, interest was sparked where a major family gathering will take place with many artifacts to be shared because of Mr. Maliskas' book. Commissioner Turner said that this was incorporation with the Washington Council's Art Museum. He also said that the MCAAHC has met with the African American Historical Association of Western Maryland.

*Commissioner Lynn Bowman*

Commissioner Lynn Bowman brought greetings from Alleghany County. She shared that at the last commission meeting in October, she spoke of the Brownsville Project in Western Maryland where the application for this program was successful and that Frostburg State University was appreciative of the support they received from the MCAAHC.

Commissioner Bowman said that Frostburg State University is looking to do an installation project should all of the proceedings of the various paper work be worked out.

Commissioner Bowman said additionally she spoke about the Brownsville workshop where various individuals associated with this program have been diligently working to put together a traveling exhibit that will be able to go colleges and universities. She shared that the first two projects from this workshop traveled to her home state of New Jersey. The project will be coming back in the spring to Western Maryland where the Frostburg Students and the public are trying to encourage the public about learning what happened to the Brownsville Community.

Commissioner Bowman shared that there is a new Ancestry.com/Dr. Henry Louis Gates production called, "Rail Road Ties" that can be found on YouTube. She shared with the public that it is a must see program.

#### *Commissioner Iris Leigh Barnes*

Commissioner Iris Leigh Barnes, Ph.D. began her report by sharing that she and Commissioner Marilyn Hatza have been very busy with the initiative to commemorate and recognize the sights of memory for racial terror lynching's in Maryland. She said that this program is mostly led by the Maryland Lynching Memorial project. Commissioner Barnes said that some have heard of this project taking place in Anne Arundel County, Montgomery County, and the Eastern Shore but most recently Harford County has join this initiative and formulated a committee. The Harford County Group will have its first public meeting on March 27<sup>th</sup> at Harford Community College. Commissioner Barnes said that the group will speaking to the public in determining how they would want to recognize individuals that have been lynched in that area. She said that this initiative has been growing across the State of Maryland and if anyone is interested she will be glad to provide information on who to speak with concerning this endeavor.

#### *Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene*

Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene shared that besides being a reenactor of Harriet Tubman, Juanita Jackson Mitchell and Verda Welcome she occasionally gets to be herself. She reported that the Griot Circle of Maryland and the National Association of Black Story Tellers will be designating 2019 as: "The Year of Mother Mattie Carter Smith." On February 10, 2019 Mother Mattie Carter Smith would have turned 110 years old. Commissioner Greene said that Mother Mattie Carter Smith is the founder of The Griot Circle of Maryland, the founder of the National Association of Black Story Tellers, the founding member of the Arena Players, the founding member of Big Sisters and Little Sisters of Baltimore, the founder of the radio program at Morgan State called "Griot for the Young at Heart" and so much more. Commissioner Greene said that there will be a free Birthday Celebration for Mother Mattie Carter Smith at the Church of St. Michaels and All Angels Episcopal Church on St. Paul Street in Baltimore, Maryland. The event will begin at 3:00 p.m. Mother Mattie Carter Smith was also Baltimore and State of Maryland's Official Griot and Black Story Tell. Commissioner Greene shared that Mother Mattie Carter Smith was her friend, mentor, and was glad that she followed in her footsteps.

#### *Commissioner Maya Davis*

Commissioner Maya Davis began her report sharing that she is reporting on a collaborative effort between she and Commissioner Edwin T. Johnson. After a few short months they both have been successfully able to incorporate 1,000 members of the United States Colored Troops into the Maryland State Archive's (MSA) Database. These soldiers were buried into the Loudon Park National Cemetery (LPNC) in Baltimore, Maryland. Currently she and Commissioner Johnson are working on identifying the national figures from the United States Colored Troops (USCT) from Maryland. In addition to this she and Commissioner Johnson are working on getting additional funding to have a facility housed at LPNC. In finishing her report, Commissioner Davis shared that the public is able to search the USCT by name and regiment at the MSA.

#### *Commissioner Melvin Kelly*

Commissioner Melvin Kelly gave his report sharing that on February 21, 2019 his was invited to speak at the Rotary Club of Glen Burnie to present information on the Queenstown Rosenwald School as well as the community association that is connected next to the school.

### *Commissioner Malcolm Funn*

Commissioner Malcolm Funn gave a report that he is working with a group from St. Peter's Episcopal Church uncovering the slave history in Southern Calvert County as well as working on conversations regarding racism and privilege. He also said that on January 27, 2019 there was a great discussion held at one of the Calvert County Schools where the Calvert County Board of Education came hearing the public's response on how things are going in dealing with racism and privilege in the Calvert County School System.

### *Commissioner Marilyn Hatza*

Commissioner Malcolm Funn gave an extended report to Commissioner Iris Leigh Barnes that there is a bill that has been introduced by Delegate Pena Melynck regarding the Maryland Lynching Project. She said that it is a bill that's designed to formulate and introduce a Maryland Truth and Reconciliation Project. Commissioner Marilyn Hatza said that there is a bill hearing taking place on February 12, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. if the public would like to hear more information about House Bill 307 and testify for support about this endeavor.

Commissioner Hatza said that there is another project that she and Chair Dale Green are working concerning the Confederate Monuments. This is a newly formed group where they will be looking at the four Confederate Statues that was removed from Baltimore, Maryland. Commissioner Hatza shared that this group is made up of cultural heritage organizations and arts organizations.

## Presentations

### *Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford*

Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford thanked Chair Green and the MCAAHC for having the opportunity to speak at the MCAAHC's public meeting before the commission and public. He wished everyone a Happy African American History month. Lt. Governor Rutherford shared with the public as well as Commissioner Lee who spoke about African Americans that were a part of the American Revolutionary War that Crispus Attucks and many others were a part of this great African American history as soldiers of the American Revolutionary War as well. He said that Washington, DC's history was, at one time, a part of Maryland African American History until the 1800's.

Lt. Governor Rutherford shared that he and Governor Larry Hogan's administration provided capital funding in the State of Maryland's budget for the Arena Players. He gave this information after he heard some of the committee reports share information concerning the historical significance of the Arena Players.

Lt. Governor Rutherford thanked the MCAAHC and the Banneker-Douglass Museum for providing 50<sup>th</sup> of African American History and Culture highlighting the achievements and the important contributions African Americans have made not only for the great State of Maryland but nationwide as well. He also said that the public knows that African American History is known in all four parts of the State of Maryland. Lt. Governor Rutherford said that Dr. Henry Louis Gates, great, great, great, grandmother's home is preserved and located in Western Maryland where she bought her home out of slavery and Dr. Gate's grew up there. He also mentioned that Moriasis Walls was a place in North Brentwood where Cab Calloway and Duke Ellington performed is preserved by the State of Maryland as well as Deale Island was a place where black farmers and black shippers have connections back to Liverpool England. Lt. Governor Rutherford also shared that State of Maryland has the Hill District on the Eastern Shore where the rich African American History that is the longest, continuously occupied first free black community in the United States of America. He shared that the public knows about the rich history of Benjamin Banneker, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet Tubman as great Marylanders who have made a difference in the state and the world.

Lt. Governor Rutherford was proud to say that when he was Secretary of the Department of General Services under Governor Erhlich's Administration, he was honored to be a part of this collective group that saw to the extension of the Banneker-Douglass Museum. He shared that since this time, he has come to a number of celebrations, commission meetings and looks forward to coming to various programs and events in the near future. Lt. Governor Rutherford shared that on behalf of Governor Hogan and his administration, they would like to thank the MCAAHC and the BDM for all that it is doing for the great State of Maryland. He said in closing his report that he, Governor

Hogan and his administration supports the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the MCAAHC as well as the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the BDM.

*The Honorable Mr. Kweisi Mfume, Chair of the Board of Regents of Morgan State University*

The Honorable Mr. Kweisi Mfume shared that he was grateful and thankful for the opportunity to speak before the MCAAHC and the public. He said that he felt like many, that were in the room, were like family where has worked through many struggles and victories that were obtained with many that were at the public meeting. He took the moment to thank Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford for his leadership and kindness to all. Mr. Mfume thanked Chair Green for his leadership not only on Morgan State University's campus but also the leadership he has shown in leading the Maryland Commission on African American History & Culture. He also took a moment to recognize Commissioner H. Russell Frisby, who is like a brother to him and Commissioner Edwin T. Johnson where they are Omega Psi Phi Brothers. Mr. Mfume thanked Mr. Winston Wilkinson, Chief of Staff of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives and Board of Regent for Morgan State University. Last but not least he recognized Dr. Tony Draper, who is the CEO of the Afro Newspaper that joined the MCAAHC's public meeting.

Mr. Mfume said in his report that in doing the mathematics, Maryland has 23 counties where every county is responsible for \$21,739. He shared that each county has a tremendous responsibility of taking care of its people and making a tremendous difference. Mr. Mfume said that it would be advantageous during this celebratory time that the commission reach out to Grand Master Emanuel Stanley of the Free Masons who has been predisposed of the various celebratory programs that the MCAAHC. He said that Grand Master Stanley is an historian in his own right and would be a great ally.

Mr. Mfume said that Senator Verda Welcome was very dear to him. He said that in 1978, she and Dr. Welcome, her husband, welcomed him into their home because they heard that he wanted to obtain a political position. Mr. Mfume said that Senator Welcome asked him where he got his funny name from. He said that he established it on his own. After four hours of Senator Welcome, Dr. Welcome and their daughter listening to him, Dr. Welcome said that she was going to endorse and support Mr. Mfume when she said that she knew no one else will. Because of her support, help, and encouragement, 15 months later Mr. Mfume was voted onto the Baltimore City council. He said that the vote was close by three votes and was called the closest race in the State of Maryland.

Mr. Mfume thanked Commissioner Janice Curtis Greene for calling out Mother Mattie Carter Smith's name. He said that she was doing exceptional griot work in Baltimore City while he and others were trying to get WEAA, Morgan State University's Television Station on the air. It happened and Mr. Mfume invited Mother Mattie Carter Smith to do her griot talk where it would last for over 20 years.

Mr. Mfume said that in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the MCAAHC and in celebration of the African Americans in the State of Maryland, he said that it is important to note that this history was made possible by great people who have suffered, endured, and survived three centuries of slavery and oppression, deprivation, degradation, and denial. He shared that these individuals did not have degrees, like we have today, or were they able to speak the King's English but while their bodies were broken and bent from labor work they did in the field, they never stop believing and praying yet for a future unknown. Rather than to curse their God they gathered their life and looked inward. Mr. Mfume said that they did so on the vast plantations of Southern Maryland and the tobacco fields of the Eastern Shore. He shared that the Africans laid their bodies down for generations upon generations of African Americans to build off of what they started to get to where we are today. Later through the lens of those African Americans, generations of black Americans could see American through trouble years through Jim Crow and legal lynching's. Mr. Mfume said that through the years of the grandfather clauses and the literacy testing's where if you were black, one would have to tell how many bubbles are in a bar of soap to be deemed intelligent enough to vote. Yet they were still considered second class citizens.



Mfume said that blacks went on to join the war to integrate the military and abolish slavery. They gave rise to the Civil Rights movement that would reshape Maryland and segregate society. He said that the question was not have African American's come a long, long, way but that they had a long way to go. Mr. Mfume said that the continuing question is not what will we do when we get there but the path will we live. He said there wasn't any single layered path to follow. Mfume said that we have Democrats, Republicans, and Independents, educated, uneducated, rich or poor. He said there will never be a single path but Booker T. Washington gave one of greatest speeches in history and Tuskegee University where whites listened in astonishment as he spoke on self-sufficient living. Mr. Mfume said that Booker T. Washington said in his speech, "Cast your buckets down black people." Meaning if one works in the fields, work in the fields. If one works in the mines, work in the mines but wherever you are black people must start working and building their own life. Mr. Mfume said that we are not separate from American History we are a part of American History were we do our part. He said that the significant work the commission is doing is a part of the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives today. Mr. Mfume said that many ethnic groups have followed the MCAAHC and developed commissions. He said having challenges that are faced with ethnic groups is not new but what we must do is work our approach to these differences matters most.

*Reverend Alvin Hathaway, Pastor of the Historic Union Baptist Church in Baltimore City*

Reverend Alvin Hathaway, Pastor of the Historic Union Baptist Church in Baltimore City, thanked the MCAAHC for the opportunity to speak to the commission and the public about creating the first African American Neuroscience Institute in the State of Maryland. This development will be in conjunction with the John Hopkin's Federal School Library Institute for Brain and Development. He shared that each of us has singularly or jointly looked at precision medicine. Rev. Hathaway asked that the public look at precision medicine due to the challenges of our health care systems, the prolonged effects of the health of African Americans, as well as the rise of diabetes that affect African Americans in our country. He shared that one of the major challenges that we have to eliminate is the disparity of research. Rev. Hathaway said that research is the place where we leverage the playing field. He said that we find that there is funding for: cystic fibrosis, sickle cell anemia, and other illnesses but when it comes to funding for illnesses for African American, there can be a lack of funding. He said it is his and other's hope, his and other's desires to create in Baltimore City, the nation's first African American Neuroscience Research Institute to create a balance as well as fosters positive change of research study on the African American community.

Chair Dale Green, called for a motion to adjourn the MCAAHC meeting. Commissioner Edwin T. Johnson made a motion that the MCAAHC be adjourned. The MCAAHC Commissioners unanimously seconded and the motion carried. The public meeting was adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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LeRonn Herbert, Special Assistant