



**Memorials Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, February 17, 2022
City Council Chambers
Fredericksburg, VA

The Memorials Advisory Commission met Thursday, February 17, 2022, in the Fredericksburg City Council Chambers.

Commission Members Present: Nancy Moore, Michael Spencer, Pauline Felder, Blanton Massey, and John Lyles.

Guests: Sara Poore, President & CEO of the Fredericksburg Area Museum (FAM), and M.C. Morris, Assistant Director of Tourism for the City of Fredericksburg.

Commission Members Absent: Jervis Hairston

Call to Order: Chair Nancy Moore called the meeting to order at 4:01.

Approval of Minutes: Michael Spencer moved to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2021, meeting. John Lyles seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Old Business:

Status of Slave Block Corner Interpretation/hiring of diversity staffer by Fredericksburg Area Museum:

- Sara Poore stated FAM has the slave auction block. It is currently displayed with a partially blocked view due to obscenities painted on it. The museum is planning the permanent exhibit to be completed by 2024.
- Sara reported that the first round of interviews for the African American History Curator have not been fruitful. The position has been re-posted and Sara said there are promising applicants.

Report on various community efforts to present Black history, and the role of the Commission:

- Sara Poore announced that FAM will set a committee to establish organized conversations within the community regarding various community organizations' efforts to present Black history in the region. Members of the Commission discussed the importance of transparency

and open communication with local citizens, so that the citizens would know where to go for information regarding how to support the community's efforts. The first committee meeting will be held in April; meetings will be open, and the City Council will be updated quarterly.

- The Commission and Sara Poore discussed the roles of both the Commission and FAM in the interpretation of the slave block corner. Everyone agreed that further clarification is needed as it appears that the roles of the two organizations have changed. Nancy Moore stated that she would contact City Manager Tim Baroody to obtain clear guidelines as to how the allotted \$250,000 is to be spent.

Mary Washington Monument and Caretaker's Cottage update:

- Michael Spencer stated that updated information on the Caretaker's Cottage would be available by February 22.
- The Commission discussed the current process for the addition of new panels in the city, noting that it is managed by Kate Schwartz, Historic Resources Planner.

New Business:

Visitor Center updates:

- M.C. Morris discussed the success of the dedication of a new panel at the Dorothy Hart Community Center on February 10, 2022. The panel honors the graduates of the Walker Grant Class of 1950 and their organized protest at being denied entry to the community center through the front door. The event was covered by the media, including NBC Channel 12 in Richmond.
- M.C. announced that the Visitor Center is working with FAM and others within the community to update the African American history brochures and other media. Nancy Moore stated that the Commission would like to be involved in the project.
- M.C. also stated the old Visitor Center video has not been shown since the beginning of COVID. The new Visitor Center video is still in production, and is approximately 80% completed, with the goal of completion by the end of March. She described the video as an introduction to Fredericksburg that includes information about arts, history, recreation, food, etc. The more specific historical information will be provided by the local museums.
- M.C. clarified that the video was paid for by the Economical Development and Tourism department, and none of the \$250,000 allotted by the City Council for the interpretation of the slave block corner was used.

Election of Officers

- Nancy Moore agreed to continue as Chair, Michael Spencer will continue as Vice Chair, and Pauline Felder will continue as Secretary.
- Nancy noted that Betty Massey and Tina Morris have both left the Commission. She added that they should be recognized for their time on the Commission.
- Nancy stressed the need for new members.

Pauline Felder moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 pm. John Lyles seconded the motion, and by unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pauline Felder". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Pauline Felder