



The Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs

Conference Call/Virtual (COVID-19 protocols)

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Monday, February 6, 2023

Meeting Minutes

I. Commissioner Attendance:

Donna Abbott	Member	N
Sherry L. Ayers	Madam Chair	Y
Claude A Bowen	Member	Y
Peter Brooks	Member	Y
Kerry Hawk Lessard	Member	Y
Tiara Thomas	Vice Chair	N
Stanley Thompson	Member	Y
Guy Wells	Member	Y

GOCI/MCIA Staff:

E. Keith Colston, Director Ethnic Commissions/Admin. Director of MCIA
Cheryl Madigan, Project Coordinator – Ethnic Commissions of GOCI
Christina Poy, Administrator Director of APAA & SAAA

Guests:

Paul Browne, Drew Shuptar-Rayvis, Cheryl Doughty, Amber Neely, Leah Noble, Karigan T., Stephanie Sperling, Megan Crayon, Michelle Swann, Jaylonnie Booth

II. Call to Order and Welcome Remarks – MCIA

Madam Chair Sherry Ayers called meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

III. Invocation: Commissioner Kerry Hawk Lessard

III. Guest Presenters:

a. Maria Day, Sr. Director of Special Collections, Conservation & Library Services – MD State Archives maria.day@maryland.gov

She provided an update on the Maryland State Archives Indigenous Records project. Last year they received a grant with the Maryland Heritage Areas and it focuses on one area, which is called the State of Maryland. It is located at the Central and Lower Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay and relates to Dorchester, Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset counties. There are two paid intern positions that will be competed. This information is posted to the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs website. Deadline for applications is March 15, 2023. Also, MSA will have temporary funding for a part-time Oral History position. This person will be working directly with her and Megan Crayon to further their goals of allowing the preservation of indigenous voices to become a part of their Indigenous Records project. Ms. Day is working with Leah Renzi from the Maryland State Department of Education - Social Studies program. They are developing a teacher training workshop. They are starting to find individuals from various communities to come and be presenters and to be compensated to help train teachers about perspectives on indigenous cultures. They are starting to get a sense of what the agenda might be and a sense of the timing and location. Time commitment for the internships is actually a full time position during the summer. The location of this is an in-person opportunity in Annapolis. There is a possibility that it could be slightly part-time and spread out longer if the person has the ability to do that. They would start as classes end, or a little before part time, and then work more hours in the summer, and then maybe a little into the fall. This is somewhat flexible because it's a grant

funded opportunity. The Oral Historian does not necessarily have to have a degree or specific education tied to it. This is more about experience and ability to be a good interviewer and other qualities.

b. Kari Sprengeler – Cultural Resources Local Programs Lead – MDOT
k.sprengeler@mdot.maryland.gov

She provided updates for the Cultural Resources Section of MDOT-State Highway Administration. They are finalizing their archaeological monitoring report for the Maryland 5 Point Lookout Cemetery in St. Mary's County. This report will be sent soon to the Commissioners. The comment period for the I495 and I270 Manage Lane Surveys has ended and they are preparing to finalize those plans. They are working on initiating some non-invasive archaeological work at the Montgomery Poor Farm. This will consist of drone based Lidar survey, which is used to make high resolution maps. Lidar maps can be used to look for certain archaeological features without having to disturb the ground surface without having to do any digging. Later they will undertake additional ground penetrating radar surveys at the Morning Star Cemetery. GPR allows them to look for things like burial shafts and other features without disturbing the ground surface. Tribal groups with an interest in these studies and the Commissioners will soon see the reports on these findings. They are planning to update their consultation procedures with Federally and State recognized and other tribal groups. She is hoping to send out letters and maps to the Commission and to tribal groups that they consulted with around the States and the non-resident federally recognized tribes as well, who are mostly in Oklahoma and New York. These letters will consist of possible proposed changes to consultation areas, making calls as necessary, for people who don't have email. This is basically to start a discussion with all groups. How are their consultation procedures working? Would they like to change groups, areas of interest or topics of interest that they would like to be consulted on. Commissioner Lessard asked Ms. Sprengeler, who are the federally recognized tribes with whom she works with on this project? She will provide the commissioners with a list.

c. Dr. Maria Sprehn, Ph.D., Anthropology Coordinator & Lynne Bulhack – Montgomery College –
maria.sprehn@montgomerycollege.edu

Dr. Sprehn gave a brief presentation on Montgomery College and them moving beyond land acknowledgements. They would like to partner with Maryland's native communities, and are hoping to find two people to come and work with them. They would meet four times via Zoom. They don't have any recommendations as of yet, but they have lots of ideas, exhibitions, courses, artwork, events, events, collaborations. They would like the community to join them to come up with these recommendations together and from the start. They do have a little funding, which would be a \$500.00 honorarium for each one. They are trying to finish this by August of this summer. So again, this will consist of four Zoom meetings with the Decolonizing Community of Practice before August and then some work on refining the recommendations that will be given to the college. Commission Lessard asked, what are the intentions in taking decolonization from just a buzzword, which is often misuse or underused and really make it meaningful for the native people? Dr. Sprehn wants this to be decided by everyone on the committee before making a statement. She also informed Madam Chair Ayers that she would like these two individuals to join in February, if possible.

d. Dr. Zachary L. Singer, Ph.D., State Terrestrial Archaeologist – Maryland Historical Trust / Maryland Dept of Planning

Dr. Singer wanted to reach out concerning the 2023 Annual Field Session in Maryland Archaeology and send everyone an invite to this. This will be held at the Chapel Branch West Site near Denton, Maryland. You will travel on Smith Landing Road to get to the site. This will run from May 19, 2023 to May 29, 2023, which includes weekends. The venture is between the Maryland Historical Trust Archaeology Program and the Archaeological Society of Maryland. The purpose of the field session is the train lay persons in archaeological methods, and teach Maryland's pass through hands-on involvement while making meaningful contributions to the study of Maryland archaeology. This is open to the public and Maryland's Indian people are invited to participate in the field session. Dr. Singer provided an update Wye Island Ossuary. So on January 25, 2023 he met with Dr. Matt McKnight, who is the Chief of Archaeology for the Maryland Historical Trust / Maryland Dept of Planning and they held a meeting with the MCIA Archaeology Subcommittee to discuss the erosion of Wye Island Ossuary into the White River and the sandbags that have been falling for some time (which were placed there about ten years ago). MHT-MDP and MCIA subcommittee plans to visit this site on February 23, 2023.

- e. **Dr. Troy Wiipongwii, Ph.D., Matthias Leu and Zach Conrad – William & Mary Global Research Institute and Maryland Dept of Planning twiipongwii@wm.edu, mleu@wm.edu and zconrad@wm.edu**

They presented their Indigenous Food Sovereignty Research Project. They are working on to ensure that they're engaging with tribal communities, Urban Indian communities, tribal nations or any other type of indigenous organizations. To make sure that the data they're collecting falls under appropriate and respectful data collection protocols. They are forming an Indigenous Advisory Council, which includes a representative appointed from each Nation and community. The council will work directly with the research team to better understand community food interests, provide general demographic information and provide on-the-ground insight on tribal lands that could potentially be used for agricultural purposes. The I.A.C. includes representatives from the Baltimore American Indian Center, Native American Lifelines and all federally-recognized tribal nations in Virginia. They are seeking membership from Virginia state-recognized tribal nations and all North Carolina tribal nations. They will have a food literacy and food drive program on February 8, 2023 at the Baltimore American Indian Center from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Dr. Wiipongwii and an indigenous chef from Virginia Tech will be cooking and demonstrating how to cook some local sustainable produce while talking about the cultural relevance of these foods and simultaneously handing out produce to community members in need. Madam Chair Ayers asked how many members are you looking for, for the Council? They would like one person each tribal community. They do have honorariums that they would provide for each of the three years for sitting on the council and providing feedback as well as help to help them understand what the tribal data protocols should be. They are not sure if there will be group meetings or that they will meet with them individually. Commissioner Lessard her interest in continuing her support for this project.

IV. Administrative Report – Administrative Director E. Keith Colston:

Director Keith Colston sent out 226 emails, attended 15 meetings, 1 onsite visit and 3 presentations since the last meeting that was held in December of 2022. He is looking forward to connect with Chief Michael Morabito, Tribal Chair Natalie Proctor, Chief Norris Howard and Chief Clarence Tyler. He will ask them who would be the point of contact for those availability to share or comment concerning the information on tribal enrollment process, tribal council process, tribal constitution, tribal leadership process, etc. He provides PowerPoint presentations on information concerning the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs, whether its information on a certain project or initiative that they may be working on. He has provided the most current COVID-19 statistics, which are, Confirmed Cases = 1,349,167, Testing Positive = 9.76%, Total Testing Volume = 24,271,173, Daily Testing Volume = 7,571, Confirmed Deaths = 16,035, Probable Deaths = 276, Current Hospitalized = 477 (Adults-466 – Pediatric-11), Acute Care = 415 (Adults-405 – Pediatric-11), Intensive Care = 62 (Adults-61 – Pediatric-1). You can visit coronavirus.maryland.gov for this information. This reporting does not reflect the numbers for Native American Indians or Alaskan Natives. Director Colston informed everyone that there are 19 pieces of legislation before the General Assembly and would encourage everyone, including the commissioners to go the General Assembly's website to view this information.

V. Governor's Office of Community Initiatives Updates:

Director Colston provided the information of Governor's Office of Community Initiatives senior management are no longer with us, which are, Executive Director Steve McAdams, Chief of Staff Winston Wilkinson and Senior Executive Director Patrick Lally of the Governor's Coordinating Offices.

VI. Motions: Approval of Minutes:

Motion	1 st	2 nd	Vote	
Approval of the Minutes for the December 12, 2022 Meeting	Peter Brooks	Guy Wells	6Y-0N-0A	

VII. Committee Reports:

- a. Advisory Committee – No updated report provided.
- b. Educational Committee – No update report provided.
- c. Health and Mental Health Committee – Commissioner Lessard submitted a report.
- d. Archaeology Committee – Commissioner Bowne submitted a report.

- e. Budget and Finance Committee – No updated report provided.
- f. Economic and Social Welfare Committee – Commissioner Brooks submitted a report.
- g. Working Group – No updated report provided.
 - a) Historical Sites and Tourism
 - b) COMAR Regulations for Maryland Indian Status

VIII. Old Business

a. Petition Update:

Director Colston informed everyone that they do have three individuals for the genealogist, but is unable to provide their names because it hasn't been discussed with them yet. Commissioner Bowen has agreed to reach out to these individuals. Once they have chosen this person, this will make the 5th and final member of the RAC (Recognition Advisory Committee). This person will review the petition and then the RAC will review all their findings, and they will provide their recommendation to the Commission and then MCIA will decide if they want to forward or not forward it the Governor.

b. American Indian Heritage Day

Director Colston will like to schedule a meeting with Port Discovery representatives.

c. Amendment of MCIA bylaw

Madam Chair Ayers stated that the change was to hold the election of officers in the month of December, instead of March. This was voted on and approved at our last meeting in December.

d. Announcement of December elections and new Vice Chair

Madam Chair Ayers congratulated our new Vice Chair Tiara Thomas and Madam Chair Sherry Ayers will continue as Chair.

e. Strategic Planning 2022

Director Colston is going to wait for the completed minutes from the SPS meeting before commenting.

f. Annual Report

Director Colston has not completed the Annual Report. He will need to wait for final reporting before posting to the website.

IX. New Business:

a. Transition of new administration

Communications Director Maureen Regan is no longer with us.

b. Strategic Planning Session 2023

Madam Chair Ayers announced that this year's theme will be "We Are Here". She feels that is appropriate with the new administration. It will remind people that we exist and that we have a voice.

c. Open Discussion

No comments.

X. Public Announcements on future Community Events:

- a. Commissioner Kerry Lessard announced two events from the Native American Lifelines – 1) National Native HIV Aids Awareness Day – there will be a round dance in partnership with Baltimore Center Stage and Baltimore City Health Department. Starting time may be 4:00 p.m. There will be other health organizations there to provide information. This will be held on March 18, 2023. 2) Observation of the First Day of Spring. This will also be held at the Baltimore Center Stage in partnership with Tara Marjorie, Hopkins and Bliss Meadows. They will be discussing the importance of the first day of spring and native communities and then they will address food sovereignty-security and mutual aid networks.

- b. Director Colston announced the University of Maryland annual Powwow on February 23, 2023. It will be held at the Adela H. Stamp Student Union building from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This information will be verified before posting to the website.

XI. Adjournment:

Motion	1st	2nd	Vote	Adjourn: 8:45 p.m.
Adjourn	Kerry Lessard	Claude Bowen	6Y-0N-0A	