

Michigan Freedom Trail Commission

Meeting Minutes

Location: University of Michigan in Detroit

Date: December 9, 2022

Roll call

Present for the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission:

- Melinda Babarskis, Chair
- Amanda Campbell Crawford
- Rochelle Danquah
- Angela Dillard
- Roy Finkenbine
- Jamon Jordan
- Priscilla Robinson
- Jason Young

Virtual for the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission:

- Deidra Mayweather

Present for the Michigan History Center staff:

- Sandra Clark
- Sheri Giffin

Guests:

- Barry Jurgensen, Regional Manager, National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom
- Adelaide Lancaster

Call to Order

Babarskis called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

Chairperson Comments

Babarskis welcomed Barry Jurgenson, the Midwest Regional Manager at the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

Approval of Agenda

Campbell Crawford moved to approve agenda; Finkenbine seconded the motion, and it was approved.

Action Agenda

Finkenbine moved approval of the May 20, 2022, and October 14, 2022, meeting minutes; Robinson seconded the motion, and the minutes were adopted unanimously.

Campbell Crawford moved to approve the nominations of Babarskis as Chair and Robinson as Vice Chair; Finkenbine seconded, and the nominations was approved unanimously.

NTF Midwest Regional Manager

Barry Jurgenson introduced himself and outlined his work history. He noted some changes to the federal grant system and some of the internal programs.

Public Comment:

Adelaide Lancaster shared the work she has been doing since the last meeting.

Signage Grant:

Giffin reported that Watkins Lake was the first location to install a Network to Freedom sign. She displayed the updated webpage with the renewed request for images and other resources to fill out the website.

Heritage Gathering & Webinars

Campbell Crawford revived the suggestion of hosting webinars throughout the year. The commission agreed to the idea, and Campbell Crawford will contact Carol Mull as a presenter for a future webinar.

The subcommittee will meet to start planning the 2023 Heritage Gathering. Commissioners Jordan, Danquah, Finkenbine and Campbell Crawford volunteered to serve along with Lancaster.

Reports from Standing Committees:

Preservation & Support:

Campbell Crawford noted the signage grant work of the subcommittee. The commission also discussed creating a public calendar for events of interest.

Education:

Dillard announced that the University of Michigan is offering two funded internship positions with the Michigan History Center dedicated to the work of the Freedom Trail Commission. The Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History is also interested in hosting an intern. Dillard also shared the unveiling of the Resistance on the River through the Detroit River Story Lab project.

Current Business:

Interns and Student Projects:

The commission discussed the internship idea. Danquah noted site nominations would be an ideal project for students to continue the nomination process. Dillard and Campbell Crawford will create a framework for the internship program with the vision of a possible long-term program.

New Business:

Term Renewals:

Babarskis reminded those commissions whose terms are ending to reapply via the link sent out by Giffin.

MHC Staff Updates

Clark reported on the Historical Commission's marker review project in Detroit. Focus groups offered 89 suggestions for new markers to broaden Detroit's story.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:09 p.m.



Sandra Clark, Chairperson