

# Michigan Freedom Trail Commission

## Meeting Minutes

Location: Michigan History Center, Lansing

Date: May 19, 2023

### **Roll call**

Present for the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission:

- Melinda Babarskis, Chair
- Rochelle Danquah
- Roy Finkenbine
- Adelaide Lancaster
- Robin Peebles
- Jason Young

Virtual for the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission:

- Amanda Campbell Crawford
- Kimberly Holley
- Priscilla Robinson

Present for the Michigan History Center staff:

- Sandra Clark
- Sheri Giffin

Guests:

- Anna Thomas, University of Michigan, FTC intern
- Calebria Webb

Call to Order

Babarskis called the meeting to order at 11:23 a.m.

## Chairperson Comments

Babarskis began the meeting with introductions of three new commissioners: Patrina Chatman, Adelaide Lancaster and Kimberly Holley.

## Approval of Agenda

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

## Approval of Minutes

Finkenbine moved approval of the March 31, 2023, meeting minutes as amended; Danquah seconded the motion, and the minutes were adopted unanimously.

## Interns and Student Project:

Clark introduced Anna Thomas and Grace Kruse as the University of Michigan interns. Anna is working on the Greensky nomination and Grace is working on the Crosswhite story.

Danquah mentioned that the Charles H. Wright Museum is still interested in the internship program.

## Heritage Gathering & Webinars:

Fall Heritage Gathering: Kai Thomas, author of *In the Upper Country: A Novel*, will be the keynote. Patricia Polacco, author of *January Sparrow*, has not responded about participating. Several commissioners offered other potential authors. Lancaster mentioned Pen America as a resource for connecting to authors.

Webinars: Danquah suggested scheduled webinars beginning after the Heritage Gathering.

## Reviewing Standing Committee Work and Goals:

Cultural & Heritage Tourism: Peebles reported that Pure Michigan welcomes any articles for publication. Articles tied to tourism with approximately 250 words are ideal. There was discussion around image and video permissions and possible use of AI generated artwork.

Preservation & Support: Campbell Crawford continues to contact people for possible webinar sessions including Brian and Shannon Prince about the Bruxton connection and Graham Jaehnig concerning research on resistance in Houghton through the courts. Members also shared information on the Bonga family of Mackinac Island.

Education: Young offered some background on the history facility's support of internships and the partnership with the FTC.

Sites Identification: Danquah is still researching possible nominations topics on the Quaker Meeting house, the Greenmead area and railroad connections to the Underground Railroad. The commission discussed gathering oral histories.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.