

Michigan Freedom Trail Commission

Meeting Minutes

Location: In-person & Virtual meeting

Date: May 20, 2022

Roll call

Present for the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission:

- Melinda Babarskis
- Angela Dillard
- Roy Finkenbine, acting chair
- Deidre Mayweather
- Robin Peebles
- Pricilla Robinson
- Jason Young

Present for the Michigan History Center staff:

- Sandra Clark
- Tobi Voigt
- Sheri Giffin

Guests:

- Leslie Pielack, Director of the Birmingham Museum

Meeting Minutes

Finkenbine called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m.

Dillard moved to approve the agenda; Young seconded the motion, and it was approved.

Robinson moved approval of the March 4, 2022, meeting minutes as amended; Dillard seconded the motion, and the minutes were adopted unanimously.

Public Comment:

Pielack invited a commissioner to attend the September 17 public program for the recent addition of the Elijah S. Fish and George B. Taylor Burials site at Greenwood Cemetery to the National Network to Freedom. Since the commissioners will be hosting the Heritage Gathering conference that day, the commission will send a letter to be read at the ceremony.

Signage Grant:

Giffin reported that 10 applications have been received for the signs. The focus has shifted to ordering the physical signs and creating the webpage.

Heritage Gathering

The 2022 Heritage Gathering will be a combination of virtual and in-person sessions to reach a broader audience. The virtual sessions are scheduled for September 1, 8 and 22 with the topic of descendants. On September 17, the in-person conference will be in Lansing at the Michigan History Center and will have sessions from the Archives of Michigan on researching genealogy and a focus the events in 1862, including the William Swan story and the Homestead Act.

Reports from Standing Committees:

Cultural & Heritage Tourism:

Peebles shared information about the passport program through the National Parks Service. The commission's role may be to connect individual site to the program through its web page. The program could be marketed through the commission website and Travel Michigan.

Preservation & Support:

Campbell submitted a written report for the meeting.

Education:

Dillard reported the committee has been networking with potential committee members. Dillard continues to connect with the International School Curriculum group that presented at the 2021 Heritage Gathering.

Current Business:

Permanent International UGRR Month:

Finkenbine suggested marketing the Michigan Freedom Trail Commission subcommittees at the meeting for potential volunteers.

Internship Proposal:

Campbell submitted a written proposal for the internship concept for the initial discussion. The commission was in favor of developing a formal plan. Some initial thoughts included:

- The internship should follow Department of Natural Resources intern standards including pay for work.
- Internships should include specific projects, such as researching leading to a new nomination.

New Business:

Chair / Vice Chair Nominations:

Campbell and Robinson will serve as the nominating committee and make recommendations for the October meeting.

MHC Staff Updates

Clark reported that the Michigan Historical Commission market audit project started this spring. They are recruiting people to be subject matter advisors and to participate in community focus groups.

Clark announced that Maud Lyon is working on the Grant House project.

African American Midwest contacted Finkenbine and Clark about possible partnership. They are scheduled to attend the commission's October meeting.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Robinson moved to adjourn the meeting; Dillard seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:19 p.m.



Sandra Clark, Chairperson