

Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission

MEETING MINUTES #24

May 10, 2021

Attendance

David Armenti	x	Kirkland Hall	x
Iris Barnes	x	Elizabeth Hughes	x
Simone Barrett	x	Elgin Klugh	X
DeNeen Brown		Gary Norman	x
Jacqueline Bullock	X	Carl Snowden	
Charles Chavis	x	Marshall Stevenson	
Nick Creary	x		
Roger Davidson		Zenita Hurley	X
Maya Davis	x	Kristin McFarlane	X
Omar Eaton-Martinez	x	Will Schwarz	X
David Fakunle	X	Sonya Osei	X
Chris Haley	x		

X = Present

Members of the public present: Elaine Bachmann, Barbara Drazin, Stephen McKenna Stan Brown, Emily Oland Squires

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dr. David Fakunle at 11: 37 a.m. Ms. Osei called the roll of Commissioners and Staff.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

The minutes from meeting of April 12, 2021 were approved unanimously with no revisions.

Public Comments

The Chair asked if any members of the public wished to make a comment and there were no responses.

Sub-committee Reports

Logistics - Commissioner Maya Davis

- The last Logistics subcommittee meeting was held April 21, 2021. Subcommittee meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of every month.
- The subcommittee discussed flushing out committee updates on the website. The goal is to identify what each committee needs and can be updated and posted to the website. Commissioner Davis and Armenti will work on this initiative.
- **Liaison task updates with coalitions-** Commissioners are assigned to county coalition groups. What are we discussing when we meet? The goal is to draw out key points for discussion and have a plan for partnership
- Commissioner Armenti and Davis met with MD LTRC Legal representation to discuss position description for potential MD LTRC position. Commissioners Davis, Hughes, and Armenti will develop position description and share with the full commission.
- **Discussion:** Does registration need to happen for Reconciliation hearings? The first hearing is scheduled for Sept 11, 2021. Will this event be in-person or virtual? Please share any ideas and thoughts with Commissioner Davis.
- Mr. Schwarz has an updated document with all the adjusted hearing dates due to COVID-19 delays. The full Commission should go back and review. The hearings occur in the same order; dates have just been moved back.
- **Discussion:** Can all documents be housed in one location? Can this be stored externally?
- The subcommittee wants to prepare for the upcoming Allegany county hearing. The subcommittee would like to meet with other subcommittee chairs to plan and facilitate. Subcommittee will discuss further next meeting 5/19/2021

Research - Commissioner David Armenti

- Case study of John Fields, lynching victim in Queen Anne's County, who is not included in the MLTRC list. Commissioner Armenti inquired if anyone had further information about the individual/case, including corroborative primary source material or contacts to reach out to in QA. A few commissioners offered feedback, including Will Schwarz as Fields had been acknowledged by the MD Lynching Memorial Project.
- It was determined that more research and primary corroboration (from the 1860s) would be needed before including John Fields on the official commission record, then create a case study page on the website. Commissioner Armenti is pursuing leads in this area.
- A discussion of the involvement of the Ku Klux Klan, or any other formal white supremacist organizations, in lynchings that took place in Maryland occurred. Based on various media reports there has been suggestion that KKK members may have been directly involved. Commissioner Chavis confirmed that there was

evidence of such involvement and that there was a significant presence in the state.

- Will Schwarz supported that statement, and offered to share related research. It was decided that where appropriate case studies on the commission website should explicitly acknowledge KKK or other organizational involvement in violence, but that these must be corroborated by primary source evidence. Other complicit entities (i.e law enforcement agencies) are to be similarly acknowledged.

Reconciliation – Commissioner Charles Chavis

- The Reconciliation subcommittee has no immediate updates at this time.
- The subcommittee is discussing and wants to ensure that MD LTRC has reconciliation in place and mental health resources available before asking those to come and share their stories and testimonies in hearings and interviews.

New Business

- Howard Cooper Memorialization- old Howard county location. This was a well-attended event. Governor Hogan 34 out of 44 of those wrongfully accused and lynched have been pardoned.
- Mr. Schwarz will post link in chat. 14+ coalitions working on this concern that heightened the governors work on this effort. Without the commonality of purpose of goals, it would not have been as important of a goal.
- A Just Reckoning: Transitional Justice and Lynching in Maryland
<https://mdlynchingmemorial.networkforgood.com/events/29270-a-just-reckoning>
- Chair Fakunle- Since the Governor has now enhanced the Commission's effort, the Commissions liaison should contact the Governor's office so they can inform Maryland State Police of the MD LTRC public meeting. I would hope the trust issue would be less with MSP or it should be.

Announcements

- There is an upcoming event for Salisbury Memorial Lynching taskforce 5/22/2021. 12 p.m. Peninsula Memorial Hospital to Mathew Williams lynching area. Event occurring after following ceremony Garfield king and Mathew Williams. Commissioner Chavis has been working to host this event.
<https://salisbury.md/05/05/2021/salisbury-lynching-memorial-task-force-announces-memorial-unveiling-event>
- Lillie Carroll Jackson Civil Rights Museum in partnership with the Reginald F. Lewis Museum and the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project will be hosting a Film Discussion: 'Tulsa: The Fire and the Forgotten' Documentary Film commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre on Thursday, June 3 at 6-7:30 pm. Panelist will include our own commissioners DeNeen Brown, who is in the documentary and Charles Chavis. The film debuts on May

31, 2021 on PBS. The flyers are forthcoming, so look for the details on the Lillie Carroll Jackson website soon.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12: 55 p.m.