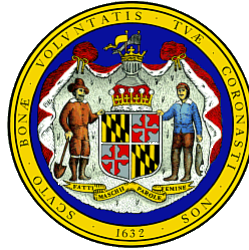


# Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission



**Chair**  
David O. Fakunle, Ph.D.

**Vice Chair**  
Charles L. Chavis, Jr., Ph.D.

**Staff**  
Sophie Asike, Esq.  
Trish Boyle  
Zenita Hurley, Esq.  
Kristin McFarlane, Esq.  
Joy Sarimakin

David Armenti  
Lindsey Baker  
Iris Leigh Barnes, Ph.D.  
Simone Barrett-Williams, Ph.D.  
Michelle Coles, J.D.  
Nicholas Creary, Ph.D.  
Roger Davidson, Ph.D.  
Maya Davis  
Teisha Dupree-Wilson, Ph.D.  
Christopher E. Haley  
Elizabeth Hughes  
Amy Millin  
Izetta Mobley, Ph.D.  
Carl Snowden  
Marshall Stevenson, Ph.D.  
Stephanie Suerth

## Business Meeting Minutes – December 2023

**Date:** Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
**Time:** 11:40am-1:12pm Eastern Time  
**Location:** Virtual

### Attendance

<b>Commissioners</b>	
David Armenti	X
Lindsey Baker	X
Iris Barnes	X
Simone Barrett-Williams	ABS
Charles Chavis	ABS
Michelle Coles	X
Nick Creary	X
Roger Davidson	X
Maya Davis	X
Teisha Dupree-Wilson	ABS
David Fakunle	ABS
Chris Haley	X
Elizabeth Hughes	X
Amy Millin	X
Izetta Mobley	ABS
Carl Snowden	X
Marshall Stevenson	ABS
Stephanie Suerth	X
<b>Staff</b>	
Sophie Asike	X
Zenita Hurley	X
Kristin McFarlane	X
Joy Sarimakin	ABS

### Members of the Public Present

Elinor Thompson, Will Schwarz, Rev. Diane Teichert, Hannah Lane

### **Call to Order**

Commissioner Armenti called the meeting to order at 11:40am.

### **Approval of Minutes**

N/A

### **Public & Chair's Comments**

Commissioner Armenti announced the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair and said he would be leading the meeting in their absence. He showed gratitude to all members of the public for their presence, time investment, commitment, and active participation. He urged everyone to introduce themselves and specify their affiliations in the comments section.

### **Soul Check**

Commissioner Haley gave a quick overview of why the Soul Check segment is part of the agenda, highlighting how it allows members to be more in tune with their feelings and the commission's core missions. He then opened the floor to anyone willing to participate. Commissioner Armenti acknowledged the holiday season, encouraging members to take advantage of it for productivity and promoting dialogue. Commissioner Baker shared her thoughts on the genocide in Gaza, and Ms. Lane also expressed her grievances on Gaza, specifically about the demolished archives and lost information.

Commissioner Coles emphasized the importance of storytelling, being able to capture stories of people with the short end of the stick, and understanding what their lives were like, expressing her excitement to provide a platform within the commission. Commissioner Barnes contributed, highlighting how public unawareness of many incidents is causing disparities in society. She also identified the need to start with young minds, educating them with the truth before they get brainwashed.

### **Research Committee Report**

Commissioner Armenti provided a brief review of the meeting held the previous Monday with staff from Maryland State Archives, Office of the Attorney General and

collaborators at Heritage Associates, highlighting progress made with mining and digitizing new and existing data and the incorporation of other external support. He also provided insight into the progress with genealogical efforts in Frederick County, pointing out that the next meeting would be after the new year. Ms. Lane provided insight into her progress with racial terror lynchings and attempted lynchings in Harford County and Baltimore County. Commissioner Creary volunteered information on other case studies related to attempted lynchings, naming Stan Moxley and Hancock. Commissioner Coles recommended another line of research, that being the loss or theft of land. Commissioner Armenti advised that although the commission does not quite cover attempted lynchings, it is a good component to understanding the community as a whole and encouraged the pursuit of these case studies. Ms. Eleanor Thompson, a member of the public, gave information on attempted lynchings of the Holland Brothers in Anne Arundel County, while Rev. Teichert gave an account of the family of Mr. Thomas Juricks.

### **Logistics Committee Report**

N/A

### **Reconciliation & Justice Committee**

N/A

### **New Business**

Commissioner Armenti stated that the onboarding of the project manager staff position is in progress with an applicant. Ms. Asike stated the tentative start date is December 20<sup>th</sup>, and once officially onboarded an introductory email would be sent to all commission members providing the materials available on their end. She further stated that Ms. Claibourn resigned, which is why the process was underway. Commissioner Baker asked for clarification on the staffing structure, and Ms. Asike provided her understanding of the structure, stating:

- The staffing is provided by Bowie State University
- The Office of the Attorney General provides legal advice, and
- The project manager is contracted staff of the Office of the Attorney General, employed to support the commission.

Ms. McFarlane affirmed the explanation, further stating they provide subpoenas and oversee the management of grant funds. Commissioner Creary commended Mr. Schwartz and Commissioner Millin for their support with hearing sessions and uplifted the matter of the counties yet to have coalitions, still emphasizing the importance of having this resolved. Commissioner Davis agreed and advised moving forward with what resources are available with or without a coalition. Commissioner Creary mentioned the date of the Frederick County hearing session is sometime in February and is working to get a specific day sooner than later. Commissioner Millin

made a point to urge members to be more proactive, highlighting how close February is in terms of scheduling a date. Ms. Thompson asked if any efforts have been made with the counties without a coalition, specifically Queen Anne's because she is a descendant of Asbury Green and has access to relevant information about the attempted lynching and a possible grant application, she is happy to volunteer. Commissioner Creary stepped up to take point on that front to work with Ms. Thompson.

Commissioner Armenti acknowledged a member of the public, Ms. Love, and her insight as a resident of Queen Anne's, stating the commission recommended a collaboration with the memorial project but did not follow up with a distinct next step. Ms. Thompson recommended some community centers that may be willing to have a conversation, and she will try to make a connection with them to see where it leads. Rev Teichert raised a question regarding genealogist training, and Ms. Hurley explained she is not sure if the training is open to partners in the community if it is determined it will be beneficial to coalition partners. The circumstance to be considered is if the training would be virtual or physical to allow proper planning. Commissioner Armenti acknowledged this, saying the next step would be to identify dates in early 2024 for maximum commissioner participation. Commissioner Haley shared his screen to show the updated contact and engaged Commissioner Coles on what county or counties she is involved with for clarity. The list would be made available to commissioners once complete. Opinions were expressed regarding how the issue of counties lacking coalitions should be addressed, and with all circumstances considered Commissioner Haley agreed to work with the Logistics committee and review it with the Chair and Vice Chair. Commissioner Davidson volunteered to work with Prince George's County though he might not be physically present at the hearing session. Commissioner Barnes offered that Harford and Cecil counties could be in September, which should be noted by the Logistics committee for better planning along with the incoming project manager.

### **Announcements**

Commissioner Hughes announced the RFP discussed in the last meeting has been posted on the commission and OAG websites and closes December 28<sup>th</sup>. The review and ranking of proposals will be in early January, and Commissioners Snowden and Creary would assist in expediting the process. Commissioner Creary discussed the need to review the commission structure for the benefit of new commissioners. Commissioner Davis shared the same sentiment and stated she had reached out to Commissioner Millin regarding this. Commissioner Millin announced the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project – Baltimore County Coalition's 5th Annual Community Forum on January 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00am and invited commissioners to register via the link shared. Commissioner Coles asked if the commission had considered a hearing session centered on reconciliation, which would not be limited to a county focused hearing session but making it statewide for reconciliation experts to discuss and offer recommendations. Commissioner Creary appreciated the idea and welcomed her to the Reconciliation & Justice committee to collaborate. Ms. Asike brought up the BJA training, asking the commission's preference on how long it should last so the

agenda can be properly prepared. Commissioner Armenti asked for an email to be sent to commissioners as a reminder. Commissioner Coles requested more information on the training, and Ms. Asike was happy to briefly explain and attach a draft agenda containing more information with the email. Commissioner Creary announced a presentation for which he was invited as a panelist, the Social Data Mini Grant Series at the University of Maryland, College Park, taking place the following day on research conducted on racial terror lynchings spanning years, and invited commissioners to attend. Commissioner Davidson urged fellow commissioners to remember the larger issues like the trauma that racial terror lynchings were a component of, considering some were seen as legal, and shared how dialogue and the work of the commission are very important.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting concluded at 1:12 pm. Commissioner Armenti made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Creary and Commissioner Haley.