

**Maryland Lynching Truth & Reconciliation Commission  
Meeting #30**

**Date:** Monday, July 11, 2022

**Time:** 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

**Attendance:**

David Armenti	ABS	Kirkland Hall	X	
Iris Barnes	X	Elizabeth Hughes	X	
Simone Barret	ABS	Tiesha Dupree Wilson	X	
(DeNeen Brown)	(ret)	Stephanie Suerth	X	
Charles Chavis	ABS	Carl Snowden	X	
Roger Davidson	X	Marshall Stevenson	X	
Maya Davis	X	Stephanie Thompson	ABS	
Omar Eaton-Martinez	ABS	Zenita Hurley	X	
David Fakunle	X	Kristine McFarlane	X	
Chris Haley	X	Will Schwarz	X	
Nicolas Creary	ABS	(Amina Ayodeji-Ogundiran)	X	
Izetta Mobley	X			

**Members of the public present:**

Annie Wood, Cheryl Mcleod, Simon Robins, Nick White, Zoe Smith, Amber Gundlach, Elaine Bachman, Brett M Tyler, Emily Oland Squires, Stan Brown, Diane Teichert, Amy Millin, Nick White, Donna Hollie

**Call to Order:**

Commissioner Davis called the meeting to order at 11:34am.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The meeting minutes for June 13 were adopted and approved after the meeting reached a Quorum.

**Public Comments:**

There were no public comments

**Committee Reports:**

**Research Committee-**

There were no updates from the Research Committee

**Joint Committee Meeting (Research and Logistics)**

Commissioner Davis reported that the June meeting for the research and logistics committee was cancelled because it fell on a public holiday (Juneteenth). She however, provided information on the establishment of three hearings in the fall for three different counties. The hearings are as follows:

- **Somerset county will be meeting Sat Nov 5<sup>th</sup> 2022**
- **Lower Eastern Shore Wicomico county will take place Oct 22**
- **Anne Arundel County will be held on Oct 8 2022**

These dates have been accepted and finalized and commissioners should expect more updates from the logistics committee. She added that the next meeting will be meeting on July 18<sup>th</sup> and will not be a joint meeting because

Commissioner Armenti will be out of town. A separate research meeting will be scheduled.

### **Reconciliation meeting**

There were no updates

### **New Business**

Commissioner Davis told the commissioners to expect updates on the remaining 2020 hearing sessions that were earlier mentioned sessions.

Commissioner Davis also informed the meeting about the one on one meetings with commissioners by Chair Fakunle to talk about commissioners' affiliations with counties and how to better serve the commission.

### **Announcements:**

- According to Commissioner Barnes, the Commission planned for 13 hearings. So far, only 2 have been held. She discussed the timelines of the work in terms of scheduling and having more hearings. She urged the Commission to look into the possibility going back to the legislation to request an extension.
- Donna Hollie shared that Commissioner Eleanor Thompson is a descendant of Ashbury Green in Anne Arundel County. Commissioner Thompson heard stories of the lynching from her father and is in contact with two other descendants, she is also making arrangements to interview them. Donna Hollie further reported that she is in contact with the church where she believes Ashbury Green is buried and can arrange for the examination of the Church records.

She is also researching Robert Green to find other descendants. The people she is in contact with are elderly and so she is looking for other people to connect with.

Donna Hollie added that she is in contact with the great-great nephew of Garfield King who has done extensive research on his family. He found two relatives who are also researching the King family and will speak to them by end of July. Donna is reaching out to other people researching the King's family on ancestry.com. She is also awaiting a response from the Friendship United Methodist Church in Wicomico County to find more records.

According to her, the 1950 Census indexing project is proceeding rapidly, she is working to find information on descendants of people that may have information on primarily Matthew Williams of Wicomico and Howard Cooper of Baltimore County. Located in the census record is a woman named Mary Taylor Robinson who is the sister of James Taylor lynched in Kent County. Donna is researching Mary Robinson and her family.

Matthew Williams does not have any siblings however, she has done a genealogy for his mother and looking for relatives in that line.

### **Chair Remarks**

Chair Fakunle confirmed that the three hearings would be the last for the year 2022.

He also confirmed that times have not been finalized, however, they would be mindful of the travel times for commissioners. He told commissioners to prepare for longer hearings because there are more cases so there will be lot more to cover during the hearings.

Commissioner Davis expressed concerns that some Commissioners may not be able to participate and may need other commissioners to step in and fill in roles.

Chair Fakunle urged all commissioners to be on board. He posited that collective efforts are valued as this will lower the burden for everyone. Commissioners should, therefore, think about the best ways to be involved. He added that Ms. Thompson has been collecting all details about everything that goes into hearing sessions. This would create a game plan on hearing sessions that commissioners can follow.

Commissioner Snowden inquired about Public Relations and who will be responsible for marketing the event.

Chair Fakunle asked if Carl can take the lead on PR responsibility.

Ms. Hurley informed the meeting that the Director of Communication has offered to send out press releases. The commission can leverage that.

Commissioner Stevenson brought up issues of reimbursement for commissioners who may be staying overnight to cover travel costs.

There were suggestions about reaching out to the agency that staff the commission to takes charge of the reimbursement and so the commission can check with Bowie State University since they just secured funds to bring a staff person to support the commission.

Commissioner Barnes suggested that the Commission can check with the federal grant to see if expenses such as reimbursements are allowable.

Commissioner Haley added that local coalitions also need to be paid for the work that they have done.

Ms. Hurley responded stating that Federal grants cannot be used to reimburse for work that was completed outside of the scope of work however, the commission can procure services that support the commission's work. According to her, anyone can apply or submit proposals to conduct work on behalf of the commission. She emphasized that one must follow the state procurement laws. All of the procurements will be posted on the commission's website to provide some directions.

Commissioner Snowden asked if it is possible to have in August or September some definitive process for commissioners who would be putting in requests for reimbursement, and who will be responsible?

Ms. Hurley stated that the first step is to see if funding can be secured for travel and then a definitive process will follow. For example any commissioner who is affiliated to a government agency already has a process for money spent for travel related to their work. The legislature cannot support reimbursement for travel. The commission can check with Bowie State University who is a staffing agency, and also see if the federal grants can also fund travel. Once a funding source is identified, then a process can be put together.

Commissioner Snowden suggested that it would be worthwhile to contact the Department of Budget Management to let them know the situation and see if there is process in place for reimbursement.

Ms. McFarlane said she was not sure about who to contact at the Department of Budget Management but the Governor's office may be of help.

In conclusion, Commissioner Snowden offered to reach out to Ms. Joycelyn who was in charge of the delegation to see what's possible for reimbursing Commissioners.

Commissioner Davis asked about the scope of work for the Bowie State staff and if they can be involved in the processes concerning grant. She needed a clear description of duties. (Amina will check with Bowie State and get back).

### **One on one meetings**

Chair Fakunle and Vice Chair Chavis will have one on one meetings with commissioners to see how each one could best serve especially with the upcoming hearing sessions. This will make sure everyone is on the same page and will provide a clear direction for Commissioners.

### **Position with Bowie**

Ms. McFarlane provided updates regarding the hiring a staff person by Bowie State University. According to her, Bowie got the funding for the staff person to support the commission. The person will be hired within the next month. She acknowledged Dr. Amina Ayodeji-Ogundiran who has been supporting the Commission to take minutes and is a liaison with between the commission and Bowie State on the staff person. The staff will provide up to 20hrs a week, and is expected to be on board by the end of summer. The staff person will support the project manager Stephanie Thompson.

Commissioner Haley asked if the funding for the staff person came from the grant or if it was within the initial legislation.

Ms. McFarlane responded saying that the funding was not provided in the initial legislation, however, Bowie went back to the legislation to request for the funding. It was stated in the past legislation that Bowie and Maryland Memorial Project will provide staffing but there was no funding associated with that so Bowie went back to request the funding.

Commissioner Barnes revisited the issue of getting an extension for the period of performance of the commission.

Chair Fakunle responded that the commission will have to come to a consensus on the issue of extension. He also assured the meeting that he is confident about getting an extension.

### **Meeting Adjourned:**

Chair Fakunle thanked the Commissioners and everyone present for their time. He reminded Commissioners to expect a call to schedule one on one meetings that would take no more than 15minutes. The meeting was adjourned at 12:34pm.