

Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 14, 2019
11:00AM

Commissioners and Staff present: Chair David Fakunle; Simone Barrett; Elgin Klugh; Tamara E. Wilson; Tim Baker; Carl Snowden; Marshall Stevenson, Jr.; David Armenti; Will Schwarz, Kristin McFarlane; Zenita Wickham Hurley

Participating via telephone: Nicholas Creary; Roger Davidson; Gary Norman; Iris Barnes

Absent: Elizabeth Hughes; Jackie Copeland

Members of the public present: Omar Eaton-Martinez; Charles L. Chavez, Jr.; Kirkland J. Hall. Sr.; DeNeen L. Brown; Janna Parker; Denice Lombard; Steve McKenna; David Taft Terry; Linda Duyer (via phone); Katie Day (via phone)

Call to Order: Acting Chair Fakunle called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 am. Commissioners and members of the public introduced themselves for the record.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: The minutes for the September 26, 2019 Commission meeting were considered and approved without objection.

Introduction of public members nominated by the Commission

The Chair recognized the four individuals who were nominated by the Commission during its September 26, 2019 meeting to be sent to the Governor for approval as public members of the Commission:

Omar Eaton-Martinez

Charles L. Chavez, Jr.

Kirkland J. Hall. Sr. (via telephone)

DeNeen L. Brown (not in attendance)

Subcommittee Assignments and Discussion

The Chair led a discussion of the three current subcommittees, updating attendees on the purpose and membership of each subcommittee:

Public Hearings

- Chair: Gary Norman
- Tim Baker

- Elizabeth Hughes
- Tamara Wilson
- Jackie Copeland
- DeNeen Brown

Research

- Chair: Elgin Klugh
- Roger Davidson
- Iris Barnes
- Simone Barrett
- David Armenti
- Marshall Stevenson

Reconciliation (Justice)

- Chair: David Fakunle
- Carl Snowden
- Nicholas Creary
- Kirkland Hall
- Omar Eaton-Martinez
- Charles Chavis

Nominated public members were assigned to subcommittees as follows:

- C. Chavez — Research
- O. Eaton-Martinez – Reconciliation
- K. Hall, Sr. – Reconciliation
- D. Brown – Public Hearings

During that discussion, Chair Fakunle asked the Public Hearings subcommittee to propose tentative hearing dates by the end of the year.

Commissioners proposed the following recommendations for the Research Subcommittee:

- Connect with local groups who are already doing this work
- Should look at media and community environment
- Response/Engagement of public and elected officials
- Important to connect the past to the present

Commissioners also raised the following questions:

- Can we access grand jury testimony from those grand jury panels related to crimes charged against individuals for lynchings?
- How should we treat the lynchings of non-blacks and those committed by blacks?

Commissioners proposed the following recommendations for the Reconciliation Subcommittee –

- Important to carefully define reconciliation in light of the history of white and black Americans
- We must shed a light on the trauma felt by black communities
- This presents an opportunity to teach – add history of lynching to the State’s educational curriculum (Commissioner Armenti agreed to reach out to MSDE to discuss their sending a representative to attend a future MD Lynching Commission meeting/research subcommittee meeting)

MD Lynching Memorial Project Conference

Staff member Schwarz discussed the MD Lynching Memorial Project Conference. He invited Commission members to attend and meet with local advocates.

New Business

Commissioner Stevenson shared that Del. Pena-Mylnck is scheduled to speak to students and professors at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore on November 7, 2019 from 11:00am-12:30pm regarding the charge of this Commission.

Closed Session

At approximately 12:15 p.m., the Commission voted unanimously to move into closed session in accordance with Maryland Code, General Provisions §3-305(b)(7) to consult with legal counsel to obtain legal advice regarding compliance with the Open Meetings Act when convening subcommittees. Acting Chair Fakunle informed meeting attendees that the Commission would reconvene in open session at the conclusion of the closed session. Public commissioner nominees left the meeting.

Return to Open Session

At approximately 12:40 p.m., the Acting Chair reconvened the public meeting and shared the Commissioners’ decision to keep subcommittees open to members of the public. The Chair announced that the next full Commission meeting will be on Monday October 28, 2019 from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at Morgan State University.

The Commission’s agenda for the October 28 meeting will focus on finalizing its by-laws and then breaking into subcommittees.

Meeting Adjourned

The Commission voted to adjourn the meeting at approximately 12:50 p.m.