

Research Committee Meeting

Maryland Lynching Truth & Reconciliation Commission

Minutes - Monday, February 22, 2021

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:30pm

Location: **Virtual meeting (Google Meet)**

Present: Emily Oland Squires, David Armenti, Elgin Klugh, Christopher Haley

(No Quorum)

Research Committee leadership

- Armenti - Agreed to take on the role of chairing the Research Committee
- Klugh - Will continue to work with the committee, has volunteered to assist the chair in note-taking and administrative work for the committee

About final reporting

-Davis - Discussed question of what our final product will be as a result of our research—individual bios or an overview summary

-Armenti – Stated concern about not redoing people’s work. There is already a base level of information through Judge Lynch’s Court that can be built upon—our report should highlight what is new as a result of the commission’s work

Showing work of the Committee

-Haley – Questioned how we can show anyone who is looking at us from the outside that this is the new material that we have uncovered since the MD state commission has been formed rather than what we’ve just restated? How are we compartmentalizing what’s new? Right now, the story of George Peck is the only story that we can say was not available prior to the formation of the commission.

AG Files

-Squires – (Asked to Davis) Should researching the AG files in the archives should be continued?

-Davis – Extensive additional information not yet found. However, there were many accidental drownings, or black men whose cars just happened to stall on a train track – incidents that raise questions and could be investigated. Important to make sure that people understand that a lynching can be more than simply someone being hung from a tree.

Armenti – (Asked to Davis) Would digitizing record groups be something that we could use to demonstrate progress? (AG records or other record groups that are not with the State Archives)

-Haley - Suggested including the coroner's reports. Need to be mindful of any HIPPA or PII issues.

-Davis – Linda Mann may be someone that we can invite to a Research Committee meeting to discuss trauma

Submitted Documents (MDLTRC website portal)

-Armenti – (asked to Klugh) Is Montgomery County willing to submit their research to the State archives for the website?

-Davis – State Archives will share the spreadsheet listing of all documents accepted through the website portal

Armenti – Important to note that this is honoring their work and providing a broader dissemination – not trying to take credit for their work

- Discussion of John Fields – mentioned in 1891 article (Fields lynched in the 1860s). UMBC student, Bria Warren, communicated this name to Armenti and Klugh. Potentially a new case that has not been documented.

-Armenti – Things that we want to highlight – scholarly research that has made things more comprehensive and/or things that provide new information

-Klugh – Need to follow up on whether UMBC fall 2020 students submitted their report to the State Archives.

-Armenti – MCHC may prefer linking digital collections through the Research Committee site

Volunteer Assistance

-Squires – Recommends following up with individuals who stated a desire to volunteer.

-Klugh – Need to reconnect with Neil Roland and Lisa Seghetti

-Davis – Created an excel spreadsheet of individuals who have stated an interest in working the commission. Can invite individuals interested in research to our next research committee meeting.

-Squires – Also on an institution level (example of Nabb center) – institutional representatives have stepped forward with willingness to share

-Armenti – Will be important to have our processes in place to be able to properly utilize volunteers

Communications

-Davis- to coordinate – Suggested cc'ing the commission email so that communications can be accessed in a centralized space

Next Steps

-Armenti – Reports that we know are out there – follow up to ask if individuals are willing to submit their reports through the State Archive's portal, and whether reports can be published on the Commission website.

-Squires – The State Archives portal for the Commission has permissions as a part of the process.

-Davis – Will follow up with Chavis about planned programming for researchers and coalitions

-Haley – Do we have permission to publish completed reports of lynching that were done by outside researchers – or link it on the website? Who is the individual who is supposed to ask?

-Davis – Liaisons should make the ask

-Haley – Important to clarify to commissioners that this is what you have the “power” to do.

-Armenti – Will follow up with Frederick County about uploading reports. Will review the coalition assignments

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