

MD Two Fifty Commission meeting
April 24, 2025 at 10:00am
Cambridge Women's Club, Cambridge, MD

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners and designees:

Elaine Bachmann, Maryland State Archivist; Senator Benjamin Brooks; Lt. Governor's Chief of Staff Geri Byrd; Katie Caljean; Alexandra Cenatus; Brenda Coakley; General Andrew Collins (representing Adjutant General Janeen L. Birckhead); Dep. Sec. Kristin Fleckenstein (representing Sec. of Planning Rebecca Flora); Dr. Joni Floyd; Chair Gov. Parris Glendening; Steve Kearney; Talbot County Councilman Pete Leshner; Deputy Secretary of State Michael Lore; Beth McCoy (representing DGS Chief of Staff Raquel Coombs); Director Cynthia D. Miller, Department of Commerce; Vice Chair Katie O'Malley; Executive Director, Maryland State Arts Council Steven Skerritt-Davis; Robin Sproul; Executive Director, Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, Larry Walker

Staff:

Dir. Michele W. Johnson, Erin Bode, Travis Clatterbuck, Rinnari Smail

Public:

Lisa Challenger, Bill Meyer, David Williams, Cindy Orban, Jaelon T. Mooney, Ronnan Rodas, Kathy Pugh, Sarah Kilmon, Mary Handley, Gail Owings; Jayla Elise, Derrick Taylor, Veronica Taylor, Ruth Clendaniel, Holly Gilpin

Chair Gov. Glendening opened the meeting, and the Land Acknowledgement was read by Commissioner Pete Leshner. There was a brief welcome from the host of the Commission meeting, Ruth Clendaniel, President, Cambridge Women's Club. Holly Gilpin, Dorchester County Tourism Director followed, then Jayla Elise sang Dorchester Dreams which is the official new Dorchester County song.

The guest speaker, Jared DeMarinis, Maryland State Election Administrator, spoke about 250 years of Maryland elections.

Vote #1: Governor Glendening: Approval of minutes from virtual meeting on January 27, 2025 at 3:00pm. Senator Brooks moved to approve, Commissioner Brenda Coakley seconded, with unanimous approval.

Chair Gov. Glendening gave a brief update from the Executive Committee, noting that since the December 2024 Commission meeting, the Executive Committee approved an interagency agreement with the Maryland State Ad Agency, along with three

co-sponsored events: March 19 2025: The Eastern Shore Women of the 6888 in Salisbury, with the Beach to Bay Heritage Area, the Heart of Chesapeake Country Heritage Area, and the Charles Chipman Cultural Center; April 5 2025: Living with History: Representing the Past in the 21st Century in Chestertown, with the Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience and Kent Cultural Alliance; and April 18 2025: Two Lights for Tomorrow, in Annapolis, with the Annapolis 250 Commission, Chesapeake Crossroads Heritage Area, State House Trust, and Maryland State Archives.

Dir. Michele Johnson followed with a brief update with highlights (full report was submitted in writing) including the receipt of \$1.5 million in ARPA funds; great progress awarding grants selected by the Commission; an agreement with the Maryland State Ad Agency; 14 presentations; the MD State Library Agenda 250th social media campaign on Maryland Rooms; a request from the White House for 3 to 5 bullet points; and progress planning a May 5 in-person symposium for stakeholders on planning for the 250th in Maryland.

Vice Chair Katie O'Malley gave the update for the Civics Working Group, and spoke about the Commission's partnership with the MD Civic Education Coalition, and citizen academy grants with three new grants recommended to the Commission for approval. There was a motion to approve by Senator Brooks, a second by Commissioner Steve Kearney, and a unanimous vote.

Commissioner Katie Caljean gave an update from the History Working Group with progress on the Maryland Mosaic partner network, an update on Inclusive History grants noting 32 grants in round 1 and 36 new grants recommended to the Commission for approval. Motion to approve these new grants by Commissioner Robin Sproul, seconded by Commissioner Steve Kearney, with a unanimous vote with abstentions from Commissioners Bachmann, Floyd, and Cenatus.

There was also a request for approval of a \$10,000 co-sponsorship of an August 2026 Sons of the American Revolution event commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Maryland Line's participation in the Battle of Brooklyn; \$2,500 for a rededication event at the Maryland Monument at Prospect Park; and a formal invitation for Gov. Moore to attend and speak at both events. Motion to approve by Commissioner Robin Sproul, seconded by Commissioner Larry Walker, with unanimous approval.

Commissioner Skerritt-Davis gave an update from the Service Working Group noting a series of events at Fort Meade and Aberdeen Proving Ground for the US Army's 250th birthday in June, and 19 new MD Two Fifty Fellows grants recommended to the

Commission for approval. Motion to approve by Commissioner Alexandra Cenatus, seconded by Commissioner Pete Lesher, with unanimous approval and Commissioner Terri Freeman abstaining.

Commissioners Robin Sproul and Steve Kearney shared brief updates from the Communications, Fundraising, and Events Committee reinforcing their support of the co-sponsorship of the Battle of Brooklyn events in 2026; an overview on the 6888 events which occurred in Maryland; the Two Lights for Tomorrow events commemorating the 250th anniversary of the midnight ride of Paul Revere; and the partnership and agreement with the Maryland State Ad Agency; and noted that while several attempts were made, we were unable to connect with the organizers of the Preakness150 festival to explore a partnership.

There was a panel with local 250 Commissions with Gail Owings of the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area; Holly Gilpin representing Dorchester 250; Lisa Challenger representing Lower Shore 250; and Sarah Kilmon representing Talbot 250.

Following Commissioner announcements there was a public comment period with comments from Cindy Orban and Jaelon Moaney, and then Jayla Elise sang her new song, The Heart of Maryland, which she wrote for the 250th.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm, and following lunch, Commissioners and staff were led by Dion Banks on a downtown civil rights walking tour.

Respectfully submitted,
Michele W. Johnson, Director, MD Two Fifty Commission