

MD TWO FIFTY

MD Two Fifty Virtual Commission Meeting **Thursday, July 31, 2025, 3:00pm**

Attendance

Commissioners: Asst. Sec. Muhammed Abdullateef, State Archivist Elaine Bachmann, Chief Geri Byrd, Dir. Dr. Tony Campbell, Alexandra Cenatus, Brenda Coakley, Dir. Keith Colston, Chief Raquel Coombs, Dep. Sec. Kristin Fleckenstein, Dr. Joni Floyd, Dir. Terri Freeman, Mayor Takisha James, Dir. Chanel Johnson, Steve Kearney, Councilman Pete Leshner, Dep. Sec. Michael Lore, Dir. Cynthia Miller, Sec. Paul Monteiro, Denise Nooe, Vice Chair Katie O'Malley, Dir. Nick Redding, Dir. Steven Skerritt-Davis, Robin Sproul, Dr. Tony Ugues, Dir. Larry Walker

Staff: Dir. Michele W. Johnson, Erin Bode, Mary Zell Galen

Minutes

Vice Chair Katie O'Malley opened the meeting at 3:00pm, and Commissioner Pete Leshner read the Land Acknowledgement.

Dir. Chanel Johnson gave an update on behalf of the African American Heritage Working Group, and announced that the list of African American Museums and Cultural Centers in Maryland has grown as new sites continue to be discovered. She noted that direct outreach has resulted in new grant applications from throughout the state, and that planning is in process for future programming.

Dr. Tony Ugues gave an update on behalf of the Civics Working Group. With a goal of 50 citizen academy grants, 9 grants have been awarded, with two new applications received this month. One new grant application is recommended for approval, and the other is on hold awaiting details. The Working Group will collaborate with the Communications, Fundraising and Events Committee on the review of two proposals: an MD Two Fifty Civics Moonshot, and a Freedom of the Press project.

Commissioner Steve Kearney moved to approve one new Citizen Academy grant, Commissioner Terri Freeman seconded, with all in favor.

Commissioner Elaine Bachmann gave an update on behalf of the History Working Group, and announced that 70 Inclusive History grants have been awarded to date, with 60 new applications received in the cycle which ended July 25th, noting that this will be a competitive round with funding available for less than 30 new grants. She shared that the review committee will meet on August 7th to review and recommend grants to the working group which will meet on August 12th to vote on moving the recommended grants to the Commission at its August 28th meeting. Discussions

continue with the request for Gov. Moore's participation at the Battle of Brooklyn 250th anniversary event in August 2026.

Sec. Paul Monteiro gave an update on behalf of the Service Working Group, noting that 28 MD Two Fifty Fellows grants have been awarded by the Commission and 8 new grants are recommended to the Commission for approval this month with more anticipated in August. He also noted that once the goal of 50 MD Two Fifty Fellows grants has been reached, the focus will shift to securing private funding for this grant program to be funded in perpetuity. Commissioners were asked to make introductions to any funders they know who may be interested.

Commissioner Robin Sproul moved to approve 8 new MD Two Fifty Fellows grants, Vice Chair Katie O'Malley seconded, with all in favor.

Co-Chairs Robin Sproul and Steve Kearney spoke on behalf of the Communications, Fundraising, and Events Committee, reporting that production of the MD Two Fifty promotional video has been completed with both 2 minute and 30 second versions. The video will launch at minor league baseball games throughout Maryland on August 1st and will be shown at all home games at all six minor league stadiums in Maryland through July 5, 2026, and on MASN, MPT, streaming and social media, and at events at the State Fair and some county fairs. They also announced the August 1st launch in Frederick of MD Two Fifty Revolutionary Baseball, with six games in the month of August, one at each minor league stadium, where MD Two Fifty will host a marketing table, where Jayla Elise will sing The Heart of Maryland, and where the video will be shown. They also noted that the committee will meet with the Civics Working Group to review the new proposals for civics initiatives.

Director Michele W. Johnson shared details of the August 28th Commission meeting in Hagerstown, then Commissioner Keith Colston announced that the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs is collaborating with the Maryland State Archives on a traveling exhibit.

Vice Chair Katie O'Malley adjourned the meeting at 3:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele W. Johnson

Director, MD Two Fifty Commission