



**MD Two Fifty Commission virtual meeting
February 13, 2026, at 3:00am**

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners and Designees: The Honorable Parris Glendening, Chair; Elaine Bachmann; Dr. Tony Campbell (representing General Janene Birkhead); Senator Benjamin Brooks; Katie Caljean; Alexandra Cenatus; Brenda Coakley; Chanel Compton Johnson; Secretary Jonny Dorsey; Judi Emmel; Dr. Joni Floyd; Terri Freeman; Elizabeth Hughes; Secretary Rebecca Flora; Councilman Pete Leshner; Deputy Secretary Michael Lore (representing Secretary Susan Lee); Patti Maclay, MD; Special Secretary Maria Martinez; Cynthia Miller; Sandi Olek; Peter Phineas Ramsey; Nick Redding; Secretary Ed Rothstein; Kim Shiloh (Senator Benjamin Brooks' Chief of Staff); Steven Skerritt-Davis; Robin Sproul; Brandon Uebel (representing Lt. Governor Aruna Miller); Dr. Antonio Ugues Jr.; Assistant Secretary Rev. Larry Walker.

Commissioners absent: *Senator Jack Bailey; Keith Colston; Raquel Coombs; Mayor Takisha James; Steve Kearney; The Honorable Katie O'Malley.*

Staff: Director Michele W. Johnson, Erin Bode, Mary Zell Galen; Angela Rush, Parys Wyatt.

Public: Lynne Forsman; Meredith Glacken; Jenny Vedrani

CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME, AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The meeting was called to order by Governor Parris Glendening, Commission Chair, who spoke about Governor Wes Moore's annual State of the State address where he ended with a discussion of the 250th and Maryland's complex history.

The Land Acknowledgement was read by Commissioner Pete Leshner.

Vote: Minutes from the November 18, 2025, meeting of the Commission were reviewed. Senator Benjamin Brooks moved to approve, Commissioner Joni Floyd seconded, with unanimous approval.

WORKING GROUP AND COMMITTEE UPDATES AND VOTES

Chair Glendening gave an update from the Executive Committee. Since the November 2025 meeting, the Executive Committee took four votes, all favorable:

- A no-cost marketing co-sponsorship with MD Two Fifty grantee, The Outpost Buffalo Soldier Living History Site in Wicomico County, for an event with retired Brigadier General Warner I. Sumpter speaking about the U.S. Colored Troops on Saturday February 21st in Chestertown.
- A sponsorship of \$5,500 for a Lunar New Year event with the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives and the Governor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs on Sunday, February 22nd in Baltimore.
- Signing onto a national letter led by Connecticut to Rosie Rios, Chair of the U.S. Semi-quin-centennial Commission, urging her to share a portion of the \$150 million of America250 funding in the One Big Beautiful Bill with State 250 Commissions.
- An event sponsorship of \$1,000 for the Maryland Humanities "Humanities at Work" Legislative Reception on Tuesday March 10th at 4pm in Annapolis at the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum.

Chair Glendening also announced the appointment of Secretary Jonny Dorsey of the Department of Service and Civic Innovation, as co-chair with Chief Geri Byrd of the Service Working Group.

Commissioners Compton Johnson and Freeman gave an update on behalf of the African American Heritage Working Group that next steps are now being considered.

Commissioner Ugues gave an update from the Civics Working Group.

- They are ready to review the Civics Moonshot proposal when ready.
- Citizen academies have launched statewide and are well received.
- Commissioner James and Director Johnson will present a session at the June Maryland Municipal League conference on citizen academies.

Commissioner Caljean gave an update from the History Working Group from their January 30, 2026 meeting.

- America's Tapestry is being stitched at the Maryland Center for History and Culture, and stitching is open to the public.
- Commissioners are asked to save Saturday, August 22, 2026 to travel to Brooklyn for Maryland 400 / Battle of Brooklyn 250th events. The Sons of the American Revolution will have bus transportation available. Governor Moore has been invited to participate but no confirmation yet.
- Commissioners are asked to save Saturday, August 29, 2026 for the unveiling of the Black Revolutionary Patriot monument at the State House.
- An unsolicited proposal was received from Preservation Maryland for a Building Communities project: a statewide historic architecture project with

hands-on paper model construction, at a cost of \$27,000. This proposal was reviewed and recommended by the working group.

Vote: Senator Brooks moved to approve, second by Deputy Secretary Lore, all in favor, other than Commissioner Redding abstaining since he submitted this request.

In the absence of Chief Geri Byrd, Director Johnson gave an update from the Service Working Group. We are searching for \$3 million in private funding to make MD Two Fifty Fellows a legacy program continuing to fund grants to organizations to pay interns in perpetuity in the name of the Commission; Commissioners are asked to introduce any donor prospects to Director Johnson. The working group is ready to review the MD Two Fifty Celebration of Service proposal when ready.

Commissioner Robin Sproul shared an update on behalf of the Communications, Fundraising and Events Committee, from their February 5, 2026 virtual meeting.

- The Freedom of the Press traveling exhibit is now in Annapolis and Salisbury, and a fall 2026 conference in Annapolis is in planning featuring journalist Terry Moran as the keynote speaker.
- The Maryland State Lottery MD Two Fifty lottery game has a planned launch on March 2, 2026.
- International partnerships are moving along including a February 28th sister-state event with Liberia in Cambridge; a March 4th Japan-Maryland night at the Japanese Ambassador's residence; and a gratitude train arriving in Maryland in June from Hauts-de-France.
- An unsolicited proposal was received from an Annapolis-based coalition for endorsement of a Bay Responsible 250th Sustainability Toolkit with best practices for 250th events in Maryland. This is a marketing partnership only at no cost to the Commission.

Vote: Commissioner Leshner moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Olek, all in favor.

- Director Johnson presented 24 MD Two Fifty Once in a Generation grant applications which were reviewed and recommended by the committee, with one proposal received from each county and Baltimore City. Every grant application received was for \$15,000 with a total program budget of \$360,000.

Vote: Commissioner Compton Johnson moved to approve all 24 applications, second by Commissioner Sproul, with all in favor, other than abstentions from Commissioners also serving on local 250 Commissions who abstained only for the proposal submitted by their locality (Baltimore City 250: Commissioners Caljean, Cenatus, Freeman, and Skeritt-Davis;

Montgomery County 250: Commissioner Maclay; Talbot County 250:
Commissioner Leshner)

UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senator Brooks shared that he has submitted Senate Bill 191 which would designate Jayla Elise's "The Heart of Maryland" song as the new Maryland State Song, and asked for the support of Commissioners once the 2026 bill hearings are scheduled.

Director Johnson gave an overview of upcoming meeting dates and dates for key 250th events.

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele W. Johnson

Director, MD Two Fifty Commission