



Fort Monroe Authority Board of Trustees  
September 17, 2020  
Meeting Minutes

The Fort Monroe Authority (FMA) Board of Trustees Annual Meeting was held on September 17, 2020 via zoom.

Governor Ralph Northam declared a state of emergency in Virginia on Thursday, March 12 in response to COVID-19. Therefore, the FMA has chosen to use electronic communications in accord with Item 4-0.01.g. of Chapter 1289 (2020 Acts of Assembly). The purpose of the meeting is to discuss or transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue operation of the FMA and the discharge of its lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities. Board members participated remotely using a ZOOM platform.

Members of the public were able to register to witness the meeting online via live-streaming and were provided the opportunity to provide public comment at the outset of the meeting using the zoom link provided in the online meeting public notice.

The online internet public notice for the meeting noted that this meeting would be conducted using an electronic process due to the COVID-19 state of emergency and as a precaution to reduce the risk and spread of the novel coronavirus. The online meeting public notice also furnished the Agenda and Board materials as well as information regarding the availability of online live-streaming of the meeting at the noted link.

Online viewers were furnished a telephone number to call to notify staff of any interruption of the live streaming of the meeting in accordance with Item 4-0.01.g. of Chapter 1289 and Section 2.23708.2 of the Code of Virginia; and no interruption of the live streaming was noted during the meeting.

**Members Present:** The Honorable James P. Moran, Chair  
Dr. Edward Ayers  
Ms. Mary Bunting  
Ms. Benita Byas  
Mr. Brian Jackson  
Dr. Maureen Elgersman Lee  
The Honorable Mamie E. Locke  
Dr. Rex Ellis  
Mr. Destry Jarvis  
Mr. Jay Joseph  
The Honorable Martha M. Mugler  
Mr. John Reynolds  
Mr. Joshua Saks for Secretary of Natural Resources  
Ms. Turner Widgeon for Secretary of Commerce and Trade

**Members Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Ms. Jan Bomar  
Dr. Françoise Bonnell  
Ms. Rachel Dancy  
Mr. John Hutcheson, Secretary/Treasurer  
Mr. G. Glenn Oder, Executive Director  
Ms. Phyllis Terrell  
Dr. Yolanda Spooney  
Ms. Donna Swiney, Assistant Secretary  
Mr. Aaron Whittington

**Others in Attendance:** Mr. Colin Campbell, former Board of Trustee Member  
Ms. Eola Dance, National Park Service ("NPS")  
Ms. Kym Hall, NPS  
Ms. Katheryn F. Surface Burks, Office of the Attorney General  
Mr. Braxton M. Williams, Office of the Attorney General

The Honorable Jim Moran called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. He welcomed the members to the first virtual meeting and reminded the members it is a public meeting and should be conducted in the same manner as an in-person meeting. He also gave instructions on public comment.

Ms. Donna Swiney called the roll and determined that a quorum was present.

#### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### **Minutes from June 18, 2020 Meeting**

Mr. Moran called for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 18, 2020 meeting.

**MOTION:** I move that the FMA Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the June 18, 20, 2020 meeting as circulated prior to the meeting (APPENDIX I).

**So moved:** Mr. Reynolds

**Seconded:** Mr. Joseph

**Discussion:** None.

**Unanimously approved.**

#### **A. Reports and Briefings**

##### **1. Nominating Committee Report**

Mr. Reynolds reminded the Board of the slate of officers placed in nomination at the June meeting. The nominees were as follows:

Chairman: Jim Moran  
Vice-Chairman: Mary Bunting  
Secretary/Treasurer: John Hutcheson  
Assistant Secretary: Donna Swiney

**MOTION:** I move that the FMA Board of Trustees approve the election of officers as presented.

**So moved:** Mr. Reynolds  
**Seconded:** Dr. Elgersman Lee  
**Discussion:** None.  
**Unanimously approved.**

2. Commending Resolution: Colin Campbell, Former Trustee

Director Glenn Oder gave special thanks to Delegate Mugler and her staff for preparing the Resolution which was unanimously approved and read the Resolution in its entirety. Chairman Moran expressed his appreciation for Mr. Campbell. Several board members also expressed their thanks to Mr. Campbell for his service on the Board as well as his accomplishments. Mr. Campbell thanked the Board for this great honor.

3. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director's report was included in the Board package (APPENDIX II). Chairman Moran recognized the challenges the FMA has had with COVID-19 and praised Mr. Oder for his communication, keeping the staff together, and his communication with the Board. The staff performed remarkably well in overcoming the obstacles and serving the interest of the Authority. Mr. Oder thanked Chairman Moran for his kind words and for recognizing the team effort. He then welcomed Dr. Françoise Bonnell as the new Director of Museums, Education & Interpretation. The opening of the Casemate Museum and the Visitor and Education Center was the day of the meeting and will be open Thursdays through Saturdays. The American Revolution project has come to a close. The FMA involvement is readily apparent in a published book with many names also affiliated with NPS and Board members. African Landing Day was held as a virtual event and opens a new world for FMA knowing the message can get out through social media. Mr. Oder thanked the Northam Administration for their support for Fort Monroe, and Ms. Rhonda Williams at OPCRES who went after a grant that would help the Algeroune Oak.

It was asked if the National Center for Freedom recognized the tribe located around Phoebus. Mr. Oder responded that while he did not see anything in the Huntington Ingalls grant presently, he does see it as a part of the story at Fort Monroe. Dr. Bonnell will be setting the priorities for the next three years and will include this.

4. Financial Report

Deputy Executive Director John Hutcheson reviewed the Financial Report included in the Board package (APPENDIX III). He shared that the new introduced budget bill retained the same funding and appropriations for FMA for both years. He stated that the discretionary spending and hiring freeze was still in place with the exception of the Director of Museums, Education & Interpretation approved by Secretary Ball. FY20 audits have a new contract with Cherry Bekaert. Mr. Hutcheson introduced Dr. Yolanda Spooner who started in March and had been important in the audit of the

financial statements. He thanked the finance staff, and residential and commercial property management teams for producing the July 31<sup>st</sup> financial statements.

#### 5. Chairman's Report

Chairman Moran stated that with the challenging circumstances, he was pleased with the progress made, determined to fulfill the Commonwealth's mission on the property. The property was a national and international asset. The entire staff was working very hard and wanted to communicate appreciation to them. The FMA has executive, finance, and nominating committees of the Board. Additionally, the Executive Director has numerous working groups to address issues as they arrive. The committee assignments are included in the Board package (APPENDIX IV). Chairman Moran welcomed the two new Board members.

#### 6. National Park Service Report

Ms. Eola Dance, Acting Superintendent, shared her history with FMA and background to contribute to continued planning efforts. She thanked partners and staff for the virtual African Landing Day, and the Association of African Museums who sponsored the townhall. NPS, in coordination with FMA, is moving forward with the effort to increase visitor services with safety protocol in place. She acknowledged the passing of the Great American Outdoor Act. NPS welcomed the new facility manager on staff.

#### 7. Fort Monroe Foundation Progress Update

The Fort Monroe Foundation Progress Update was provided in the board package (APPENDIX V). Dr. Ayers shared that the FMF is working to maintain contact with donors. The Cabell Foundation awarded a challenge grant and has delayed it for one year due to the crisis. The grant was for the post theater and the memorial project. In anticipation of the renewed emphasis of matching the challenge, the FMF will be working on research and prospect screening. The hope is to have 100% participation from the Board members and staff with the annual fund for the upcoming year.

### **B. Old Business**

#### 1. Memorandum of Agreement FMVEC

Mr. Oder shared that the FMA and NPS continue to work on the memorandum agreement and how to mutually operate the visitor center. The bulk of the agreement is in place and Ms. Dance and Dr. Bonnell will work together on finalizing the agreement and move forward. The Hampton Visitor and Convention Bureau will give a staff member to work the welcome desk during operational hours. It was their effort to unify the City and market the City as a whole.

## 2. Moving Properties to the Marketplace

Mr. Joseph welcomed Mr. Brian Jackson to the Finance Committee who joined and attended the meeting last week. He then shared that the developers are still engaged and making good progress. All work will meet or exceed design guidelines administered by the Historic Preservation Officer and the State's Department of Historic Resources. The NPS was consulted under various agreements and the City of Hampton and the State's Department General Services was involved as needed and when appropriate.

## 3. African Landing Memorial Art Project

Mr. Jarvis shared that Mr. Oder has put together a working group to support the artist, Brian Owens, and staff in developing this project. The artist had shown the working group last year preliminary design concepts and has continued to refine those based on the results of the listening tour. The public will be reengaged in February whether in person or by virtual. The need for the landscape design plan to create a park-like setting around the art project is the next step. The Northam Administration approved the FMA to go forward with hiring a landscape firm to work with the FMA and working group to make sure the landscape design is compatible with the art project. The project has already international interest from slave source sites in Africa. That and the project will help elevate Fort Monroe in the general public's mind as the place where the first Africans arrived, putting Fort Monroe as a travel destination. Mr. Oder expressed appreciation to the Northam Administration that allowed FMA to move forward with this project by lifting the hiring freeze on contractors. Survey work will be in September, conceptional design work will be October and November. Roll something out in February during Black History Month to show the public what has been done.

Concerning the artist tour in February, the Hampton University students were still engaged with that experience even after classes went virtual. The impact of the listening tour transcended the month of March.

## 4. NPS Transfer

Mr. Oder shared that the partnership between FMA and NPS covers many areas including property management. In recent years, the FMA supported the expansion of the NPS at Fort Monroe. A plat to transfer 35+ acres to the National Monument has been recorded. In recent years, reference dates two resolutions for transferring property has been passed. Most recently, Governor Northam encouraged Virginia US Senators to include 35-acre transfer in legislation designed to create the Chesapeake Bay National Recreation Area. One of the goals is to have a Visitor Center at Fort Monroe. The FMA has been actively engaged on two fronts; supporting the transfer and evaluating the expenses.

Concerns were expressed and there was much discussion on the NPS property transfer.

a FLAP grant application. One of the requirements of the FLAP grant was the resolution of the governing body supporting the application, committing the funds for the design and the construction, as well as the continued operation. The Resolution was brought to the Board of Trustees for consideration both to commit on the project and authorize the Executive Director or his designee to sign both the application grant and a letter supporting the project.

**MOTION:** I move that the FMA Board of Trustees approve the resolution

***So moved:*** Mr. Jarvis

***Seconded:*** Dr. Ayers

***Discussion:*** None.

***Unanimously approved.***

5. FOIA and COIA Training – Daniel Ingersoll

The FOIA and COIA training has been postponed to the November meeting.

6. Draft 2021 Meeting Calendar

Director Oder stated the draft 2021 calendar is included in the Board package (APPENDIX VI) for the Board members to review. The final calendar will be approved at the November meeting.

7. Board of Trustees Open Discussion

There was no open discussion.

**D. Closed Session**

1. In accordance with VA code 2.2-3711

- Acquisition or disposition of real property – 2.2-3711(A)(3)
- Personnel Matters – 2.2-3711(A)(1)
- Consultation with Legal Counsel – 2.2-3711(A)(8)

**MOTION:** I move the Fort Monroe Authority Board of Trustees convene in closed session to discuss matters pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia pertaining to acquisition or disposition of real property located at Fort Monroe, in accordance with Section 2.2-3711(A)(3) of the Code of Virginia; personnel matters, in accordance with Section 2.2-3711(A)(1); and consultation with legal counsel, in accordance with Section 2.2-3711(A)(8) of the Code of Virginia.

***So moved:*** Mr. Joseph.

***Seconded:*** Mr. Reynolds.

***Discussion:*** None.

***Unanimously approved.***

**Reconvene**

**MOTION:** I move that the Fort Monroe Authority Board of Trustees end the closed session to discuss matters pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of

Virginia pertaining to acquisition or disposition of real property located at Fort Monroe; personnel matters; and consultation with legal counsel.

**So moved:** Mr. Joseph.

**Seconded:** Ms. Bunting.

**Discussion:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Unanimously approved.**

**MOTION:** I move that we close the executive session and reconvene an open meeting. Each member will now be asked to certify that only those matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened, were heard, discussed or considered by the Fort Monroe Authority Board of Trustees in executive session.

**So moved:** Mr. Joseph.

**Seconded:** Mr. Reynolds.

**Ayes:** Chairman Moran, Dr. Ed Ayers, Mary Bunting, Benita Byas, Brian Jackson, Dr. Rex Ellis, Destry Jarvis, Jay Joseph, Delegate Mugler, John Reynolds.

**Nays:** None.

**Unanimously approved.**

## Adjournment

Next Meeting is November 19, 2020

**MOTION:** I move the Board adjourn.

**So moved:** Dr. Ellis.

**Seconded:** Delegate Mugler.

**Discussion:** None.

**Unanimously approved.**

There being no further business to come before the Board of Trustees, the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Swiney, Assistant Secretary