

VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION
Report of the Executive Committee
Speaker of the House William J. Howell, Vice-chairman
November 26, 2007

Update on Projects in Development

Museum exhibition - Dr. Charles F. Bryan, Jr., President and CEO, Virginia Historical Society

Dr. Bryan offered an update on the museum exhibition, "Virginia's Civil War: America's Great Turning Point." Andrew Talkov has been hired as exhibit coordinator. In keeping with the Commission's goal of presenting a balanced view of Virginia's participation in the Civil War, the exhibit will profile two great armies: the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of the Potomac. Discussions on artifacts that will be featured as part of the exhibition are underway.

Educational DVD

Staff informed members of the Executive Committee that payment in full has been made for production of the educational DVD that was authorized at the September 26 meeting of the Commission. Production is beginning, and Dr. Robertson will continue to offer further updates.

Projects under Discussion

Document digitization - Dr. Sandra G. Treadway, Librarian of Virginia

Dr. Treadway presented a proposal for a document digitization project that the Commission has previously endorsed in concept. The three-part, six-year program would focus on locating Civil War-era materials currently in private hands, scanning them, and suggesting possible repositories for permanent retention of original materials. The digital collection assembled during the sesquicentennial would become an enduring product of the Commission to be available on the Commission's website, and after 2015, through the Library of Virginia's website. The project would begin in 2010 with the hiring of a full-time project coordinator who would publicize the project throughout the state and plan its logistics. Once underway, a processing archivist would be hired for cataloging and description of the collections. Scanning capabilities would be available on-site at local repositories, especially targeting individuals who are not willing to donate their collections.

A preliminary budget for the project is \$665,432. Staff of the Library of Virginia and the Commission will work on securing additional funding for the project outside of general fund appropriations.

A motion was made by Delegate Algie Howell and seconded by Dr. Bryan to bring the proposal before the full Commission with a recommendation to approve it in concept.

Other projects - Cheryl Jackson, Project Manager/Staff Coordinator

Ms. Jackson updated members on the status of other projects that the Commission is considering:

Signature Tours: The National Endowment for the Humanities has indicated an interest in partial funding of the Signature Tours by entering into a three-way Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the NEH, the National Park Service, and the Commonwealth (through the Commission) to develop specialized battlefield tours for interactive webcasting. Along with representatives of the National Park Service, staff will work with the NEH to explore and develop the MOU. The first of the Signature Tours will be in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, where the Commission will travel on June 25-26, 2009 to the kickoff the sesquicentennial commemoration.

Signature Conferences: Workgroup 2 (Signature Events and Activities) is reviewing feedback on the proposal for Signature Conferences. The first conference, "*The Coming of the Civil War*," is planned for spring of 2009 at the University of Richmond, and will be chaired by Dr. Edward L. Ayres. Letters of invitation will be sent to each college and university to opt-in for consideration as the host institution for ensuing conferences.

HistoryMobile: The task force continues to meet to gather data about the type of vehicle needed, plan exhibit logistics, develop a budget, and seek funding partners. The task force will make a recommendation at a later meeting.

Development Update - Danielle Watkins, Development Officer

Ms. Watkins presented a case statement that will serve as the foundation for the Commission's development efforts. During the fundraising process, the case statement is an initial request from a potential funder to gain a better understanding of the Commission's mission, goals, objectives, and funding opportunities. Members of the Executive Committee agreed to recommend adoption of the case statement.

Development staff have also established a phased campaign for fundraising, and begun identifying foundations whose fields of interest are in line with the mission, goals and objectives of the Commission. Last, staff is working closely with the National Endowment for the Humanities for grant-funding of many of the Commission's initiatives.

Special License Plate Legislation - Cheryl Jackson, Project Manager/Staff Coordinator

Ms. Jackson reviewed a draft bill which, if enacted by the General Assembly, would authorize a revenue-sharing special license plate for the sesquicentennial commemoration. The Executive Committee will recommend adoption of the proposed legislation to the full Commission.

Overview of 501(c)(3) Articles of Incorporation - E. M. Miller, Jr, Director, Division of Legislative Services

Mr. Miller reviewed Articles of Incorporation for the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Foundation, a nonprofit that would be formed to accept gifts, grants, donations and bequests in furtherance of the Commission's work. The Articles were filed with the State Corporation Commission on October 18, 2007. Mr. Miller also reviewed the Bylaws of the nonprofit corporation, which will be considered for adoption at a later meeting.