

**VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION**  
**Report of the Executive Committee**

Speaker of the House of Delegates William J. Howell, Chairman

June 8, 2010

9:30 a.m.

Executive Committee members present: Speaker William J. Howell, Senator Charles, J. Colgan, Sr., Delegate Algie T. Howell, Jr., and Dr. Paul A. Levensgood.

**I. Call to Order**

Speaker Howell called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. He announced that Delegate Lingamfelter has been appointed to the Executive Committee, to fill a vacancy created by the retirement of Delegate Eisenberg.

**II. Federal Enhancement Grant Project: Sesquicentennial and Scenic Byways Promotion - Mike Estes, Director, Local Assistance Division, VDOT**

Mr. Estes presented an overview of the Federal Enhancement Grant Project: Sesquicentennial and Scenic Byways Promotion, a partnership between VDOT, the Commission, the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), Virginia Wineries, Civil War Trails, and the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT).

By way of background, Mr. Estes explained that 10% of the federal funds VDOT receives must be used for non-motorized projects. Federal transportation enhancement funds are administered by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), which receives roughly 150-200 applications per year, in turn awarding grants to approximately 100 projects. In the coming fiscal year, the CTB has set aside approximately three million dollars for a statewide initiative aimed at promotion of the scenic byways program and the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War.

The main components of the partnership initiative include:

- (1) Acquisition of unprotected battlefield land in the Piedmont and south-central portions of Virginia in partnership with the CWPT;
- (2) Development of smart phone GPS-enabled applications for visitors to download and use in touring Virginia's Civil War battlefields;
- (3) Working with Virginia Civil War Trails to update maps and install gateway markers in the state's Welcome Centers; and
- (4) Establishing interactive multimedia centers in Welcome Centers throughout the state that coalesce information from the (i) Scenic Roads in Virginia map, (ii) Then/Now map on the Commission's website, and (iii) map of Virginia wineries.

Mr. Estes indicated that the funds will be available in October 2010 and a vendor should be on board by early 2011, with an estimated launch of summer 2011. In response to questions, Mr. Estes estimated that the initial phase of the project will include installation of the multimedia centers in six or seven Welcome Centers.

### III. Status Update of *Civil War 150 HistoryMobile*

**Storyline Development:** *John Hennessy, Chief Historian / Chief of Interpretation, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park*

Mr. Hennessy summarized a revised and enhanced overview/script for the *Civil War 150 HistoryMobile*. Considering that the *HistoryMobile* is intended to function primarily as an educational tool accessible to school children, Mr. Hennessy advised that the contents should contain limited text, and be highly interactive and experiential. Mr. Hennessy continued by outlining the basic structure of the storyline describing what visitors will experience as they move through the *HistoryMobile*, starting with an introductory short film on the causes of the Civil War using actual dialogue from that time period to frame the debate leading up to the war. Visitors will then proceed to an immersive environment in which sight and sound will be used to convey the human experience of battle. From the battlefield experience, visitors will move to the facade of a dilapidated farm house where the focus shifts to the home front. Visitors will participate in a decision-making interactive that emphasizes the dilemmas that many Virginians faced during the war. Next, visitors will encounter *Journey to Freedom*, an interactive exhibit that will guide visitors through the decisions that faced slaves during the war. Finally, visitors will enter the concluding portion of the exhibit, which will include an overview of the losses, gains, and legacies of the Civil War, with a focus on encouraging visitors to further explore the many historical sites and battlefields in Virginia. In response to questions, Mr. Hennessy assured members that stories of slavery and freedom are interwoven throughout the exhibit.

Members were pleased with Mr. Hennessy's suggested revisions to the storyline for the *HistoryMobile* and expressed appreciation for his outstanding work. Members agreed that this storyline would move forward.

**Donation of Tractor:** *Dale Bennett, Executive Vice President, Virginia Trucking Association*

Mr. Bennett provided a status update on the donation of a tractor for the *HistoryMobile*. Mr. Bennett explained that he is still in discussions with Scott Kress, Vice President of Sales at Volvo Trucks North America and they are amenable to donating a tractor for the project; however, the details have not yet been finalized. Mr. Bennett further stated that Mr. Kress indicated that at the very least Volvo would refurbish a 2006 or 2007 tractor with a sleeper cab and provide it at a low-cost lease rate. Mr. Bennett expressed his desire to continue negotiating with Volvo to try and secure a tractor and trailer free of charge.

**RFP Progress and Schedule:** *Cheryl Jackson, Executive Director, Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission*

Ms. Jackson presented a brief overview of development of the *HistoryMobile* and the process of issuing an RFP for its fabrication and tour management. Ms. Jackson indicated that an initial estimate for fabrication of the storyline as presented is approximately \$770,000 with an estimated \$550,000 to operate the *HistoryMobile* for a 24- week tour. A significant portion of the costs will be paid with grant funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Altria, Wal-Mart, and other private donors.

Ms. Jackson suggested the following development schedule over the next few months:

- (1) June - continue to hone storyline with John Hennessy and staff of the Virginia Historical Society;
- (2) July/August - Issue an RFP for fabrication and tour management;
- (3) August/September - Evaluate bids from RFP and present recommendations to Executive Committee for consideration and approval;
- (4) October - have designer in place. This schedule will allow for fabrication in early 2011, with an estimated launch date of spring/summer 2011.

Executive Committee members agreed to move ahead with the *HistoryMobile* development as Ms. Jackson proposed.

Speaker Howell asked Ms. Jackson to continue working with Dale Bennett on tour logistics and to secure a donated or low-cost tractor trailer. Speaker Howell suggested they call on Bill Graves, CEO and President of the American Trucking Association as well as on Rick Holcomb, Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles.

**IV. Site recommendations for VHS exhibition: "An American Turning Point: The Civil War in Virginia" - Dr. Paul Levensgood, President and CEO, Virginia Historical Society**

Dr. Levensgood informed members that, since the Manassas Museum had to table plans for an expansion, it would no longer be able to host the gallery exhibition as planned due to lack of sufficient space. However, Dr. Levensgood stated that the gallery exhibition would still be able to travel to Northern Virginia and be on display at the National Marine Corps Museum in Quantico. Advantages of this location include its proximity to I-95 and the fact that the museum boasts 500,000 visitors per year. Further, the Marine Corps Museum will be able to accommodate the entire exhibition at one time due to a planned expansion of the location. The exhibition is slated to be at the Marine Corps Museum from January through June of 2014. Dr. Levensgood also explained that although Manassas cannot host the gallery exhibition as it will appear at the Marine Corps Museum, it will still be able to host the panel version of the exhibition. Additionally, an enhanced version of the panel exhibit will be on display at the Fredericksburg Area Museum.

Delegate Howell made a motion that the Commission approve the change of venue from the Manassas Museum to the National Marine Corps Museum. The motion was seconded by Senator Colgan and passed unanimously.

**V. Virginia Tourism: Request for Funding of Marketing and Advertising Budget** - *Diane Bechamps, Vice-President of Marketing and Richard Lewis, Public Relations Manager, Virginia Tourism Corporation*

Mr. Lewis presented an overview of sesquicentennial marketing and public relations activities undertaken by the VTC to date. In addition to conducting research to update the profile of Civil War travel in Virginia, the VTC has also administered the sesquicentennial marketing grant program awarding over \$33,000 to local committees throughout the state. Mr. Lewis continued by outlining future promotional activities planned for the sesquicentennial that include: commercial spots; newspaper ads; international marketing in United Kingdom and Germany; e-mail blasts; and developing a webpage dedicated to the sesquicentennial commemoration. Further, Mr. Lewis explained that one of the Virginia Travel Guides will feature Civil War travel in Virginia on its cover and will have four pages dedicated to the topic in 2011.

Ms. Bechamps reiterated that Civil War travelers as a group are a tourism driver for Virginia, staying longer than other tourists and spending 50% more. Ms. Bechamps continued by reviewing the costs associated with the future activities Mr. Lewis previously outlined. Additionally, Ms. Bechamps discussed the cost of making VTC's website [www.virginia.org](http://www.virginia.org) interactive, advertising the Commission's document digitization program, and creating a children's program where they are rewarded based on the number of Civil War sites they visit. Ms. Bechamps explained that given the costs of advertising today, she estimates that all of these activities will cost an additional \$650,000.

Executive Committee members had a number of questions regarding the cost of the proposal. Ms. Bechamps confirmed that the VTC will receive an additional \$7.2 million in the next two fiscal years through the appropriation act, leading members to express concern as to the necessity for additional funds for the activities as presented. Ms. Bechamps and Mr. Lewis reiterated VTC's commitment to marketing the sesquicentennial commemoration with or without additional funding.

Members declined to take action on the proposal, requesting instead that VTC work with staff of the Commission, Senate Finance Committee, House Appropriations Committee, and Department of Planning and Budget to pare down the proposed budget, eliminate duplicative and unnecessary spending, and establish performance benchmarks. Once revised, the proposal will be considered at an upcoming meeting.

## **VI. Staff Update - Cheryl Jackson, Executive Director**

### **Funding Allocations: FY10**

Ms. Jackson presented recommendations for funds remaining in the Commission's budget for fiscal year 2010. Ms. Jackson explained that after conferring with finance staff, it was suggested that given the uncertain budgetary times, the bulk of the unexpended funds should be carried over to next fiscal year. However, some of the remaining funds could be used on Commission projects in FY 2010. These projects include an estimated \$30,000 - \$50,000 to develop and install signage promoting the sesquicentennial commemoration in each of the Welcome Centers and other visitor centers throughout Virginia, as well as an additional \$200,000 to double the number of grants available to local sesquicentennial committees.

Senator Colgan made a motion that the suggested funding allocations for FY10 as outlined by Ms. Jackson be approved. The motion was seconded by Delegate Howell and passed unanimously.

### **Logo Requests Approved and Pending**

In accordance with the procedure established by the Executive Committee, Ms. Jackson presented a list of applications to affix the Commission's logo that have been pre-approved by staff. The list includes the following: (1) Museum of the Confederacy and Library of Virginia (lecture at LVA 2/20/2010); (2) City of Newport News (website); (3) Friends of Smith Mountain Lake State Park (display) (4) Manassas Museum (ads; display); (5) Virginia Association of Museums (brochure); (6) Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (posters, displays, flyers); (7) Museum of the Confederacy (lecture); (8) Fredericksburg/ Stafford Regional Committee (exhibits, website, brochures); (9) Friends of Fairfax Station, Inc. (newsletter); (10) Museum of the Confederacy (brochure); (11) Smyth County Committee (letter); (12) Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association (website); (13) Winchester-Frederick CVB (flyers); (14) City of Fairfax (brochures); (15) Booker T. Washington National Monument (brochures, calendar); (16) Washington County Sesquicentennial Committee (calendar); (17) Sully Historic Site (kiosk); (18) Winchester-Frederick County Sesquicentennial Committee/SVBF (map pad); (19) City of Newport News (invitation); (20) Town of Occoquan/Occoquan Historical Society (flyers/website); (21) Winchester-Frederick County Sesquicentennial Committee / SVBF (flyers, poster); (22) Winchester-Frederick County Sesquicentennial Committee / SVBF (banner); and (23) Fairfax County Sesquicentennial Committee (program). Pursuant to the Logo Use Policy, the following application was not approved: Frank Stringfellow Camp #822, Sons of Confederate Veterans (website).

Delegate Howell moved that staff recommendations for approval of logo applications be given final approval by the Executive Committee. The motion was seconded by Senator Colgan and passed unanimously.

### **Advisory Council Meeting**

Ms. Jackson suggested that the Advisory Council be convened later this summer to update members on Commission projects and seek feedback. The Executive Committee agreed and directed Ms. Jackson to proceed with coordinating the meeting.

### **Demonstration of "Walk in Their Footsteps" Database**

Due to time constraints, a demonstration of the *Walk in Their Footsteps* database was tabled until the next meeting.

### **VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.