

Florida Museum of Black History Task Force
Thursday, October 26, 2023–9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough St., Tallahassee, FL 32399
And via GoToMeeting Webinar, ID: 711-570-219

Meeting Minutes

Task Force Members Present In-Person: Howard Holley; Dr. Altony Lee; Gayle Phillips; Sen. Geraldine Thompson
Task Force Members Present Via Webinar: Brian Butler; Rep. Berny Jacques; Terri Lipsey-Scott; Rep. Kiyan Michael; Sen. Bobby Powell

Task Force Members Not Present: N/A

Department of State (DOS) Staff Members Present: Alissa Lotane, Director, Historical Resources; Dr. Angela Tomlinson, Assistant Director, Historical Resources; John Grandage, Assistant Director, Historical Resources; Jon Morris, Deputy General Counsel; Lisa Barton, Chief, Bureau of Historical Museums; Alexys Johnson, Executive Assistant, Division of Historical Resources; Jeremy Heiker, Webinar Facilitator; Alexa Wilson, Grants Specialist; Matt Storey, Archives Historian; Mark Nicolou, Florida Memory Program Director; Mark Ard, Director of External Affairs, Office of the Secretary of State

Members of the Public Present In-Person: Members of the public who spoke during the meeting are noted below, where appropriate.

Members of the Public and Staff Present Via Webinar: 75 individuals registered for the webinar.

Item I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Sen. Geraldine Thompson called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. Roll call confirmed that all Task Force members were present, either in-person or via webinar.

Item II. Introduction of Task Force Members, Staff, & Guests

Task Force members introduced themselves.

Item III. Adoption of Agenda

Dr. Altony Lee moved to adopt the agenda and Terri Lipsey-Scott seconded. The motion passed.

Item IV. Adoption of Minutes from September 25, 2023, Meeting

Sen. Geraldine Thompson requested that staff correct "Commissioners" to "Task Force Members" at the top of the minutes. With this change, Terri Lipsey-Scott moved to adopt the minutes from the September 25, 2023, meeting. Howard Holley seconded. The motion passed.

Item V. Election of Vice Chairperson

Sen. Geraldine Thompson opened the floor to nominations for Vice Chairperson. Brian Butler nominated Rep. Berny Jacques. Rep. Berny Jacques accepted the nomination. No other nominations were brought forward, therefore, Rep. Berny Jacques becomes Vice Chairperson.

Item VI. Discussion of Academic Advisory Council

Jon Morris, Deputy General Counsel, provided comment on the Task Force creating an academic advisory council. He advised against creating a council separate from the Task Force, in order to ensure compliance with Chapter 286, *Florida Statutes*, regarding public notice of meetings. He further explained that this would not prohibit individual members of the task force from conducting their own research, having discussions with members of the public or education professionals, or providing communications to staff on matters that they wish to come before the Task Force as a whole. Task Force members should coordinate with staff on facilitating participation at future meetings by representatives of the academic or educational communities.

Sen. Geraldine Thompson recognized Rep. Bruce Antone, sponsor of House Bill 1441 that created the Task Force, to provide information about the legislation. Rep. Bruce Antone spoke about his vision for the future museum and provided information about tourism in Orlando and Central Florida.

Discussion ensued regarding the information provided by Rep. Bruce Antone, including construction cost figures, tourism data, and Task Force expectations for how to consider the proposed location, amenities, and scale of the future museum.

Item VII. Discussion of Public Survey

Sen. Geraldine Thompson recognized Alissa Lotane to present on the public survey. Alissa Slade Lotane asked that John Grandage present on the survey.

John Grandage presented on staff progress towards developing a public survey. Discussion ensued about survey methodology, distribution strategies, and timeline. In advance of the next meeting, staff will send the draft survey to Task Force Members, who will provide feedback in preparation for potentially approving the public survey at the November 13 meeting, for public distribution.

Item VIII. Presentation of Existing Museum and Archival Resources

The following representatives from the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network (FAAHPN) spoke about museums in their respective regions:

Althemese Barnes, Founder of the John G. Riley Center & Museum, Tallahassee, and Founder of FAAHPN, introduced FAAHPN.

Walter Gulley Jr., Executive Director, Ella Jordan Black History House Museum, Pensacola, also represented the Chappie James Black History Museum & Flight Academy; and the African American Historical Society Museum, all located in Escambia County.

Gayle Phillips, Executive Director, Lincolnville Museum & Cultural Center, St. Augustine, also represented the John G. Riley Center & Museum, Tallahassee.

Adonnica Toler, Toler-Vision Creative Consulting, also represented the Cotton Club Museum, Gainesville; Clara White Mission & Eartha M.M. White Museum, Jacksonville; and Durkeeville Historical Society & Museum, Jacksonville.

Pasha Baker, Executive Director, Goldsboro African American History Museum, Sanford, also represented African American Museum of the Arts, DeLand; Pinellas County African American Museum, Clearwater; Mary Harrell Black History Museum, New Smyrna Beach; and Harry T. & Harriette V. Moore Museum, Mims.

Dr. Martha Bireda, Executive Director, Blanchard House Museum, Punta Gorda, also represented Spady Black History Museum, West Palm Beach; and the African-American Research Library & Cultural Center, Fort Lauderdale.

Sen. Geraldine Thompson called for a short break after the FAAHPN presentations and before the DOS presentations.

John Grandage spoke about resources from the Division of Historical Resources.

Matt Storey spoke about resources from the Division of Library and Information Services.

Item IX. Break (Optional)

See above, the break began at 11:35 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 11:50 a.m.

Item X. Discussion of Museum Location

Sen. Geraldine Thompson called upon each Task Force Member to share their thoughts on the location for the proposed museum. As part of this discussion, Task Force Members asked staff to facilitate presentations at the November 13 meeting by representatives from Florida’s Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs). Task Force Members want to ensure that more robust information is provided by organizations that represent potential museum sites so that Task Force Members can hear from all interested parties and other stakeholders before developing any recommendations on location.

Item XI. Discussion of Museum Design

Alissa Lotane updated the Task Force on DOS efforts to procure architectural services to provide conceptual renderings and schematic floor plans for presentation at future meetings.

Item XII. Future Meeting Dates, Number of Meetings & Agendas

Staff will circulate a meeting poll to determine potential dates and times for the December 2023 meeting. Task Force Members recommended that the meeting be held by webinar only and discussed moving the discussion about marketing, which would involve the presentations by DMOs, to the November 13 meeting and shifting discussion about educational components to the December 2023 meeting.

Item XIII. Task Force Open Discussion and Questions

Task Force Members discussed organizations that would be appropriate to present at future meetings, including the Smithsonian, the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), and Association of African American Museums (AAAM). Task Force Members discussed potential visits to museums by members to gather additional information and ideas for consideration when developing the future museum.

Item XIV. Public Comment

Ted Ellis, Director of the Civil Rights Institute at Florida State University, offered his support and willingness to serve as a resource to the Task Force.

Staff read into the record comments received from the public. Task Force Members responded to public comments.

Item XV. Adjourn

Sen. Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Altony Lee seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

 Presiding Officer

 State Historic Preservation Officer and Director, Division of Historical Resources

Approved: 3/7/24