

**Approved Minutes**  
JOINT TRAINING SESSION FOR THE  
STATE REVIEW BOARD and BOARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES  
**March 15, 2023**

Reynolds Room, Virginia Museum of History and Culture, Richmond, Virginia

**Board of Historic Resources Members Present**

W. Tucker Lemon, Chair  
Aimee K. Jorjani  
Trip Pollard  
Dr. Ken Rutherford

**State Review Board Members Present**

John Mullen, Chair  
Dr. Eleanor Breen  
Jeff Klee  
Greg Rutledge  
Carol Shull

**Board of Historic Resources Members Absent**

Dr. Colita Nichols-Fairfax, Vice-Chair  
Karice Luck-Brimmer

**State Review Board Members Absent**

Jody L. Allen, Vice-Chair  
Dr. Larissa Smith

**Department of Historic Resources (DHR) Staff Present**

Julie Langan, Director  
Stephanie Williams, Deputy Director  
Kyle Edwards  
Jess Hendrix  
Elizabeth Lipford  
Blake McDonald  
Brad McDonald  
Megan Melinat  
Jolene Smith  
Andy Poole  
Tim Roberts  
Caitlin Sylvester  
Marc Wagner

Joanna Green  
Joanna McKnight  
Amanda Terrell  
Aubrey VonLindern  
Jen Pullen

The joint training session began at 1:00 p.m. DHR Director Julie Langan opened the meeting with introductions and an overview of the Department of Historic Resources (DHR).

DHR's Grant Coordinator, Caitlin Sylvester; Community Outreach Coordinator, Tim Roberts; Tribal Outreach Coordinator, Jess Hendrix; Architectural Survey & Cost Share Grant Program Manager, Blake McDonald provided updates to each board regarding current activities of their respective programs.

Marc Wagner, Senior Architectural Historian for DHR's Eastern Region Preservation Office, made the following presentation to both Boards.

The joint training session ended at approximately 3:00 p.m.

TRAINING SESSION FOR THE  
BOARD OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

March 15, 2023

Reynolds Room, Virginia Museum of History and Culture, Richmond, Virginia

**Board of Historic Resources Members Present:**

W. Tucker Lemon, Chair  
Aimee K. Jorjani  
Trip Pollard  
Dr. Ken Rutherford

**Department of Historic Resources (DHR)**

**Staff Present:**

Julie Langan, Director  
Stephanie Williams, Deputy Director  
Kyle Edwards  
Jess Hendrix  
Elizabeth Lipford  
Dr. Jennifer Loux  
Brad McDonald  
Megan Melinat  
Wendy Musumeci  
Karri Richardson  
Jolene Smith  
Andy Poole

**Board of Historic Resources Members Absent:**

Dr. Colita Nichols Fairfax, Vice-Chair  
Karice Luck-Brimmer

The Board of Historic Resources reconvened at 3:19 p.m.

**THE VIRGINIA HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKER PROGRAM**

**HIGHWAY MARKERS**

**Marker Production Update:**

Dr. Jennifer Loux presented the following update on highway marker production:

Currently there are 46 markers on order with a handful of markers still awaiting site approval. The foundry has agreed to produce two markers per week until the current backlog has been satisfied. Dr. Loux anticipates that marker dedications will increase in the coming months and encouraged Board members to attend dedications.

Board Comments Summary: Board members asked about current marker costs and if another foundry has been identified to produce the markers. Dr. Loux informed the Board that the current cost for marker production is \$2,880, and only one other foundry has been identified, but it would charge more than \$7,000 per marker.

**Local Marker Programs:**

Dr. Loux presented the following information on Local Marker Programs:

Dr. Loux presented Virginia Code §10.1-2209 which states that localities cannot create a local marker program without approval by the Board of Historic Resources. Additionally, the Board must approve markers to be placed on public lands (including multi-jurisdictional signage such as Civil War Trails, etc.). Local markers must be differentiated from DHR's highway markers in design, size, and appearance. Dr. Loux provided information and

context for the Nat Turner Trail local marker program which is currently being installed in the town of Courtland in Southampton County (14 of 19 markers have already been installed). While the County was not aware that it had to obtain the Board's approval for these markers, the design, size, and appearance is differentiated from DHR's highway markers. However, the County neglected to include the name of the governing body which approved the text of the marker (Southampton Historical Society) which is a requirement per §10.1-2209. Dr. Loux also provided the Board with a list of local marker programs.

Board Comments Summary: Board members asked why DHR marker demand is so high despite the rising costs of marker production. Dr. Loux explained that history has become a hot-button issue over the past few years and therefore more people are interested in commemorating historic sites and events across the Commonwealth.

### **Highway Marker Objections:**

Dr. Loux presented the following information on objections to highway makers:

Per §10.1-2209, only the Director and the Board have authority over DHR's Highway Marker Program. There is currently no policy in place regarding objections to highway markers. This has become an issue recently due to objections to two highway markers that were previously approved by the Board but not yet installed and removal of two highway markers by localities. Highway marker staff is now seeking the Board's input to determine if a formal policy is needed, and if so, what that policy may entail.

Board Comments Summary: Board members noted that objections to each highway marker situation are unique. However, the Board questioned whether or not it should respond to objections if the markers meet the standards for the application process and receive Board approval. Board members asked if there is any public review of a marker before it is approved by the Board. Director Langan stated that the only current public review is the Board meeting. Board members suggested that DHR should consider formally notifying localities about proposed highway markers thirty (30) days before the Board meeting for which the marker will be considered. Several Board members emphasized that the Board would consider the objection, but the objector would not have veto power. Should locality objections be received prior to the Board meeting, the Board would consider these objections at the Board meeting. Dr. Loux noted that in order to provide notice to localities, the marker text must be finalized. Currently marker text is not finalized until a week before the Board meeting, so staff would have to make significant adjustments to the entire marker review process. Board members also questioned if DHR has any enforcement ability if a marker is removed. Director Langan cited a past case wherein a county removed a highway marker without notifying DHR. The Office of the Attorney General sent a letter to the county informing them that marker removal is an illegal act but there were no repercussions. Dr. Loux stated that marker rejection and/or removal is very rare, ±1% of all markers have been rejected or removed over the 96-year history of the Highway Marker Program. Board members also asked if DHR has consulted with marker programs in other states on this issue. Dr. Loux stated that she has not been in contact with other statewide marker programs on this issue, but she will do so. Director Langan stated again that staff was not expecting answers at this meeting and asked that the Board members continue to consider this issue.

The Marker portion of the agenda ended at 4:10 p.m.

### **EASEMENT PROGRAM**

Megan Melinat, Director of Preservation Incentives Division, briefly reviewed basic criteria for Easement Program eligibility. Ms. Melinat also reviewed the Easement Program portfolio which includes over 675 easement properties covering ±77,000 acres across the Commonwealth. Karri Richardson, Easement Program Specialist, outlined the easement application process as well as the current open projects and the number of new easement applications received since March 2022. Wendy Musumeci, Easement Program Coordinator, reviewed restrictions and provisions found in typical DHR easements. Musumeci also highlighted the purpose of and qualifications for the Virginia Battlefield Preservation Fund ("VBPF") grant program and noted that it will now

be administered by the Easement Program. Changes to VBPF include a shorter grant application, a virtual grant workshop and an updated grant agreement. Kyle Edwards, Easement Program Archaeologist, presented a list of nine new easements recorded since March 2022. Finally, Brad McDonald, Easement Program Stewardship Coordinator, noted that the stewardship numbers for site visits have significantly increased following the addition of Elizabeth Lipford, Easement Stewardship Specialist. In the past year, stewardship staff have conducted 347 site visits to easement properties, or half of DHR's 675 easements. McDonald also stated that he and Ms. Melinat have reviewed 108 project review requests in the past year.

Comments Summary: Board members requested general information about outreach to new easement property owners and violations. Mr. McDonald explained that staff tries to stay up to date on easement property conveyances and routinely reaches out to new owners to see if they have any questions about DHR's easement restrictions. In response to a question regarding easement violations enforcement, Ms. Melinat provided the Board with a summary of a recent major violation and the remediation that the property owner agreed to undertake in order to correct the violation. Ms. Melinat also noted that when considering violation remedies, staff's goal is to balance the preservation negative aspects of a violation with a preservation positive solution. Director Langan stated that DHR tries to negotiate settlements with property owners whenever possible. Mr. McDonald noted that having an additional stewardship staff member has increased property owners' accessibility to DHR and this may play a role in preventing, or at least decreasing, easement violations.

The BHR meeting was adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

TRAINING SESSION FOR THE  
STATE REVIEW BOARD  
March 15, 2023

Collections Study Room, Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221

**State Review Board Members Present**

John Mullen, Chair  
Dr. Eleanor Breen  
Jeff Klee  
Greg Rutledge  
Carol Shull

**Department of Historic Resources (DHR)  
Staff Present**

Amanda Terrell  
Marc Wagner  
LaToya Gray-Sparks  
Michael Pulice  
Aubrey Von Lindern  
Joanna McKnight

**State Review Board Members Absent**

Dr. Jody L. Allen, Vic-Chair  
Dr. Larissa Smith

The State Review Board reconvened at approximately 3:20 p.m. The following presentations were made to the Board regarding DHR's National/State Register program.