

# MEMORANDUM

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TO: Virginia Board of Historic Resources

FROM: BIPOC Grant Fund Working Group

RE: 2023 Virginia's Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Historic Preservation Grant Funding Recommendations

DATE: March 20, 2024

Chapters 185 and 186 of the 2022 Acts of Assembly, codified as Virginia Code Section 10.1-2202.5, established the Virginia Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Historic Preservation Fund (BIPOC). The purpose of the legislation is to create a grant program to protect and support Virginia's historically underserved and underrepresented communities and the cultural and historical sites associated with them. This fund will provide grants for the acquisition, protection, and rehabilitation of historic and archaeological sites of significance associated with Virginia's Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

On February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, DHR issued the Project Screening Form (pre-application) and received 56 submissions. Of those, 40 projects were determined preliminarily eligible by the DHR staff in the BIPOC Fund Working Group for the grant program and were invited to submit a full application. DHR then received 32 completed full applications. The BIPOC Fund Working Group reviewed those applications for completion and grant program eligibility and from those 32, 14 were determined complete and eligible for grant funding and were elevated to the scoring review panel.

On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, following application scoring, a review panel composed of Joseph Rogers, Manager of Partnerships & Community Engagement at the Virginia Museum of History and Culture; Savannah Baber, Coordinator for Virginia Indian Programs at Virginia Humanities; and Julie Langan, DHR Director and Virginia's State Historic Preservation Officer; convened to recommend grant awards for the first round of BIPOC Grant funding.

To reach the first-round full funding amount of approximately \$2,500,000 the scoring review panel and DHR recommend funding nine projects for a total of \$2,514,254 with projects ranging in budget from \$78,758 to \$771,309. This will include six rehabilitation/ stabilization projects, two data recovery projects, and one cemetery project that includes both. The funding for these projects covers 9 different localities including six grant projects in the Eastern region and three grant projects in the Northern region.

All applicants are being informed of the funding recommendations on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Due to the discrepancy between the legislation language and the 2022-2024 biennium budget language, DHR will not be able to begin funding dispersal for the awarded applicants until the budget is signed by the governor, mostly likely before June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. In the meantime, DHR grant staff will be conducting initial site visits and on-site meetings with grantees. Applicants who were not selected in this first round of funding are encouraged to reapply for the next round in early 2025. As with the first round, DHR will begin assisting interested applicants including hosting an information session and application workshop later in the year.

The projects recommended for funding are included in more detail on the following page and are listed in alphabetical order.

| <b>Project Name</b>   | <b>Applicant</b>                              | <b>Location</b>               | <b>Funding Amount</b> | <b>Project Description</b>  |
|---|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <b><i>Review Committee Recommendations:</i></b>                                     |   |                               |                       |   |
| <b>Cantauncack Archaeological Survey</b>  | Flagler College & College of William and Mary | Hayes/ Eastern Region         | \$136,497             | Working alongside a Virginia Indian Advisory Counsel and marine scientists, archaeologists from William & Mary and Flagler College seek funds for surveying and excavating oyster shell-rich archaeological deposits from the Powhatan town of Cantauncack. This will be done using traditional excavation methods as well non-invasive ground-penetrating radar and magnetometry surveys to understand the nature and extent of shell-bearing deposits at the site. This funding will support the first phase of this two-phase project. |
| <b>Chatsworth School Stabilization Project</b>                                      | Chatsworth School Museum                      | Henrico/ Eastern Region       | \$86,700              | Chatsworth School, a partially Rosenwald-funded school for Black children, now functions as a museum. Rehabilitation funding is sought for external sheathing and roof repairs, as well as increasing accessibility though the installation for an ADA access ramp and gravel for the parking area.   |
| <b>Drexel-Morrell ADA Access and Accessibility</b>                                  | Belmead on the James, Inc.                    | Powhatan/ Eastern Region      | \$450,000             | Funding is sought to provide ADA compatible access to the Drexel-Morrell Center that will allow the facility to operate as a fully approved Community Center that focuses on local Black history. This will include VDOT compliant property access and ADA compliant accessibility including lift, restroom, parking, and sidewalks.  |
| <b>Germanna BIPOC Archaeology, Engagement, and Research Project (GBAER Project)</b> | Historic Germanna                             | Locust Grove/ Northern Region | \$292,510             | The GBAER project aims to deepen understanding and fill a gap in BIPOC history and community connections in a region long overshadowed by a predominating focus on Civil War history. Funding is sought for two main project objectives: archaeological investigations of already identified BIPOC sites (Spotsylvania County Courthouse, east end of the Enchanted Castle, and associated BIPOC-related sites) and outreach and engagement with the Tribal and Black communities related to those sites.                                 |
| <b>John Wesley Community Church Restoration Project, Waterford</b>                  | Waterford Foundation, Inc.                    | Waterford, Northern Region    | \$225,000             | Largely built by hand by the members of the congregation, the church is one of three significant Black history sites in Waterford. Funding will support exterior structural stabilization and restoration work including addressing ADA accessibility as well as stabilizing the interior balcony, which is the first half of planed restoration. The property will be transferred to a new non-profit formed by church descendants following full restoration.   |

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|--|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Rappahannock Chief Otho S. &amp; Susie P. Nelson House Rehabilitation</b> | Rappahannock Tribe of Virginia                   | St. Stephens Church/ Eastern Region | \$771,309             | At the Chief Otho S. & Susie P. Nelson House, the Rappahannock Tribe launched efforts to secure state and Federal recognition, battled Virginia's 1924 Racial Identity law denying Indian identity, operated an Indian school and apothecary, and began the fight for equal rights that continues today. Funding is sought for interior finishing – walls, plumbing, interior electrical and mechanical, and fixtures, as well as an accessible bathroom building and ramp/entry area to the house.   |
| <b>Restoration of St. John Rosenwald School Phase IV</b>                     | St. John Family Life and Fitness Center (SJFLFC) | Gordonsville/ Northern Region       | \$138,480             | The St. John School was built in 1923 using Rosenwald funding and served the Black community in the Cobham and Gordonsville areas of Albemarle County until 1954. Funding is sought for the final phase of a multi-phase rehabilitation project that began in 2003. The project scope involves siding and window repairs, interior and exterior paint, restoring the flooring, and repairing the roof and roof structure.   |
| <b>Salem School Stabilization Project</b>                                    | Salem School Preservation Committee, Inc.        | Red Oak/ Eastern Region             | \$335,000             | Salem School was constructed in 1924 for the education of rural Black students, funded by the Black community, school boards, and the Rosenwald Fund. It is an unusual three-teacher school. Due to water infiltration, funding is sought for an initial stabilization project to repair structural deficiencies, replace roofing, repair clapboarding, and restore windows.  |
| <b>Woodland Cemetery/Grounds &amp; Chapel Restoration Project</b>            | Woodland Restoration Foundation                  | Richmond/ Eastern Region            | \$78,758              | This Woodland Cemetery was built during the Jim Crow as a resting place for the Black community and many of the interred were instrumental in the growth and development of Richmond. Funds are sought to restore the stability, access, and use of the historic chapel for volunteers. This will include installing HVAC, repairing failing windows, and ensuring the walkways and chapel entrance are ADA complaint and accessible. Funding is also sought for a ground penetrating radar survey of the site to make sure the surrounding burials are identified and not disturbed. |
| <b>Total:</b>  |  |                                     | <b>\$2,514,254</b>    |   |