

Florida Museum of Black History Task Force
Monday, November 13, 2023–1:00 p.m. to 5:00 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; Rep. Berny Jacques; Dr. Altony Lee; Gayle Phillips; Sen. Geraldine Thompson, Chairperson

Task Force Members Present Via Webinar: Brian Butler; Terri Lipsey-Scott; Rep. Kiyon Michael

Task Force Members Not Present: Sen. Bobby Powell

Department of State (DOS) Staff Members Present: Alissa Slade Lotane, Director, Historical Resources; John Grandage, Assistant Director, Historical Resources; Jon Morris, Deputy General Counsel, Florida Department of State; Alexys Johnson, Executive Assistant, Division of Historical Resources; Jeremy Heiker, Webinar Facilitator; Alexa Wilson, Grants Specialist, Division of Historical Resources; Mark Ard, Director of External Affairs, Office of the Secretary of State; Lisa Barton, Director, Museum of Florida History

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 Present Via Webinar: Members of the public who spoke during the meeting are noted below, where appropriate.

Item I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Sen. Geraldine Thompson called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m. Roll call confirmed quorum.

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

Task Force members introduced themselves. Alissa Slade Lotane introduced herself and Division staff present in person.

Item III. Adoption of Agenda

Terri Lipsey-Scott moved to adopt the agenda. Howard Holley seconded. The motion passed.

Item IV. Adoption of Minutes from October 26, 2023, Meeting

Terri Lipsey-Scott moved to adopt the minutes from the October 26, 2023, meeting. Howard Holley seconded. The motion passed.

Item V. Approval of Public Survey

John Grandage discussed the public survey. Task Force members offered suggestions for improvement. Howard Holley suggested allowing survey respondents to indicate their residency and affiliation. Discussion ensued. Task Force members also directed staff to distribute the survey as widely as possible, noting potential interest groups and avenues for dissemination. Sen. Geraldine Thompson called for a roll call vote to approve the public survey. All Task Force members present voted to approve the survey. Staff will finalize changes and distribute the survey as discussed.

Item VI. Information on Marketing Plan

Mark Ard discussed the marketing plan, as required by the legislation, including involvement from Visit Florida. Next, Malinda Horton, Executive Director, Florida Association of Museums, broadly discussed issues facing Florida's museums and considerations for creating the new proposed museum. Dr. Altony Lee brought up issues regarding funding and considering locations with an existing donor base. Discussion ensued. Brian Butler asked about best practices for museum budgets, in terms of percentages from earned revenue, versus grants, endowments, donations, and other means of support, etc., to fund large museums, offering Florida State Parks as a potential model to examine for guidance. Malinda Horton provided information on typical museum budget arrangements and best practices but noted

that these can vary from site to site. Gayle Phillips offered perspective on issues facing small museums, in the context of competition for funding and support, and provided various sources for more information on this and other questions raised. Malinda Horton highlighted ways that small museums and regional organizations in Florida collaborate to share resources and foster connections with the public and with supporters. Staff will gather related guidance documents from organizations like the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) to share with the Task Force.

Sen. Geraldine Thompson asked members to provide suggestions on other groups that should present before the Task Force, including educational associations and marketing organizations, to generate further discussion on this topic.

Item VII. Presentations on Museum Locations

Sen. Geraldine Thompson acknowledged Angela Stack, Vice President for Public Affairs and Community Relations, who spoke on behalf of Orlando International Airport. Brian Butler asked about future trends for the Brightline rail system. Angela Starke provided updates on the newly opened section of the system that connects Orlando to Miami.

Sen. Geraldine Thompson acknowledged Kristin Westover, Director of External Affairs, who spoke on behalf of Visit Orlando. Rep. Berny Jacques asked for data on the percentage of visitors to Orlando who participated in cultural tourism. Kristin Westover stated that 17% of visitors participated in cultural tourism activities while in her market area, which equates to about 10.4 million people on an annual basis.

Sen. Geraldine Thompson acknowledged Jennifer Vigil, who was scheduled to speak on behalf of Destination Panama City. Jennifer Vigil was not present. Panama City will be offered another opportunity to present at a future meeting.

Sen. Geraldine Thompson acknowledged Regina Davis, who spoke on behalf of Quincy, Florida, and the Big Bend Community Development Corporation. Dr. Altony Lee asked if the Florida Museum of African American History, which is currently in development for placement in Quincy, is part of the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network. Regina Davis responded that it is not. Sen. Geraldine Thompson asked about current museum visitation and transportation considerations for placing a museum in Quincy. Regina Davis responded that the Florida Museum of African American History is still in development and that the nearest airport to Quincy is in Tallahassee. Gayle Phillips asked about the museum's anticipated square footage. Regina Davis responded that they are planning for about 7,500 square feet, spread out over multiple buildings.

Sen. Geraldine Thompson acknowledged Guilherme "Gui" Cunha, Administrator of the Office of Economic Development and Tourism, who spoke on behalf of Seminole County. Brady Lessard, Economic Development Director, City of Sanford, and Kenneth Bentley, Sanford Airport Authority, also spoke on behalf of Seminole County.

Alissa Slade Lotane asked Task Force members to continue to invite representatives from other organizations to make presentations at future meetings. Members should forward any direct contacts that they have to staff.

Terri Lipsey-Scott said that she submitted a request for the City of St. Petersburg to present in December. Staff will add this organization to the December agenda.

Item VIII. Break (Optional)

Sen. Geraldine Thompson called for a short break at 2:30 p.m. The meeting resumed at 2:40 p.m.

Item IX. Discussion of Museum Location & Governance

Task Force members discussed various factors related to location and governance, including financial support, sustainability, and issues related to other statewide organizations on these topics. Dr. Altony Lee spoke about considerations for state government versus non-profit management of the proposed museum. Dr. Altony Lee also provided insight on museums that are primarily government funded, but that also have an associated non-profit entity

providing non-government support. Discussion ensued on the general structure of existing state-funded museums and similar, state properties managed by a central entity, like Florida State Parks.

Item X. Location Criteria & Museum Visits

Task Force members discussed potential criteria for evaluating locations for the future museum. Discussion ensued on the following points: guidance from leading museum organizations (e.g. American Association for State and Local History, AAM, Association of African American Museums); population; transportation infrastructure; historical significance of the proposed site/community/region; hub and spoke concepts, versus one large museum; campus setting versus a single, large building; availability of land; building footprint and acreage requirements; multipurpose spaces; and parking and large vehicle access. Task Force members also discussed factors related to desired museum amenities, including outdoors spaces, performance spaces, retail, etc.

On the issue of the Task Force traveling to visit museum sites as a group, Alissa Slade Lotane and Jon Morris discussed Sunshine Law compliance and encouraged individual members to visit sites and report findings, or secure presentations by representatives from key Black history museums, or other organizations, at future meetings.

Item XI. Update on Museum Design Solicitation

Alissa Slade Lotane updated Task Force members on the timeline for the design solicitation.

Item XII. Update on Educational Materials

Alissa Slade Lotane provided an overview on topics that would be included in the museum as outlined in the legislation:

- The role of African American participation in defending and preserving Florida and the United States, including, by way of example and without limitation, the contributions of the residents of Fort Mose, the Tuskegee Airman, and all African American veterans
- The history of slavery in the state
- The history of segregation in the state
- Notable African Americans in Florida
- Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, including the founding of Bethune-Cookman University
- The history of historically black colleges and universities in Florida
- The inherent worth and dignity of human life, with a focus on the prevention of genocide

Alissa Slade Lotane requested that if Task Force members wanted scholars to present on these and other subjects at future meetings, please provide their names and contact information to staff.

John Grandage discussed, in general, how museum design relates to museum education, particularly in the context of serving different audiences, by providing some examples from DOS managed museums and historic sites. Task Force members discussed inviting experts from different aspects of the museum field to present at future meetings.

Item XIII. Future Meeting Dates & Agendas

Task Force members indicated a preference for meeting on Mondays or Fridays during the upcoming legislative session. Staff will circulate a digital poll to facilitate scheduling future meetings.

Item XIV. Task Force Open Discussion and Questions

Task Force discussion focused on the possibility of a feasibility study to help determine the best path forward on making objective recommendations regarding the proposed museum. One of the major factors, raised by Brian Butler, is determining the construction cost per square foot for a world class museum. Brian Butler offered that his research indicates this cost can range from between \$800 to \$1100 per square foot, noting that there are many other factors to consider in a final calculation. As a point of reference, Alissa Slade Lotane provided background information, including cost and procurement issues, on a master plan underway for the Museum of Florida History, funded by the 2023 Florida Legislature.

Item XV. Public Comment

Dr. Nashid Madyun, Director of Florida Humanities, provided comments in support of a feasibility study and the need to produce design assets, such as renderings and artwork, as a means of gaining support.

Item XVI. Adjourn

Sen. Geraldine Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Altony Lee seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.

Geraldine F. Thompson Presiding Officer

Alissa Straw State Historic Preservation Officer and Director, Division of Historical Resources

Approved: 3/7/24