

**ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES: February 15, 2023**  
**LLOYD HOUSE, 7 P.M.**  
**220 N. WASHINGTON STREET**

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**Members Present:**

Esther White, Planning District II (Vice Chair)  
Elizabeth Vehmeyer, Member at Large (Secretary)  
Dylan Colligan, Area Business Community Representative  
Rebecca Doser, Visit Alexandria Representative  
John Oldfield, Member at Large  
Richard (Dick) Owens, Friends of Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA) Representative  
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria Association Representative  
Ralph Rosenbaum, Member at Large  
Seth Tinkham, Historic Alexandria

Foundation Representative  
Robert (Scott) Vierick, Alexandria Historical Society Representative  
Paula Whitacre, Planning District III

**Members Excused:**

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I (Chair)  
Nicholas (Nick) Dienna, Member at Large  
Ann Greer, Member at Large  
Michael Johnson, Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage or equivalent organization

**City Staff:**

Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist

**Call to Order**

- Esther White, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**Review and Approval of Minutes**

- AAC members reviewed the Wednesday, January 18 meeting minutes. Ralph Rosenbaum moved to accept the minutes, as amended. Dylan Colligan seconded. Motion passed and minutes approved, as amended.

**Chair Report – Esther White for Ivy Whitlatch**

- Happy 48th Anniversary to the AAC!
- Freedom House Master Planning
  - Scott Vierick agreed to fill in for Paula Whitacre as the representative from AAC.

**AAC Representation Reports**

- HARC Update – Esther White for Ivy Whitlatch
  - HARC meeting next week so no report.
- Waterfront Updates
  - Waterfront Commission - Esther White
    - No report; meeting is next week.
  - African American Heritage Trail Committee - Ted Pulliam
    - Great launch of the southern route of Trail on Saturday, February 4. The event was fully booked. Local news coverage from WTOP and WUSA.

Reminder: Your attendance at AAC meetings is mandatory as part of your appointment. For an excused absence, please call Alexandria Archaeology at 703.746.4399 or email [eleanor.breen@alexandriava.gov](mailto:eleanor.breen@alexandriava.gov) ahead of time.

- There has been some discussion about having a spring event for the Trail outside on the waterfront.
- Seth Tinkham - National Park Service's African American Civil Rights Network (AACRN), in partnership with the Association of African American Museums, has funds available for ACCRN sites to enrich the listed sites and for site improvements. AAC/the City might want to consider listing the Trail with AACRN and then applying for this funding to help with more research or sign fabrication.
- Samuel Madden Redevelopment – Seth Tinkham
  - Meeting this past week at Charles Houston Recreation Center. The meeting focus was engaging the public/stakeholders. Alfred St Baptist Church representatives attended. Next consulting party meeting is Thursday, February 23.
- Torpedo Factory Stakeholders Committee Representation – Ivy Whitlatch
  - No report since Ivy is concurrently at this meeting.

### **Break Out Sessions (15 minutes) and Committee Reports**

- AAC agreed to not do Break Out Sessions this month since it did during the January meeting. The idea of breaking out quarterly was discussed.
  - Awards Committee (Nick Dienna, Liz Vehmeyer, Paula Whitacre)
  - 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (Dylan Colligan, Rebecca Doser, Ivy Whitlatch)
  - African American Initiatives (Ted Pulliam, Paula Whitacre, Esther White)
  - Museum (Dick Owens, Ralph Rosenbaum, Michael Johnson, Scott Vierick)
  - Waterfront (Ann Greer, Seth Tinkham, John Oldfield)

### **Commissioner Reports**

- FOAA Update (Richard Owens)
  - George Washington Birthday Parade will be held on Monday, February 20. All are welcome to march with FOAA. Please sign up with Emma Richardson, Archaeology Museum Education Specialist. Your help in creating signs for the parade is welcome on Saturday, February 18, at the Museum.
  - Next FOAA meeting is in March.
  - Visit Alexandria (Rebecca Doser)
  - Visit Alexandria unveiled its plans to rebrand with a new logo that will launch Wednesday, March 1. New campaign will go with it.
  - “What’s New for 2023” blog is up.
- Alexandria Association (Ted Pulliam)
  - no report
- Alexandria Historical Society (Scott Vierick)
  - Nominations for T. Michael Miller Award are open until Wednesday, March 1. New this year, City staff can be nominated and can nominate. You can nominate more than one person.
  - Speaker for Wednesday, March 22 at Lyceum is Molly Kerr, founding director at History Revealed, Inc: “Shopping stories: Revealing Lives through the Ledgers.”
- Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage or Equivalent Organization (Michael Johnson)
  - no report
- Historic Alexandria Foundation (Seth Tinkham)
  - no report

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- Business Community (Dylan Colligan)
  - A new proposal for a Business Improvement Service District (BISD) was made through the Old Town Association. Dylan is happy to add archaeology into discussions with BISD as appropriate. Dylan will plan on reporting more next month.
  - Seth - suggested the City look into a Main Street designation for Old Town/King Street. Main Street America is a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- Planning District Updates (Paula Whitacre, Esther White, Ivy Whitlatch)
  - Esther and Ivy - no report
  - Paula - District 3 - The new location for Fort Ward's playground is down to two options. Next meeting is Wednesday, February 22 at 7 p.m., held virtually.
- Members at Large (Nick Dienna, Ann Greer, John Oldfield, Liz Vehmeyer)
- John Oldfield
  - Any updates on museum re-accreditation? Eleanor - no
  - Suggested that researchers working with the Office of Historic Alexandria/Alexandria Archaeology come to an AAC meeting this year to present on their ongoing research on a Civil Rights Trail, oral histories, and waterfront history/story maps.
  - John met with Benjamin Skolnik, Archaeologist, about waterfront ships and his research as John has plans to work with Maryland Historical Trust on an underwater site. John will share what he can at future AAC meetings.
  - John asked about the status of the Feasibility Study for a Waterfront Museum. No update. Esther provided a summary of the AAC's involvement in the project, including the AAC Ships Committee, leading up to a request for the study.

### **Staff Reports – Eleanor Breen**

- Archaeology Updates
  - Eleanor presented to the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission (AHRPC) about potential easement sites related to African American history. They have an opening on their commission. Contact Susan Horne, AHRPC chair, if you or anyone you know is interested.
  - Eleanor presented to the Old Town Civic Association at their membership meeting about waterfront archaeology and bottle digging. Eleanor appreciated their support.
  - Emma Dietrich, Prince William County (VA) Cemetery Preservationist, visited Alexandria Archaeology to learn more about cemetery preservation efforts including Douglass Cemetery and Fort Ward.
  - Archaeologists and preservationists from Loudoun County (VA) came to visit Alexandria Archaeology yesterday. Staff talked about collections management, Alexandria's processes and repository, and educational programming around artifacts.
  - Emma Richardson has developed a new lesson plan, "Science Underground." It is recommended for PreK-1st grade.
  - Ship Ponding: City is starting to talk about the first annual condition assessment of the ponding the ship timbers, which will be in early June. Contacted VA State underwater archeologist to do side sonar with a kayak to test equipment/method.
  - Eleanor attended a webinar hosted by the VA Department of Historic Resources on its new grant program called "VA Black Indigenous, and People of Color Historic Preservation Grant Fund Program." She shared what she learned with AAC.

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- Emma Richardson is now a **full-time** museum educator, thanks in part to AAC's recommendations in recent years. Congrats, Emma!
- Social Media and Events Update
  - Benjamin Skolnik gave a lecture, Exploring the Alexandria Slave Pen, on Monday, February 13 at the Lyceum.
  - There will be a STEMposium at Samuel Tucker Elementary on Thursday, February 23 that Alexandria Archaeology will be participating in.
  - Alexandria Archaeology will attend and present at the MidAtlantic Archaeology Council (MAAC) conference on Saturday, March 11.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m. The next AAC Meeting will be held in person on Wednesday, March 15 at The Lloyd House. Garrett Fesler will be the City representative.