

Alexandria Archaeological Commission Meeting
Minutes of May 20, 2026

Members Present:

Ivy Whitlatch, Planning District I (Chair)
Robert (Scott) Vierick, Alexandria Historical
Society Representative (Vice Chair)
John Oldfield, Member at Large, (Secretary)
Kim Abraham, Member at Large
Cynthia (Cindy) Boren, Member at Large
Raymond (Chip) Eresman, Member at Large
Richard (Dick) Owens, Friends of
Alexandria Archaeology (FOAA)
Representative
Edward (Ted) Pulliam, Alexandria
Association Representative

Members Excused:

Dylan Colligan, Area Business Community
Representative

Ann Greer, Member at Large
Michael Johnson, Society for the
Preservation of Black Heritage or
equivalent organization Representative
Paula Whitacre, Planning District III
Anita Winsor, Historic Alexandria
Foundation Representative

Members Unexcused:

Visitors:

City Staff:

Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist

At 7:05 p.m., at the Lloyd House, the meeting was called to order by Ivy Whitlatch.

AAC members reviewed the Wednesday, April 15 meeting minutes. Scott Vierick moved to accept the minutes as written. Ted Pulliam seconded. Motion passed and minutes were approved.

Chair Report: The Request for Proposals to take over management of the Torpedo Factory Arts Center only attracted one respondent. Ivy and other members of the AAC continue to engage with relevant stakeholders to discuss the upcoming return of the conserved ship hull remnant to the City of Alexandria, its display, and related issues.

The proposed ordinance change for the Visit Alexandria Representative to the AAC was not discussed at the most recent City Council meeting.

Ben Brenman Awards: The AAC is awaiting nominations from the public for the 2026 Ben Brenman award. AAC members discussed potential awardees as well.

Nominating Committee: Ted, as Chair of the Nominating Committee, nominated Scott for AAC Vice Chair. John Oldfield seconded. Motion passed.

AAC Membership Reports:

Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC) report: Ivy attended the most recent HARC meeting and raised the issue of the return of the conserved ship hull remnant in 2028, stressing

the expenses associated with the conservation, and the need for a location for a proper display. The City of Alexandria decided to conserve the hull remnant when it was found and had a clear intent to exhibit it upon its return. The four ship hull remnants were an important part of the banking out process which helped make Alexandria's waterfront what it is today. Scott proposed a motion stating that the point of view of the AAC is that AAC looks forward to the ship hull being displayed in a location on Alexandria's historic waterfront. Chip Eresman seconded. The motion passed.

Waterfront Commission report: Ivy attended its most recent meeting. Key topics included public restrooms on the waterfront, the pump station, and an alternative (that is unlikely to involve archaeology) to the now-disallowed pumping station.

Cemetery Committee: The Preliminary Information Form (PIF) for the Nomination of the Wilkes Street Cemetery Complex to the National Register of Historic Places was successfully submitted. If the PIF is approved, Paula Whitacre will write the application for the nomination, via a grant from the Historic Alexandria Foundation. The Virginia Department of Historic Resources will review the PIF formally on Thursday, June 18.

Advocacy Committee: The AAC will provide a welcome packet to newly elected Councilwoman Sandy Marks and will invite her and the rest of City Council to the AAC Walkabout on Wednesday, June 17, and to visit the City of Alexandria's Archives. The Committee also discussed events surrounding the country's 250th birthday where AAC members could show up and speak on behalf of archaeology. The Committee discussed potential locations for the returning ship hull remnant and recommended that there be continual outreach about the ship hull remnants from the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. Members discussed potential exhibit options for the four scale models of the hulls and the need for a proper exhibit plan before seeking to raise money for cases, interpretation, and other expenses.

Commissioner Reports:

- Alexandria Historical Society (AHS): AHS' next lecture "*Shipwreck on the Potomac: Disaster in Pursuit of Lincoln's Killer*" will be delivered by Karen Stone, Museum Division Manager for St. Mary's County, Maryland, on Wednesday, May 27 at 7 p.m., at The Lyceum. On Friday, June 5, AHS will organize a panel discussion "*Wooden Hulls & Rag-Tag Fleets: From the Continental to the US Navy*" at the Athenaeum at 7 p.m. AHS will have a presence at Sails on the Potomac.
- Planning District 2: This Planning District needs representation on AAC.

Staff Report: Eleanor Breen

- John Glaser, one of the founders of Friends of Alexandria Archaeology, visited Alexandria Archaeology prior to his move out of town.

- Previously, developers had removed archaeological resources at the Heritage project on Patrick Street without archaeologists being present. Alexandria Archaeology worked to be sure there was mitigation; for the loss of those resources, there will be a re-examination of a privy excavated in the 1970s in The Bottoms neighborhood. A consultant is writing a report.
- Alexandria Archaeology (AA) participated in the City's Building Safety Day, as AA is an important part of the process.
- Alexandria Archaeology recently organized a successful cleanup of Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial in early May. Another cleanup is planned during Archaeology Month in October. Alexandria Archaeology will also organize a tour of Douglass Cemetery and Freedmen Cemetery.
- Alexandria Archaeology organized another Transcribe-a-thon.
- Alexandria Archaeology (Emma Richardson, Archaeology Education Coordinator) was at the Four Mile Run Farmers Market.
- Alexandria Archaeology has spent a lot of time on the Douglass Cemetery Stormwater Project. Gravestones that were removed are now being returned. "New" stones were also found totally buried, and they will be re-erected. Alexandria Archaeology will provide a public update on Friday, June 19 at Douglass Cemetery.
- AAC members are encouraged to participate in Sails on the Potomac.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

The next AAC Meeting, the annual "Walkabout," will take place on Wednesday, June 17 at 6:30 p.m. at Freedom House Museum.