

Alexandria Community Remembrance Project
Steering Committee Meeting
May 15, 2025
5:30 p.m.
Alexandria Black History Museum
Meeting Notes

Present: Gretchen Bulova, Audrey Davis, Rose Dawson, Mark Farcas, Rev. Franklin, Paul Glist, Jean Kelleher, Heather Peeler, Jacquay Plummer, RaAlim Shabazz, David Spinrad, Sarah Whelan, Judy Vaughn, Sarah Whalen, Kennetra Wood.

Excused Absence: Michael Johnson, Rev. Heatley.

1. Gretchen Bulova called the meeting to order at 5:37. New members were introduced.
2. The Committee recognized Rabbi David Spinrad's contributions to ACRP.
3. Joseph McCoy Remembrance
 - During a review of the Remembrance Event for Joseph McCoy, committee members felt it was an honor to have the City hold the event at Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church in recognition of this church and its historic contributions to Alexandria.
 - Mark Farkas commented on the unique take on each Remembrance and expressed his appreciation for this.
 - The group thought the speaker was very good and was pleased that he sold a lot of books.
 - This was Mayor Gaskins' first time attending as the Mayor and her remarks were very powerful.
4. Benjamin Thomas Remembrance Planning
 - Keynote Speaker, Steven Hahn, is booked for the event.
 - Ways to promote the event and increase attendance discussed.
5. FY26 ACRP Budget from City of Alexandria begins July 1, 2025.
 - The City approved a budget that provides \$50K for the Project Coordinator and Events. We had requested \$75K, which was the amount budgeted for FY25. Times are tight and we are grateful for the \$50K we will adjust by reducing the Project Coordinator hours to 18 a week.

6. Project Updates

- Faith Initiative, Co-Chairs David Spinrad and Quardricos Driskell
 - Rabbi Spinrad shared that the Faith members have created an Affirmation Statement to offer words of comfort and commitment at these difficult times.
 - Mr. Glist, who was involved in the drafting of the statement further explained its contents to the Steering Committee who have approved the statement.
 - There is hope to host it on the Co-Chairs websites as the City website would not be an appropriate home for a religious message.
 - This will be presented to the public on June 12.
 - They hope to hold a workshop in September to train clergy and lay people in discussions across divides.
 - With Rabbi Spinrad relocating to California, Rev. Grace Han from Trinity will take over for David Spinrad as one of the Co-Chairs.
- Committee of Inquiry, Chair Jean Kelleher
 - Ms. Kelleher told the Committee that we have delayed the launch of the Committee of Inquiry while we seek applications for volunteer researchers.
 - We have a research plan in place that we are currently refining.
 - We hope to launch in November 2025.
 - In the end, we will have a report based on truth, on facts of history, and something that everyone can agree upon.
 - We also hope to find ways to right the record, symbolically or literally.

7. Scholarship Updates, \$44,883 (will be reduced by \$6,000 this month)

- 2025 Award Recipients will be announced on May 22. Descendant Bishop Taylor will present the McCoy Scholarship while Audrey and Gretchen will present the Benjamin Thomas (the Thomas family declined).
- Tables of Conscience Series. We are actively recruiting for hosts for three dinners this fall. We will be using recently banned books.

- Promotional video: Mark Farkas presented a video he has put together to share with those who may be interested in donating to our work, our scholarships or our student program for 2025-2026.
8. Public Comment: No public was present.
 9. The meeting concluded at 6:35.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 11, 2025 (Last meeting before August 8 event)