

## **Black History Commission of Arkansas**

### **Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

**May 1, 2025**

The Black History Commission of Arkansas met in person and via Teams in the Heritage meeting room at the Division of Heritage headquarters in Little Rock, Arkansas on Thursday May 1, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. Commissioners attending in person: Caleb Williams, Pat Johnson, Arnetta Bradford, Daion Daniels, Jospeh Wood, Linda Chesterfield and Lynda Johnson.

Staff present in person: DAH Director Marty Ryalls, ADPHT Deputy Chief of Communications Danyelle McNeill, ASA Director David Ware, ASA African American History Program Coordinator, Tatyana Oyinloye, and ASA Administrative Specialist III April Goff.

Guests in attendance: Jennifer Siccardi, Liaison from the Governor's Office and representatives of each of the grant applicants, and members of the public.

Start of meeting was delayed due to technical difficulties.

The meeting was called to order at 12:20 p.m. by Bradford.

Chair Bradford opened the meeting with an optional prayer to celebrate the "National Day of Prayer."

The commission reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and after the motion by Chesterfield and second by Wood they were approved.

Ms. Goff presented the financial report, and the report was accepted. She mentioned how much was still available for grants.

The commission then moved on to Sykes Grant applications. At the suggestion of Ms. Goff, the commission decided to hear all applicants before voting on which ones to award.

First to present was Vanessa McKuin from Historic Cane Hill to speak about their application for the project "Persistence of Hope: Seeing Ourselves in the Decorative Arts." The commission inquired about what materials would be submitted to the archives and were informed that the materials would include a catalog of the exhibit, photos, a video of the demonstration and historical research on exhibit items. They also asked if the presentation would be focused on Arkansas and were told that several pieces in the exhibit were made in Arkansas.

Next was Janet Allured from the Sequoyah United Methodist Church to speak about their application for their project "Theressa Hoover Memorial Marker at Sequoyah United Methodist Church, Fayetteville." The commission inquired about materials that will be submitted to the archives and were informed that materials would include promotional materials and photos.

Next was Joyce Richardson form Juneteenth Gospel to speak about their application for the project "Juneteenth Gospel." The commission asked about archival materials and were

informed that publicity materials produced would be included. The commission also asked about what activities would be included in the event and how history was promoted as a part of that. The presenter said they worked to present history though the music they will present.

Next was Barbara Holt to speak for Keaton Township Project's application for their project "Return to Keaton Township Series: Book 3. Coming Home to the Ancestral Land." The commission asked whether the grant requested provided 100% of the funding for the project or if the applicant would be providing funds from other sources. The applicant replied that the project would be funded completely from Sykes Grant funds.

Next was Peggy Lloyd presenting for the Ethnic Minority Memorabilia Association Inc.'s application for their project "Archer Shepperson and his Legacy." The commission had o questions about the application.

Next was Patricia Griffen to present for the Arkansas Association of Black Psychology Professionals application for their project "Book Publication-Historical Contributions of African American Psychologists from Arkansas." The commission asked whether the book would be sold or given away. Griffen responded that it would be both. They would donate copies to the archives and to universities in Arkansas but they would be also sold and the proceeds would go to the group.

Last was the Courtney Marketing PR project "Daisy Gaston Bates Children's Book." There was no representative present.

The commission then moved on to consideration of the applications. There was some discussion of the rules for voting on the grants for the new commissioners.

First, they called the "Juneteenth Gospel" representative back for their suggestion that she add some aspect to the event that focused on presenting history other than just the music itself. After motion by Chesterfield and Second by Woods they approved the grant in the amount of \$3500 to be paid from Fund SHF0610/Cost Center 429460.

Next was the "Archer Shepperson and his Legacy" application. After motion by Chesterfield and second by Williams they approved the grant in the amount of \$1993.47 to be paid from Fund SHF0610/Cost Center 429460.

Next was the "Theresa Hoover memorial marker at Sequoyah United Methodist Church, Fayetteville." After motion by Chesterfield and second by Williams the commission approved a grant in the amount of \$3500 to be paid from Fund SHF0610/Cost Center 429460.

Next was "Persistence of Hope: Seeing ourselves in Decorative Arts." After motion by Daniels and Second by Wood the commission approved a grant in the amount of \$3300 to be paid from Fund SHF0610/Cost Center 429460.

Next was “Book Publication-Historical Contributions by African American Psychologists from Arkansas.” After motion by Wood and second by Daniels the commission voted to decline the application.

Next was the “Return to Keaton Township Series: Boo 3. Coming Home to the Ancestral Land.” After motion by Willaims and second by Lynda Johnson to decline there was a counter motion by Chesterfield and second by Lynda Johnson the commission approved a grant in the amount of \$1750.00 to be paid from Fund SHF0610/Cost Center 429460.

Last was the “Daisy Gaston Bates Children’s Book” application. After motion from Chesterfield and second from Daniels the commission approved a grant in the amount of \$1510.74 to be paid from Fund SHF0610/Cost Center 429460.

The commission then heard the African American History Coordinator’s report. She discussed plans for the June Symposium.

The commission moved on to old business. Goff brought up the purchase of promotional materials that was tabled at the last meeting. She presented several options of items and quotes for different quantities. There was some discussion of the different options and how much money was available the. After motion by Lynda Johnson and second by Pat Johnson the commission voted to purchase materials. After motion by Bradford and second by Chesterfield they elected to purchase 500 each of the pens, fans, sticky note pads, and bags. After motion by Daniels and second by Chesterfield the commission elected the purchase a quantity of 5000 of the State Legislator rulers to restock for upcoming events.

There was discussion about purchasing promotional jump drives and after motion by Williams and second by Pat Johnson they elected to purchase 500 of them. Goff double checked costs and as that would put them over their budget for the year after motion by Williams and second by Chesterfield the commission elected to withdraw vote to purchase jump drives.

Next the commission discussed the need to update the Sykes Grant rules. Legal Counsel discussed process, and the commissioners are to look at guidelines and come to next meeting with suggestion and the legal counsel will as well.

The commission confirmed the dates and time of the next meeting as August 14, 2025, 12 noon at the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives in Washington, AR.

After motion by Wood and second by Lynda Johnson the meeting adjourned.

The commission then moved on to the coordinator’s report. Oyinloye discussed the results of the February symposium and plans for the June symposium. The names of several speakers were suggested for the event and the commission requested that they be sent a calendar invite for the event to remind them of date. There was discussion of publicity and calendar conflicts affecting attendance at symposiums.

The commission then moved to Old Business. Discussion of rule changes was tabled. The suggestion from last meeting to purchase promotional materials was discussed and Goff was given a list of items to get quotes on for purchase approval. Locations for upcoming meetings were discussed, and several locations were discussed.

The commission moved to election of officers Bradford was nominated for chair by Pat Hohnson and seconded by Williams. After discussion and no further nominations, the commission elected Arnetta Bradford as Chair. Bradford nominated Lynda Johnson as Vice Chair and it was seconded by Pat Johnson. After discussion the commission elected Lynda Johnson as Vice Chair.

The commission then moved to annual vote on Receiving stipends and travel reimbursements. After discussion and then motion by Pat Johnson and second by Bradford the commission elected to continue to receive both at the current rates.

There was a suggestion by Dr. Lynda Johnson and then a discussion of training and information for new commissioners. Goff offered to reinstate the commissioner handbook which includes info on commission processes and procedures and the history of commission.

There was then discussion of work commissioners could do to spread word about the commissions mission.

Ware introduced a request from the Arkansas Historical Association for the BHCA to sponsor a break at the AHA annual conference in April. After some discussion and motion by Bradford and second by Williams the commission voted to approve the request in the amount of \$500.00.

Williams then suggested the commission make arrangements to participate in Juneteenth event around the state. Director Ryalls mentioned the Juneteenth celebration at Mosaic Templars Cultural Center on June 21<sup>st</sup>. The commission agreed and requested the staff make arrangements for the commission to have a presence at the event.

Last was a discussion of the locations for the next 3 meetings, it was decided to meet at DAH headquarters in Little Rock in May, Northeast Arkansas Regional Archives in August and the Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives.

After motion from Pat Johnson and second by Williams the meeting adjourned at 1:57 pm.

David Ware  
Secretary

April Goff  
Administrative Specialist III

Approved August 14, 2025