



**VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**November 23, 2015, 10:30 AM
Speaker's Conference Room - 6th floor
General Assembly Building**

AGENDA

1. Call to order
Speaker of the House of Delegates William J. Howell, Chairman
2. Briefing: The Economic Impact of the American Civil War Sesquicentennial Commemoration in Virginia
Xioabing Shuia, Chmura Economics and Analytics
3. Future use of Civil War 150 HistoryMobile
 - Current status - *Cheryl Jackson*
 - Virginia Museum of Fine Arts - *Jeffrey Allison, Manager, Statewide Programs*
4. Update: Legacy Project book
Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr.
5. Other business; Adjournment

Members of the Executive Committee:

The Honorable William J. Howell, *Chairman*
The Honorable Charles J. Colgan, Sr., *Vice-Chairman*
The Honorable Mark L. Keam
The Honorable L. Scott Lingamfelter
Dr. Paul A. Levengood
Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr.

Staff:

Division of Legislative Services:
Cheryl Jackson, Executive Director
Gwen Foley, Senior Operations Staff Assistant
John Young, Associate Editor

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House Appropriations Committee:
David Reynolds, Legislative Fiscal Analyst

Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission
Report of the Executive Committee

Speaker of the House of Delegates William J. Howell, Chairman
November 23, 2015
10:30 a.m.

Executive Committee members present: Speaker William J. Howell, Delegate L. Scott Lingamfelter, Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr., Dr. Paul Levensgood

Call to Order

Speaker Howell called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance.

Briefing: The Economic Impact of the American Civil War Sesquicentennial Commemoration in Virginia

Xioabing Shuia, Chmura Economics and Analytics

Xioabing Shuia highlighted the recent economic impact study and provided a brief explanation of its methodology. The study found that more than 3.7 million people participated in sesquicentennial commemoration events, including both commission-organized events and local sesquicentennial programs. Total spending by the Commission and localities amounted to nearly \$18.4 million. This sum was factored into Chmura's economic model, resulting in an estimate of \$35.1 million as the total economic impact of commemoration spending. The impact of visitor spending was \$255.3, an estimate extrapolated from three onsite visitor surveys that were conducted at 150th anniversary events in Appomattox, the Commission's Signature Conference at UVA, and the Sesquicentennial Finale Concert at the State Capitol. The aggregate of spending by the Commission and localities and spending by visitors came to \$290.3 million in the period 2007–2015. This spending supported approximately 3,500 jobs. Moreover, the state reaped \$8.4 million in tax revenues as a result, while localities took in another \$5.0 million. There were at least 3,000 locally sponsored events, with more than 1,500 included in the economic impact survey. Other benefits of the sesquicentennial observance, which were not measured but for which much anecdotal evidence exists, include more than 1,000 print-media articles, thousands of internet stories and hits, and an overall boost to state and local tourism.

Delegate Lingamfelter gave much of the credit for the Sesquicentennial Commission's impact to Speaker Howell, who, he said, set the bar high for the Commission. The high point of its success, he thought, was the Legacy Project undertaken in cooperation with the Library of Virginia. He hoped such activities would continue for the World War II commemoration and others, since the Sesquicentennial Commission has set a model of success. Speaker Howell observed that much of the credit for success belonged to the Commission's staff and its executive director, Cheryl Jackson.

Future Use of Civil War 150 HistoryMobile

Current status – *Cheryl Jackson*

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts – *Jeffrey Allison, Manager, Statewide Programs*

Cheryl Jackson reported that the Civil War 150 HistoryMobile is still on the road. It has had nearly 180,000 visitors from 108 localities in Virginia, from every other state, and

from dozens of other countries. It is booked at least to April 2016. There is no pressing time frame for termination; the plan at present is to keep on with school visits until demand drops off. Various agencies have shown interest in acquiring the mobile unit but for one reason or another, such as budget constraints, have withdrawn their requests for consideration. The World War II 75th Anniversary Commission, chaired by Delegate Cox, has expressed interest in adding a statewide traveling component to its commemorative plans starting in late 2016, but it may not need the full tractor-trailer. The unit stays in good repair, and should it not be feasible to repurpose the tractor-trailer to another agency, SPEVCO will facilitate its resale at market value. Distribution of the exhibit and tour components still has to be worked out; with debranding of the HistoryMobile, the usable exhibit pieces will be offered to museums on a first-come, first-served basis. Several have already indicated an interest. SPEVCO estimates the cost of unwrapping, uninstalling the exhibit, and shipping component pieces to a new location to be approximately \$15,000.

Jeffrey Allison made the case for acquisition of the tractor-trailer by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. He noted that a significant part of the museum's just-completed strategic plan for FY2016–20 is *VMFA on the Road*, a statewide mobile museum learning environment. The museum in past years had a long-running program called the Artmobile, which featured traveling art exhibits and extended the opportunities for residents throughout Virginia to experience art in their own communities. The program was discontinued in 1995, but his dream is to have a 21st-century version of the Artmobile on the road again in the near future. The museum is fully committed to *VMFA on the Road*. It has every prospect of success. Mr. Allison said he is familiar with the HistoryMobile and believes the museum could make "brilliant use" of it. The VMFA could purchase works of art specifically for *VMFA on the Road*, or it could have artists create them for the purpose. Legacy pieces of art could be left in every community. Mr. Allison assured the committee that the museum's security staff can handle the job of protecting the art and that ample funds already are available for the project from donors who remember the former Artmobile from their childhood. The museum considers the HistoryMobile the perfect platform on which to develop the *VMFA on the Road* project.

The question then became: How soon would the museum need the tractor-trailer? Mr. Allison stated that it would not be needed until the end of 2017, though the planning process already has begun. Cheryl Jackson said that staff would like to reserve at least six months before the end of the Commission's existence to undertake the process of decommissioning the unit. In the meantime, it can continue to visit schools and other events, based on demand. In answer to Delegate Lingamfelter's question how much money is available to carry the HistoryMobile into the future, she replied that \$3 million remains to carry over and that the HistoryMobile tour could last another year, ending in late 2016, assuming the Commission is extended (extension language would be needed in the budget bill in the upcoming session). That would leave the first half of 2017 to de-install the HistoryMobile exhibit, disburse usable components to museums across the state, and effect a transfer of the tractor-trailer to the museum.

Dr. Robertson moved that the tractor-trailer be transferred to Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in due course, to serve as its Artmobile. Dr. Levenson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Update: Legacy Project Book

Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr.

Dr. Robertson noted that the Legacy Project, which began in 2010, is the Commission's last major project. The original hope was that 1,000 pages of documents would come out of the project; instead, there are more than 32,000 documents and 1,600 collections. Dr. Robertson reviewed the collections and selected 144 for possible inclusion in the book. He has taken notes on them and arranged material into three categories: Virginia Confederate soldiers, Union soldiers stationed in Virginia, and Virginia civilians. The title will be *Civil War Echoes: Voices from Virginia, 1860–1870*, and the book will convey the feelings and emotions reflected in the documents. Dr. Robertson has completed the narrative through 1863 and anticipates that 1864 will be the longest section because of the particular wealth of documents from that year.

Cheryl Jackson pointed out that the Commission will publish the book and that the Library of Virginia will sell it and keep the proceeds, since the Commission will be phasing out of existence. She noted that the idea of going out into the community to scan documents, as was done with the Legacy Project, is new and sets an example for other states and institutions to follow. On a similar note, Dr. Levensgood observed that the Virginia Historical Society has formed a significant partnership since the merger of the Museum of the Confederacy with the American Civil War Center. All the MOC's paper-based documents have gone to VHS and are being digitized. They will be accessible to everyone. This probably will be the first such collection in a private institution anywhere in the country. Every Civil War scholar will have to use it. The accession of these documents by VHS avoids having to disperse the collection and keeps it in Virginia and Richmond. VHS has allocated space for the material; a new kind of shelving is being used for efficient storage. This project, Dr. Levensgood said, is another legacy of the sesquicentennial.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.