**JOURNEY THROUGH HALLOWED GROUND PARTNERSHIP**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**HYBRID:**

Held at Manassas National Battlefield,

12521 Lee Highway, Manassas VA 20109

& via Video Conference

September 8, 2023

10:00 a.m.

**BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

Members attending: JTHG Team attending:

Chair Chuck Ledsinger Bill Sellers

Co-Vice Chair Chris Wall Michelle Burrelli

Co-Secretary Jim Campi Becky Wilhelm

Co-Secretary Betsy Merritt

Peter Friedman Other Attendees:

Hollis Mcloughlin

Ken Merin Brent Glass

Chris Miller Kris Butcher

Martha Raymond

David Vela

David Williams

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m.

Chair Ledsinger confirmed that the Notice of Meeting had been given and that a quorum is in attendance.

**Motion:**  To approve the minutes of the June 9, 2023 Board meeting.

MOTION BY: Chris Wall

SECONDED BY: David Williams

NONE BEING OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIED

Kris Butcher, Superintendent of Manassas National Battlefield, welcomed the Board to Manassas National Battlefield Park. Mr. Butcher discussed the recent data center proposals adjacent to the park boundaries.

**Financial Discussion**

Mr. Wall and Ms. Wilhelm provided an update on the cash position. Mr. Wall observed that individual donations are down from last year.

Ms. Wilhelm said JTHG is in a good cash position. Looking at the cash projection, we are still expecting some donations during this fiscal year. Mr. Sellers added that with Mrs. Mars’ donation of $225,000 this year was previously booked as part of her $1.000,000 pledge. We are tracking roughly a $125,000 to $175,000 cash loss on the year, and Mr. Sellers stated that fundraising in support of scholarships and unrestricted funds must increase in the next fiscal year. The audit is scheduled for November.

**National Heritage Area**

Ms. Burrelli discussed the NPS Evaluation, which is still awaiting final approval from the National Park Service.

Ms. Burrelli provided an update on the upcoming *Gettysburg* 30th Anniversary Celebration, October 13-15, 2023. JTHG is coordinating the weekend while partnering with Main Street Gettysburg, the Seminary Ridge Museum, the Adams County Historical Society, Destination Gettysburg, the Majestic Theater and the Gettysburg Foundation. The Saturday screening sold out in 15 minutes, and the Friday screening should come close to selling out as well. Mr. Miller discussed the disconnect between the audience for *Gettysburg* and the need for conservation of the actual historic sites that are being threatened with data centers and other development.

**National Scenic Byway**

Ms. Merritt provided an update on the Route 15 issue between Leesburg and Point of Rocks Bridge. She also discussed the impact of *Sackett v. EPA*,the recent Supreme Court decision, on Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction in this project and others throughout the country.

Mr. Campi gave an update on the Wilderness Crossing Development and the ABT Lawsuit.

Mr. Miller asked how we might elevate the data center issues to a national issue.

Ms. Raymond said a virtual simulation of what it would look like if these data centers were built would be very powerful.

Mr. Miller observed that we need technology, but it requires a thoughtful approach and a comprehensive plan for mitigation of the impacts to our historic resources.  There needs to be better planning and better regulation.

**Executive Session**

Executive Session began at 11:42 a.m.

Executive Session ended at 12:08 p.m.

**Living Legacy**

Mr. Sellers discussed the $180,000 VDOT funds that are outstanding for Living Legacy Tree Planting Project. We are working on plantings with ABT and Goose Creek Association, while also preparing a proposal for use of those funds over the course of the next three years for VDOT..

**National History Academy**

Mr. Sellers gave an overview of the 2023 Academy. Eighty students from 36 states and territories attended. We had 10 students who signed up but withdrew in the weeks leading up to the program, and we will change policies in the future to limit that attrition. Mr. Sellers said it was another outstanding class; the students have a common thread in that they are interested in history because they are concerned about the country.

The 2024 Academy is the last year that we will have access to new names through our partnership with the College Board. Due to student privacy issues, the College Board is changing how both colleges and nonprofits like JTHG access students. They no longer will make lists of students available for purchase as they have in the past. The Academy is developing a “50 state approach” to create partnerships throughout the country to both recruit students and raise money for scholarships to support their attendance.

**Fundraising**

Dr. Glass said we have developed new supporters and partnerships this summer, and have identified others for the next year. Dr. Glass discussed our partnerships and the 50-state approach to fundraising and recruiting. We currently have 13 states where we have active partnerships. The goal is to have 25 states by summer 2024 and all 50 states by 2025.

**Board recruiting**

Mr. Sellers discussed some potential new Trustees. Chair Ledsinger spoke with former Academy student Dominique Castanheira about potentially joining the Board, and proposed bringing her nomination to the table at the December Board meeting.

**National Parks Conservation Association**

Kyle Hart with NPCA presented on the history of the organization. NPCA is working with JTHG, American Battlefield Trust, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Piedmont Environmental Council, and many others on Data Centers and the serious issues they represent throughout the region. Mr. Hart provided an update on date center developments at Manassas and others within Prince William County, Fauquier County, Culpeper County, Orange County, and others both within and just outside the JTHG National Heritage Area.

**Other Business**

* Proposed 2023 meetings:
* Annual Meeting - December 8, 2023

**Motion:**  To adjourn the meeting.

MOTION BY: David Williams

SECONDED BY: Chris Miller

NONE BEING OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m.