



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Special Commission on the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution

Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee

Minutes

1st Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee Meeting

October 20, 2022 – 3pm - Virtual

Members Present: Krauthamer, Peters, Boyles, Shephard, Lewis (after roll call)

Opening Roll Call and Approval of the Minutes

- Chair Krauthamer called the opening roll of the meeting at 3:02pm. Being the first meeting of the Subcommittee, there were no minutes to approve
- Chair Krauthamer allowed Subcommittee members introduce themselves

Barbara Krauthamer (Subcommittee Chair), Dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts at UMass Amherst, Professor of History	Ray Anthony Shepard, an author and middle school teacher.
John Peters, Executive Director of the Commission on Indian Affairs for Massachusetts	Brian Boyles, Executive Director of Mass Humanities
Kerima Lewis, Member of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Professor	Kyera Singleton, Executive Director of the Royall House and Slave Quarters in Medford (Not present)

Defining Subcommittee Scope and Goals

- Chair Krauthamer What do we mean when we are talking about Diversity and Inclusion? What are the outcomes we want in terms of the larger Commission?
- Peters: Native American people and history are a part of the story and the work of this Subcommittee. Our story needs to be told, and some of the background information needs to be told. During Plymouth 400, was sometimes at odds with the work of that group in planning certain events.

- Shephard: Challenge will be having so many stories in need of being told. Loyalists, Women, Indigenous, Enslaved, children, the challenge is how do you take this and put it into a context that is in with the goals of America 250.
- Boyles: Embrace the complexity of this history and the great scholarship of the founding era, having a chance to provide a more complex story of America. Smaller organizations and institutions need to be a part of this. Not just a Boston focused event
- Chair Krauthamer: Struck that Representative Fiola said we need to think about the whole Commonwealth, not just Boston- about the different communities that played a role. The stories that need to be told, what perspectives are being centered in narratives, including all communities is really important.
- Peters: Interesting stories to be told –The King, charging the colony to leaving the natives alone, can't keep imposing yourself, getting a proclamation to let them self rule, 10 years later everything changed, was that a retaliation against that proclamation? Bring out that conversation, what really happened in the Tea party, dressing up as Indians, what was that about? Discussion on both sides.
- Shepherd: Another challenge in linking attitudes that drove events in the past with events that are happening today. Thinking of the Boston Tea Party, can't help but look at January 6th. Interesting time to be looking back at the revolution given the current context, with that lens of certain individuals wrapping themselves in the flag and yelling liberty.
- Krauthamer: How to contextualize its meaning in our context. Revolution creates opportunities for people to move beyond the Commonwealth to find freedom, thinking of the story of a black, enslaved women who escapes to Nova Scotia in the midst of Revolution.
- Lewis: Focus on participation of black soldiers in the Patriot forces, will we look beyond that? Most local towns have a list of participation of African Americans in the war, some of these towns have their own stories that should be brought into the larger story and should be brought into it.

Identify organizations (museums, historical societies, etc.) for historical resources and expertise

Making sure that work that comes out of the Commission is accessible to organizations and the public. Organizations the Subcommittee indicated they would like to talk to:

- Boston Tea Party Ships and Museums
- Colonial Society and Professor Bob Allison
- Mass Historical Society
- Revolutionary Spaces (Old South Meeting House and Old State House)
- Local historical societies
- Mass History Alliance – Umbrella organization for historical societies

- MA Association of Librarians – created guidelines and recommendations how they can tell their local story. Could do displays, in each and every town that way
- Kerima Lewis indicated Prof. Chernoh Sesay, Associate Professor at DePaul University
- Annette Gordon-Reed
- Prince Hall Freemasons
- MA African American Museum
- Royall House
- National Park Service

Identify constituencies and audiences to ensure inclusion across the Commonwealth

- Ties with school districts, way to reach, students of color, including the Boston Public schools, do outreach in Brockton
- Lewis: Will look into school ties
- Boyles: Adult education
- Immigrant service organizations, different perspectives of the American experiment
- Lexington – association of black citizens, other towns may have as well

Work should be done with Revolution 250 and Jonathan Lane.

Lewis: There is a group that is addressing the commemoration from an LGBT perspective, locate what group that is and make sure to collaborate with them.

Boyles: Have a lot of organizations not in the history field but are doing story telling of the past.

YMCA's and YWCA's provide a place to meet people where they are at.

Brainstorm points of collaboration with other subcommittees, such as Marketing and Outreach

- Important to bring in other subcommittees to look at their work and to ensure communities and opportunities are not missed. Making sure messages that are sent out from the work of this Commission are tailored to reach specific communities that otherwise might not be targeted.
- Education and Outreach and Marketing Subcommittees and Chairs specifically to be invited

Closing Roll Call

- Set a date in November for the next Subcommittee meeting and will invite another Subcommittee's Chair to that meeting for discussion.
- A closing roll was taken around 3:50pm, with Krauthamer, Peters, Boyles, Shephard, Lewis present