

# Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Advisory Council

Summary of July 22, 2014 Meeting

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (“The Trail”) Advisory Council convened a meeting at 9:00 A.M. on July 22, 2014 at the Wilson House on the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) Campus in Gloucester Point, VA. In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the meeting was open to the public.

Council members present:

- Wayne Adkins
- Suzanne Baird
- Wade Blackwood
- Virginia Busby
- Dennis Coker
- Joel Dunn
- Elizabeth Hughes
- Mary Ann Lisanti
- Susan Moerschel
- Mark Platts
- Kristin Saunders
- John Reynolds, Chair
- Charlie Stek (phoned in)
- Bill Street
- Ann Swanson

Others present for all, or portions of the meeting were:

- Deanna Beacham, National Park Service
- Cindy Chance, National Park Service
- Suzanne Copping, National Park Service
- Clyde Cristman, Virginia Dept. of Conservation & Recreation
- John Davy, National Park Service
- Jonathan Doherty, National Park Service
- Chuck Hunt, National Park Service
- Julie Langan, Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources
- Christine Lucero, National Park Service
- Danette Poole, Virginia Dept. of Conservation & Recreation
- Christiana Tambone, James River Association
- John Van Gilder, City of Havre de Grace, MD

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chairman John Reynolds and Superintendent Chuck Hunt, welcomed the Advisory Council members to the meeting. John Reynolds reviewed the agenda and objectives for the meeting.

## **WHAT THE CHESAPEAKE MEANS TO ME**

Christine Lucero led the Council members through an interpretive exercise to reflect on the importance of the Chesapeake watershed, how it relates to the Trail and how it informs and/or inspires our collective work on the Trail. Members shared their personal and professional experiences with the Chesapeake. Through this process, several themes like family, solitude, escape and memory were repeated by many of the members.

## **UPDATE ON MEMBER COMMITMENTS**

John Reynolds facilitated the member discussion on updating their person and professional commitments to the trail that were collected at the Joint meeting with the Star-Spangled Banner NHT Advisory Council last fall. See attached table.

## **SHORT BREAK- WORKING LUNCH**

*(Agenda reflects an update from the NPS on interpretation, education and conservation projects which did not occur due to lack of time.)*

Jonathan Doherty facilitated a discussion to identify the major areas of interest the Advisory Council should advise upon in the coming years. Facilitating questions denoted in red with highlights of the discussion that followed.

*How would you describe the stage of development or maturity of the Trail today?*

Most of the membership agreed that the trail was in its infancy, with so much more development to come. It was suggested that a type of gap analysis be prepared to show where there is trail activity occurring and in so doing, identify where more effort to engage trail partners needs to occur.

*What challenges do you foresee needing to address to bring the Trail where it needs to be; and what of these challenges should the Council be equipped to wrestle with and advise upon over the next year?*

- Potential impact of climate change and sea level rise. How will policies that are being developed impact our ability to fund the trail and trail access projects.

- Landscape conservation issues. How do we expand the model of partnerships to include local governments and communities?
- How about a Jon Smith trail conference? Celebrate success together.
- Explore the “Trail towns” concept; where communities make commitments to develop resources in trail.
- Develop an economic prospectus; show local governments and businesses how being a trail partner can benefit their bottom line (\$).
- Need an education component, using an interdisciplinary approach. Explore ways to integrate environmental literacy into curriculum.-facilitated access for youth-where are the most underserved.
- Take advantage of the Federal leadership committee- through the GIT- request one of the meetings focused on CAJO to incorporate the conservation aspects of the trail.
- Connectivity is key. Lots of things going on, and no one outside this room understands how they are connected. Awareness: integrate the different trails (STSP, state) to make it a seamless experience. Build awareness so people recognize the Trail.
- Need paddle-able sections to bind the communities that support them. From a business standpoint – we are all connected to organizations that do have money. Look at it from an alliance standpoint – what does it cost these organizations to take care of these sites and get some community buy-in?
- Develop history- meets- environment map and guides.
- The Advisory Council needs to help NPS staff think about federal acquisition of sites, and with less funding, how do they manage those future sites for public benefit? Instead of hiring rangers, how can they accomplish that mission in a new and different way? And support the outcome within the bureaucracy?
- The Indigenous Cultural Landscape initiative is now a national model; it will be important that the Council continue to advance the ICL in a helpful way.

*What types of information would you want to help inform these discussions?*

- How do we connect the Susquehanna and the other connecting trails to the story?

Chuck responded that in order for the connecting trails to be valid, we have to connect with the Indian story. And in order to connect to the Indian story, we need robust connections with Indians along the trail. Oren Lyons urged us to instruct about the ecological significance of the Bay.

- Captain John Smith is a theme, not a person. A linkage to another world. How do we use the figure of John Smith to introduce us to the places and the stories?

Chief Coker imparted the following...part of the issue with Indian interaction is that America has not come to grips with their native American interaction and the outcomes. Lenape have 1000 people and government wouldn't acknowledge we exist until recently. It's a broader education issue than just the Chesapeake Bay. People have been denied their culture. And then you ask them to consult with you on their culture,

and they might not be confident or afraid of being ridiculed. It's rare that you'll find some people who will want to talk about it. They might be Indian impersonators with a passion, but they aren't really the ones you want to hear from. To get this information, it is very important to address what happened to these communities and why it happened. You need to be prepared for the continuance and it is not pretty. You have to incorporate the indigenous sacredness of this region, the abundance of the resources. An awesome story, but the bay and the people were depleted and abused and monetized and the sacredness was lost. You have to bring it back to make the Chesapeake a "must visit" destination.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

No public comment.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.