

Monuments and Marker Committee Meeting
September 29, 2023

Minutes

Meeting opened at 3pm Central Time.

Members present: Sam Elliott, Jeremy Harrell, Dan Pomeroy, and Ray Smith

Members not present: Pastor Keith Norman

Commission members present: Derita Williams

Commission Staff present: Miranda Christy, Patrick McIntyre

Public guests present: Leslie Valentine, Tom Kunesh, Octavia Lenior, Shane, Main06, Hobrina Taylor, Rosa Tellis

The Determination of Necessity was read and voted with a roll call vote as being necessary.

The 11 marker texts submitted were reviewed and revised as determined to be needed.

Of the 11 submitted, 10 were accepted with modifications and one was deferred,

The marker text being deferred is the one about Fort Sanders and is being requested to be researched by staff or an appointed committee to resolve the apparent disagreement regarding the facts of the Civil War battle. The Civil War Roundtable in Knoxville is recommended to be consulted as a part of the research.

There was discussion regarding the use of the Chicago Manual of Style as our guide for proper usage and punctuation. We agreed that Dan Pomeroy would do a style review of the texts and make any additional needed changes before sending those changed texts to be included in the final submittal to the full commission in October 2023.

The anticipated increased cost of markers was communicated as provided by Linda Wynn. Same text on both sides will increase from \$2,150 to \$2,688. Markers with continued text on second side will increase from \$2,350 to \$2,938.

Sam Elliott made the motion to “approve the marker versions that we accepted during the course of our discussion with the proviso that Dan is authorized to go through and assure the commas are in accordance with the Chicago Manual of Style and also numbers are appropriately spelled out.” Jeremy Harrell seconded the motion. The

motion was passed by a roll call vote. So, 10 of the 11 markers were approved and the one deferred marker requested to be referred to staff or committee for further research and resolution of the obvious differences in historical facts.

Dan Pomeroy raised a concern regarding how the state-wide historical significance of a given marker was determined as our bylaws indicate that determination should be made. Sam Elliott, being the longest tenured member of the committee present, provided the historical method that had been used in the past. While there have been very few markers submitted that were determined inappropriate, Sam indicated it is this committee's responsibility and that it is an art more than a fixed criterion. Some hypothetical situations were used to exemplify the range of possibilities. We agreed the responsibility is ours to determine the relative historical significance of markers we submit to the full commission.

It is worthy of note that public input was most beneficial to this review and because of substantial contributions by guests to the meeting the marker text being considered resulted in a more appealing and more precise description of the intended historical facts.

As we discussed "a mulatto" versus "a free woman of mixed race," a comment from a guest regarding the sensitivity with which the committee addressed racial designation was also most appreciated. She admonished us regarding the use of the word mulatto and suggested that the use was being considered more derogatory by the younger generations. We agreed with her and left the term mulatto out.

We also appreciated one guest noting that we had begun to insert comma's generally about one third of the way through and helped us go back and catch earlier omissions of commas.

Finally, a guest indicated her appreciation for the way the meeting handled the marker she was part of submitting and asked about the timeline for approval. Sam Elliot noted that the final approval would be provided by the full commission on October 20, 2023. She also asked when and how the recording of the meeting would be available. We indicated it would be available and that Linda Wynn would be the staff person who could help her access the recording.

Ray Smith, Chair of the Monuments and Markers Committee