

**VIRGINIA SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR COMMISSION**  
**Report of the Executive Committee**  
**June 18, 2007**

**Members Present:**

Senator John H. Chichester, Chair  
Speaker William J. Howell, Vice Chair  
Delegate Albert C. Eisenberg  
Delegate Algie T. Howell, Jr.  
Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr.  
Dr. Charles F. Bryan, Jr.

The Executive Committee met to discuss and consider expenditures of the Commission's 2007 appropriation. Several proposals were presented, including those from the Virginia Historical Society, American Civil War Center at Tredegar and Blue Ridge Public Television.

**Review of 2007 Appropriation to the Commission - Dick Hickman, Senate Finance Committee**

Mr. Hickman reported that the General Assembly appropriated a total of \$122,000 for 2007 and \$2,769,400 for 2008. This amount reflects expenses for the Commission and the Advisory Council. He also mentioned that the General Assembly has appropriated \$573,800 for 2007 and \$273,800 for 2008 to non-State agencies for purposes related to the Civil War.

**Options for Programmatic Funding**

The Executive Committee discussed the following options for funding:

**I. Virginia Historical Society: Dr. Charles Bryan, Jr., President and CEO**

1. Traveling museum exhibition: The exhibit area, consisting of a total of 4000 square feet and two parts, would open at the VHS in Richmond in 2011, and then travel during the next three years to Roanoke, Abingdon, Lynchburg, Fredericksburg, Winchester, Manassas, and Hampton. The two components consist of a) battlefront and b) homefront. The two components of the exhibition will travel to each museum at different times.
2. HistoryMobile: The VHS and Library of Virginia will work together to develop a mobile exhibition, featuring a few key artifacts and documents plus high-tech maps and displays. The exhibition would travel by tractor trailer to every county and city in Virginia throughout the commemoration period.

**II. American Civil War Center at Tredegar: Alex Wise, President and CEO**

1. Experiential film: An IMAX type of immersive, 360 degree film experience that discusses the Civil War in Virginia from a character-driven point of view. Instead of giving facts about battles and places, the viewer would perceive the war from a particular character's point of view.
2. Orientation exhibit: Leading into the theater would be an orientation exhibit area. One key focus of this area would be on an interactive map that directs visitors to the other Civil War attractions they can see in Virginia.
3. Educational programs, including adaptation of the film for schools: Portions of the film would be available in DVD format for distribution to schools. Trailers of the film could also be used for the Welcome Centers throughout the state.
4. Sesquicentennial Digital Program: This option would take 15 individuals from Virginia who were part of the Civil War and allow school children to follow their stories. The concept would be "Real people in real time."

### **III. Blue Ridge Public Television, Dr. James I. Robertson**

Dr. Robertson proposed a joint venture with Blue Ridge Public Television to create a three-hour DVD on Virginia and the Civil War. The DVD would be produced for the use of schools, and would consist of nine 20-minute segments, including: coming of war, military campaigns (3), the African-American experience, life of the common soldiers, personalities, the home front (including women and medicine), and the legacy of the war. Dr. Robertson proposed producing 5,000 copies for statewide distribution to schools.

The Executive Committee, having previously endorsed the traveling exhibition and HistoryMobile, agreed to award \$50,000 planning funds to the Virginia Historical Society for each of those exhibitions with specifications on deliverables due November 2007. The Executive Committee also agreed to fund website development for the Commission's website. No decision was made on the film proposals at this time.

### **Staff Update**

#### **Development Officer hiring process**

An advertisement for a Development Officer was widely circulated in early May. Interviews for the position will be held in mid-June. The Executive Committee discussed fundraising goals, but made no final decision.

#### **Workgroup composition and tentative meeting schedule**

The Speaker has established three workgroups to focus the work of the Commission, as listed below. Workgroups will meet as often as needed, briefing the full commission at regular intervals.

#### **Workgroup 1: Coordination Committee**

Includes oversight and monitoring of:

- Location, event and information coordination throughout the Commonwealth (including coordinating museums, battlefields, parks, and events)
- Local sesquicentennial committees
- Other states' sesquicentennial commissions
- National sesquicentennial planning and events
- Welcome Center information, kiosks, and/or orientation film
- Website, publications, etc.

### **Workgroup 2: Signature Events and Activities**

Includes oversight and monitoring of:

- Establishment of unifying themes, stories, and goals for the commemoration (to tie together signature events, grant recipient programs, etc.)
- Commission-sponsored events, lectures, symposia, films, battlefield tours, etc.
- VHS Traveling exhibition
- Mobile (tractor-trailer) exhibition
- Public relations

### **Workgroup 3: Education**

Includes oversight and monitoring of:

- Involvement of schools, students, teachers, administration, and PTAs
- SOL review and resources, curriculum framework, resources for teachers, etc.
- Teacher institutes
- Higher education involvement
- Law school symposia
- Public library involvement
- Document preservation project

### **Other Business**

Delegate Eisenberg distributed a reflective article that summarizes the work that lies before the Commission. He will present the article to the Commission at its next meeting.

**Next meeting:** The Executive Committee will meet at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, July 16, 2007 in the Great Hall of the Wren Building at the College of William & Mary. A meeting of the full Commission will follow at 10:00 a.m.