

Mathews County VA250 Committee
Monthly Board meeting
July 19, 2023

Chairman Fred Lyon called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. at Mathews Memorial Library. In attendance were: Fred Lyon, Sandy Warhol, Joe Syslo, Reed Lawson, Bobby Dobson, Tom Edwards, Tom Karow, Martha McCartney, Hunter Owens, and John Priest. Sherry Hamilton of Gloucester-Mathews Gazette-Journal photographed the committee for an upcoming edition of the newspaper. The minutes of the June 21, 2023, meeting were approved on a motion by John, seconded by Sandy.

1. **Bylaws** - The proposed Bylaws of the Mathews County VA250 Committee were approved as corrected on a motion by Joe, seconded by Sandy.
2. **Committees** – Joe explained the proposed committee structure as recommended by the executive board: Finance under the Treasurer, Research under the Secretary, Grant writing under the Secretary, Communications under the Vice-chair and Project management under the Vice-chair. Each committee will have a chair. The proposal was approved on a motion by John, seconded by Tom K. On a motion by Sandy, seconded by Bobby, the establishment of the Battle of Cricket Hill Subcommittee was approved. John suggested the committee work closely with the two local SAR chapters: Richard Henry Lee and Thomas Nelson, Jr. and the 7th Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line. Martha volunteered her research as a resource for the committee. Committee members are asked to email Fred by July 28, with two committee choices and if interested in being a chair.
3. **501(c)(3) Donations** – Fred informed the committee that county administration will set up an account with Chesapeake Bank in order to facilitate receiving grant monies. Virginia Commemorations, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization associated with VA250 as a conduit for donations. He will make contact to determine whether donations to the nonprofit can be earmarked to Mathews County. If not, this committee may be able to set up its own vehicle. Fred will ask the county whether approval for that is required. The need for soliciting funds exists in order to meet possible matching situations. John reiterated this committee needs to be project-specific and detailed before applying for grants.
4. **Grant Opportunities** – Sandy gave an overview of grant opportunities available through VA250, DOE, Virginia Humanities, NPS, among others. She suggested we invite Destination Development Manager Laura Messer of VA Tourism to meetings and encourage historical interest groups to collaborate and coordinate activities. Non-committee members can participate in the various committees but not have voting rights. Once the committees are established, a press release to the *Gazette-Journal* will be submitted to seek out these additional committee members. She will contact VA Tourism Grant Director Staci Martin for assistance.
5. **Brainstorming** – Joe moderated the brainstorming session. His summation:
 - PREPARE TIMELINE OF MATHEWS ACTIVITIES TO COORDINATE WITH VA250 EVENTS
 - CRICKET HILL BATTLE AND PRESENTATIONS IN CONCERT WITH SAR/DAR
 - ARRANGE MILITARY BAND FOR SELECTED FUNCTIONS
 - ARRANGE TALL SHIPS W/ MILFORD HAVEN REENACTMENT
 - REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD SHIPBUILDING HISTORY IN MATHEWS COUNTY
 - WILLIAMS WHARF
 - MERCHANT/COMBATANT CONSTRUCTION
 - REPAIR/SUPPLY CONTINENTAL NAVY
 - POST REVOLUTION GOVERNMENT RESTRUCTURE
 - PRESENT PERIODIC LECTURE SERIES “MATHEWS IN 1776-86”
 - RECOGNITION OF SLAVES LEGACY AND FLIGHT
 - NATIVE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD OF MATHEWS COUNTY
 - MATHEWS TOBACCO IN REVOLUTIONARY TIMES

6. **Other Notes and Ideas –**

Fred reiterated that all members should read the Rev War section of Martha's county history, *Mathews County Virginia: Lost landscapes, Untold Stories*.

May 15, 1776, Virginia declared its independence.

Battle of Cricket Hill was July 9/10, 1776.

July 4, 2026 is a Saturday.

Create a timeline of events beginning at the Battle of Concord in April, 1775.

Recognize those who fought in the war, celebrate their descendants.

Be inclusive – Patriots, Enslaved and Loyalists

Involve Mathews County Public Schools in the planning and celebrating.

Map shipbuilding sites in the county.

Collaborate regionally.

Compose a letter to local organizations to introduce the VA250 and provide information.

Take advantage of local speakers: Mike Cecere (Va. 7th), John Broadwater, Bob Kelley, Peter Wrike, Jamestown-Yorktown Fdn speakers bureau, etc.

Create a Business Plan by the end of the year.

Have a lecture on Thomas Mathews.

7. **Adjournment** – The next meeting is August 25, 2023 at 3 p.m. at Mathews Memorial Library. The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Reed Lawson, Secretary