



**LEWES AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE
COMMISSION**

**Thursday, April 16, 2026, 6:00 PM
Council Chambers, City Hall
AGENDA**

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A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, & ANNOUNCEMENTS	
B. PRESENTATION & POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE APPROVAL OF MINUTES	
1. 2026 03 19 LAAHC Meeting Minutes	3 - 7
C. OLD BUSINESS:	
1. Continued discussion and possible action regarding future programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Once In a Blue Moon” Lewes 250 Event – May 30, 2026 - Update• Girl Scouts Program – Update	
2. Continued discussion and possible action regarding website review.	
3. Continued discussion and possible action regarding formation of the Social & Economic Workgroup.	
4. Continued discussion and possible action regarding 2027 events budget (Update)	
5. Continued Discussion and possible action regarding participation in State of Delaware African American Commission. LAAHC Vice Chair will represent us.	
D. NEW BUSINESS:	
1. Discussion and possible action regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none">1. 2027 Black History Month Program – Ideas2. Other Programming Ideas	
2. Discussion and possible action regarding input into City of Lewes new comprehensive planning effort.	
3. Discussion and possible action regarding fund raising efforts.	
E. VOLUNTEER RESEARCH & ORAL HISTORIES UPDATES AND POSSIBLE ACTION	
1. Continued discussion and possible action on status of “Voices Heard” oral histories.	
2. Continued discussion and possible action on status of utilizing the Cato Lewis video from W Films. Facebook	
3. Continued Discussion and possible action regarding “Middle Passage Marker Project.” Middle Passage Ceremonies and Port Markers Project	
4. Continued Discussion and possible action regarding “Finding Their Voices” Black History Walking Tours - Tours and Workshops - Historic Lewes	
5. Continued discussion and possible action regarding LAAHC artifact storage and Voices Heard Traveling Exhibit loan agreements.	
F. JOHNNIE WALKER UPDATE AND POSSIBLE ACTION	
1. Update on Interpretive Sign creation/placement/installation.	

2. Sign Unveiling Ceremony – May 30, 2026 [Johnnie Walker Beach Interpretive Sign Unveiling Tickets, Saturday, May 30 from 10 am to 12 pm | Eventbrite](#)
3. Update on Pavilion Design, Placement, Application, and Construction.

G. JUNETEENTH UPDATE AND POSSIBLE ACTION

1. Update for Juneteenth 2026 Planning.

H. LAAHC COMMISSIONER UPDATES

I. OTHER / PUBLIC COMMENTS / QUESTIONS / NEXT MTG DATE

J. ADJOURNMENT

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84780893535?pwd=GU9SuVXR1WooGaHMXaR4Di7b7OEpjO.1>

Join via audio:

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Webinar ID: 847 8089 3535

Passcode: 064798

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City Hall is located at 114 E. Third Street Lewes DE

Agenda Posted: 4/9/2026 Posted By: BJ

City of Lewes
LEWES AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION
Thursday, March 19, 2026
MINUTES

The Lewes African American Heritage Commission met on **Thursday, March 19, 2026 in Council Chambers at Lewes City Hall**, in accordance with proper notification, with the following members present: Chairperson Darryl Daisey, Vice Chairperson Mickeya Linzie (attending virtually), as well as Commissioners Bill Collick, Stephanie Collick, Calvin Jackson, Dee Lott, and Cynthia Anderson Clay (attending virtually). Also in attendance were: Ex-Officio Member Pat Garchinsky of the Lewes Historical Society, and Parks & Marina Supervisor Giulia Kirsch.

A. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL *Chair Darryl Daisy called the March 19, 2026 meeting of the Lewes African American Heritage Commission to order at 6:00 PM. Roll call was conducted.*

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Calvin Jackson newly appointed to Johnnie Walker Beach Subcommittee.

Chair Daisey announced that Calvin Jackson had volunteered to join the Johnnie Walker Beach subcommittee that evening, noting they were shorthanded and needed assistance.

2. Historic City Marker Initiative.

Chair Daisey reported that the city had announced a historic city marker initiative to create markers with less arduous criteria than the state historic markers. This initiative aligns well with the Commission's mission to create markers and signage to designate areas or neighborhoods significant to Lewis history. Councilmember Trina Brown-Hicks provided additional details, explaining that the city is in initial stages of developing a framework for the marker program. The local program will be less stringent than the state marker program and may include both physical markers and virtual access through QR codes on the city website. Research will be required, and volunteers may be needed once the framework is developed.

Additional announcements included:

- April 11: NAACP of Lower Sussex County Freedom Fund scholarship brunch at Baywood clubhouse in Millsboro, \$65 per person, 11 AM to 2 PM, with keynote speaker Alana Berry, state representative
- April 11: Community bonfire at Johnnie Walker Beach at 4 PM (RSVP deadline was the following Friday)
- March 29: Deadline for Sussex County Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta scholarship application
- June 27: Juneteenth event
- May 30: Johnnie Walker Beach interpretive sign unveiling at 10 AM and Once in the Blue Moon event at 5 PM

C. PRESENTATION & POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE APPROVAL OF MINUTES *Chair Daisey noted that all commissioners should have received the minutes and was impressed with the AI process for transcription. He identified that Cynthia appeared to be missing from the February meeting attendance and noted a spelling correction needed for Falan's name (spelled as "Fallon" instead of "Falan").*

Motion: *Commissioner Collick moved to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Jackson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

D. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Continued discussion and possible action regarding future programs.
 - Black History Month Program(Recap) – “*Used to Be my Playground Program*”
 - “Once In a Blue Moon” Lewes 250 Event – May 30, 2026
 - Girl Scouts Program – Update

Black History Month Program (Recap) – “Used to Be my Playground Program”
 Commissioner Lott provided a comprehensive recap of the February program. The event had 118 signatures on the sign-in sheet, though additional attendees were observed who didn't sign in. Positive aspects included collected contact information, diverse audience, quality posters and photos, signage, food, and compliments from attendees. Areas for improvement included parking challenges due to snow, extending registration deadlines, using a microphone for questions instead of index cards, and reviewing the menu for potential cost savings.

Recommendations included ensuring adequate funding for all future programming. The program received numerous compliments forwarded by Councilmember Trina Brown-Hicks, including from Councilmember Joe Elder who suggested turning it into a play. Ex-officio Commissioner Lott noted the positive response to the housing map display, with many attendees recognizing areas where they used to live. Commissioner Collick praised the importance of preserving African American history, and Chair Daisey noted the program made both news and newspaper coverage, ensuring the playground's story is preserved for future generations.

“Once In a Blue Moon” Lewes 250 Event – May 30, 2026

The Commission had previously agreed to provide photographs and other materials for this event. Chair Daisey offered additional volunteer support if needed.

Girl Scouts Program – Update

Commissioner Bill Collick reported that the church would be available for the program, and Chair Daisey had reached out to local Girl Scout troop again. They are looking at an October date to maximize both local Girl Scout and alumni participation.

Several potential participants have been identified, including community member Paula Johnson who expressed strong interest. Commissioner Bill Collick noted his wife was also a Girl Scout and would attend.

2. Continued discussion and possible action regarding website review.

Chair Daisey thanked City Staff Member Blue Jade for uploading the “Used to Be my Playground” program video, which expanded the reach beyond the 100+ attendees to additional viewers online. Chair Daisey also thanked community member Mr. Flowers and his son for their video production work. Commissioner Jackson offered his expertise to help restructure the website, as the current organization makes navigation difficult, especially on mobile devices. The goal is to make the site more user-friendly as a resource while working within the platform's limitations.

3. Continued Discussion and possible action regarding creation of a workgroup to facilitate the LAAHC stated goal to “Increase the social, political and economic value of African American Heritage.”

Chair Daisey reported that the creation of this work group had been approved at the last meeting. He is in the process of confirming membership and is about halfway complete. Meetings will be mostly remote due to geographic distribution of members. Either Ms. Kirsch or another city representative will join the meetings, with meetings to be held once a month.

E. VOLUNTEER RESEARCH & ORAL HISTORIES UPDATES AND POSSIBLE ACTION

1. Discussion and possible action regarding status of "Voices Heard" traveling exhibit and possible future uses.
 - Photos to be provided for "Once In a Blue Moon" Lewes 2050 Event

The photos from the exhibit will be used at the Once in a Blue Moon event, providing additional use for the photographs.

2. Discussion and possible action on status of "Voices Heard" oral histories.

Chair Daisey noted that the Lewes Historical Society now has the "Voices Heard" documentary on their website. However, the oral histories of 6-7 individuals that were previously on the Historical Society's website had disappeared when the new website was built. Ex-officio Commissioner Garchinsky explained that the person in charge has the USBs and that it needs to go through their website contractor. She set a personal deadline to retrieve the materials and potentially have them posted on the Commission's website with assistance from Ms. Jade, if the Historical Society cannot restore them.

The Historical Society also has cassette tapes, including recordings of Beau Gooch, the former police commissioner, from around 2000. These need to be digitized to prevent deterioration. Commissioner Jackson offered to help with the technical transfer process.

3. Discussion and possible action regarding "Middle Passage Marker Project."

Commissioner Garchinsky provided extensive background on this global project inspired by Toni Morrison's 1989 observation about the lack of suitable memorials for enslaved people. The Middle Passage Marker Project, incorporated in 2012, focuses on entrance points along the East Coast where enslaved people were brought into the US. Delaware has two entrance points being considered: Wilmington and Lewes.

The Lewes marker would focus on Cato Lewis and his family.

The marker would be placed on the canal where Cato worked. An RFP is out for Delaware, seeking an artist to create artistic markers rather than just plaques, using materials suitable for outdoor elements. The Commission would like to help with research to strengthen the application.

Councilmember Trina Brown-Hicks noted that the Commission is also working with the state marker program for Peter Lewis (Cato's son), which has been written and approved but is waiting in the state pipeline for final approval and funding.

4. Discussion and possible action regarding LAAHC artifact storage agreement. (Update)

Chair Daisey requested another copy of the agreement to follow up on this matter, as artifacts are accumulating and need proper storage arrangements.

F. JOHNNIE WALKER / SAVANNAH BEACH UPDATE AND POSSIBLE ACTION

1. Update on Interpretive Sign creation/placement/installation.

Commissioner Anderson-Clay provided an update that the Lewes 250 celebration would be April 11, 2026.

2. Sign Unveiling Ceremony – May 30, 2026

The ceremony is confirmed for 10 AM on May 30, 2026. Invitations will be sent out with special guests requested to speak. The sign will include a QR code allowing visitors to

access additional photos, activities, and historical information about Johnnie Walker Beach from various events over the years.

3. Update on Pavilion Design, Placement, Application, and Construction.

Commissioner Anderson-Clay reported a productive meeting about the pavilion with conceptualized project plans and milestones. Ms. Kirsch outlined the approval process: site plan update by floodplain manager and GMB engineers, then review by the Johnnie Walker Beach Subcommittee, African American Heritage Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Mayor and Council, followed by DNREC permit application, bidding process, and construction.

Chair Daisey noted that DNREC indicated that adding electricity to the pavilion would not affect their approval process, suggesting the Commission not completely dismiss the concept as electricity would add utility to the pavilion. The design meetings with DNREC were described as wonderful and informative, providing multiple avenues to consider.

G. JUNETEENTH UPDATE AND POSSIBLE ACTION

1. Update on Juneteenth 2026 Planning.

Vice Chair Mickeya Linzie reported over 30 vendors have registered so far. She needs to discuss budget with Ms. Kirsch for entertainment contracting, which likely cannot be finalized until after April pending budget approval. The Commission will need to allocate budget amounts for each event. Historical spending has been around \$10,000, with sponsors helping offset costs in previous years.

H. COMMISSIONER UPDATES: *Chair Daisey provided updates on the Peter Lewis historical marker, reporting that Commissioner McCaffity had sent an edit to the wording in October but hadn't heard back since then.*

He also discussed Doctor Abdul Mohammed's request for the Commission to participate in a proposed statewide Delaware African American Commission. The proposed commission would support institutions dedicated to documenting, preserving, and promoting Delaware's African American culture heritage while improving social, economic, educational, and political well-being of the African American community.

The request was for the Commission to nominate a representative, preferably in a specific position for continuity. There were questions about Delaware residency requirements that needed clarification.

Motion: *Commissioner Jackson moved to nominate Vice-Chair Linzie to be the Commission's representative on the state of Delaware African American Heritage Commission. Commissioner Stephanie Collick seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

The nomination was made contingent upon finalization of the mission and city approval.

I. OTHER / PUBLIC COMMENTS / QUESTIONS / NEXT MTG DATE

James Sherrod (3045 Park Pavilion) provided public comment, expressing enjoyment from attending the meetings and indicating he hoped to contribute more as he became more informed and knowledgeable about the Commission's work.

J. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Stephanie Collick moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jackson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Jeffery Coover, Administrative Support Specialist

Minutes generated by HeyGov.ai

Transcripts available upon request.