

Louisiana
Archaeological
Survey and
Antiquities
Commission

September 8, 2015 Meeting

The Louisiana Archaeological Survey and Antiquities Commission met on Tuesday, September 8, 2015, at 1:30 p.m. in the 4th floor conference room, 1051 N. 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Members Present:

Dr. Chip McGimsey
Mr. Ray Berthelot
Dr. Heather McKillop
Dr. Mark Rees
Dr. Ryan Gray
Mr. George Riser
Dr. Ed Britton

Members Absent:

Ms. Missy Graves
Dr. David Kelley
Mr. Mike Tarpley
Dr. Jack Irion

Others Present:

Mr. Paul French
Ms. Rachel Watson
Ms. Julie Doucet
Ms. Ashley Fedoroff
Ms. Nancy Hawkins
Dr. Diana Greenlee

Welcome & Introductions

The Chair, Dr. Heather McKillop, called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

Dr. McKillop thanked all the Commission members for making the effort to attend, all the Division staff for arranging the meeting, and Dr. Greenlee for coming down from Poverty Point to speak. She took the opportunity to note that the DIVA Lab at LSU had acquired a 3-D printer and brought several examples of archaeological artifacts produced by the machine. This machine will be on display at the Archaeology Month event at the State Museum.

Dr. McKillop asked Ms. Rachel Watson, Dr. McGimsey, and Ms. Hawkins to the front to recognize Ms. Watson's completion of her Ph.D. degree. Ms. Watson graduated on 7 August 2015.

Dr. MxcKillop also noted that she had been invited to a conference on digital approaches in archaeology at Michigan State University. During the conference, she discussed the Division's GIS system and the availability of its records.

She also acknowledged that she had missed the previous Commission meeting as she was conducting fieldwork in Belize.

MOTION: *A motion was made by Dr. Mark Rees and seconded by Dr. Ed Britton, to accept the minutes of the June 9, 2015, Antiquities Commission Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.*

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss

New Business

Update on Historic Preservation Plan – Ms. Julie Doucet

The SHPO is in the process of updating the State Historic Preservation Plan. SHPO receives federal Historic Preservation Funds (HPF) from the Department of the Interior distributed through the National Park Service. One requirement for receiving these funds is the State has to submit a Historic Preservation Plan (HPP). Plans can be of variable duration but are usually set for 4 or 5 years. The HPF funds are allocated to each state using a formula that takes into account the state's proportion of the national population, the state's proportion of the national land area, and the state's proportion of the population over 50 years old. A portion of the HPF funds are used to support staff salaries in the SHPO office. All activities funded by HPF funds have to meet standards promulgated by the Secretary of the Interior and ten percent of the total state award is set aside for Certified Local Governments for locally based activities. If Congress appropriates additional funds for the HPF, the NPS can use the goals developed in a state's HPP as a basis to provide additional funds to address those goals.

The HPP is intended to be comprehensive and incorporate all of the state's historic preservation organizations, not just the SHPO. The HPF funds support the Divisions of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, with each receiving approximately half of the funds. For Archaeology, a significant amount of the funds support the Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program. State funding to support the SHPO have been steadily cut over the past 7 seven years and HPF funds have been increasingly allocated to support

SHPO staff. The HPF funding requires that the State provide a 40% match in either funds or in-kind services.

The current HPP was intended to cover a five year period, ending in 2015. Ms. Doucet provided a powerpoint slide listing the Plan's goals, including Developing Advocacy, Expanding Outreach and Public Knowledge, Building Visibility, and two other goals. The new HPP plan has an added goal of Creating Partnerships, and will cover the next 8 years (2016-2023).

As part of efforts toward updating the HPP, two public surveys were conducted. The first survey was conducted in February 2015 and the second in August 2015. The survey was targeted at individuals and organizations that participate in historic preservation activities. The goal of the surveys was to elicit information on what the focus of the SHPO and historic preservation in Louisiana should be and strategies for achieving those goals. The first survey asked a series of specific questions about historic resources across the state with the responses ranking the resources in terms of importance. The second survey focused more specifically on partnerships and how the SHPO and other organizations could create partnerships and work together to realize the preservation goals. Developing these partnerships will be a major goal of the new HPP. One option may be the creation of a Historic Preservation Council where all of the preservation organizations in the state can work with the SHPO to focus attention on critical issues and goals. The success of achieving the goals of the new HPP will depend upon the partner organizations, many of whom have complementary missions to the SHPO.

Dr. McKillop asked who is the State Historic Preservation Officer now? Dr. McGimsey replied that Mr. Phil Boggan, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Cultural Development is the Deputy SHPO. The position of Assistant Secretary for OCD and the SHPO is currently vacant and will not be filled until the new administration takes office in early 2016. Dr. McKillop asked how extensively does Mr. Boggan work with Ms. Doucet and the Division? Ms. Doucet replied that she was hired to work on the Plan and to coordinate the Ancient Mounds Commission. Dr. McKillop stated she appreciated the update from Ms. Doucet on the HPP.

Dr. Rees asked if an individual or organization could contact the SHPO to volunteer a partnership? Ms. Doucet replied this was what the Plan hoped for. Dr. Rees noted that UL-Lafayette now has a Historic Preservation Certificate program but that the program is struggling with low participation and a partnership might help to build interest.

Dr. McKillop asked who Ms. Doucet worked with in revising the HPP? Ms. Doucet replied that she worked with the Division Directors Dr. McGimsey and Ms. Hobson-Morris primarily but also discussed things with various staff members. She also reviewed plans in other states, particularly those that focus on partnerships, to gain insights on how these processes could work. Dr. McKillop asked how partnerships with universities might work? Ms. Doucet replied there are a diverse set of options discussed in other states, and it really comes down to what goals of each organization are complementary to each other and how they can work together. Dr. McKillop noted that

the absence of the Regional Archaeology program at LSU has meant there is no one available to answer calls from the public. Ms. Doucet noted that the Regional program was a main goal in the previous plan and although funding does not currently allow the program to continue, addressing the issues that the Regional program handled does need to be part of the new plan. Dr. McKillop asked what the members of the Commission could do at this point? Ms. Doucet replied each member could think about what a partnership with the SHPO could mean for you and your organization. The SHPO will be in touch once the new plan has been approved and posted for public access. She noted that unlike with past versions of the HPP, it cannot be just the SHPO that works to meet the goals; the new plan will require efforts from a wide range of individuals and organizations in the historic preservation community. Dr. McKillop also noted that a key effort will be reaching the public, perhaps through Facebook and Twitter, and other avenues that people communicate with today. Dr. Rees noted that he had put together a blog for his Acadiana research project but had few readers while a Facebook page had several thousand views. Dr. Rees also noted that there were ‘community’ Facebook pages now focused on various aspects of preservation. Ms. Doucet commented that once something is posted on Facebook, it can be linked to a wide variety of other pages. Dr. McKillop commented however, that younger readers think Facebook is for old people, and that they use other media. Ms. Doucet noted that the key is simply talking about preservation issues in a variety of different situations and media. Dr. McKillop asked that Ms. Doucet return for the December meeting and for the Commission members to think about how they and/or the Commission could work to promote the goals of the new HPP.

Update on Archaeology Month – Ms. Nancy Hawkins

Ms. Hawkins said this will be the 28th annual celebration, and so far there are commitments from approximately 30 venues to host events. One big event will be held October 3rd at the State Museum here in Baton Rouge, organized by Ms. Doucet, Ms. Watson and Ms. Amanda Evans. The poster theme will be the Natchez Fort site near Sicily Island. There will be photographs of artifacts collected from the site. This theme also dovetails nicely with the joint Louisiana Archaeological Society /Mississippi Archaeological Association annual meeting in Natchez in February 2016 which will feature a number of presentations on the Natchez.

Dr. McKillop asked if the event calendar was on the Division’s website and if events could still be added? Ms. Hawkins replied that the calendar is online and more events are very welcome. Dr. McKillop also asked for an overview of the event at the State Museum. Ms. Watson replied during the morning they would have 5 guest speakers with opportunities for people to ask questions. In the afternoon, there will be demonstrations, technology displays, and artifact identification. She also noted that the Museum will be free that day.

Permit Request – Poverty Point Site Manager

Mr. Ray Berthelot stated that the Poverty Point World Heritage Site has a new site manager – Ms. Stephanie Perrault. Ms. Perrault has been an archaeologist working in Louisiana and surrounding states for many years. The absence of the Regional Archaeology Program has had an effect on State Parks, as they had been able to call upon the regional archaeologist to assist with small projects at state parks that might impact cultural resources, but that this resource was no longer available. Today, State Parks would have to contract out any work. Mr. Berthelot emphasized that the discussion was addressing only small, very limited projects; large projects would always have to be contracted out. State Parks recognized that Ms. Perrault, as a professional archaeologist, could fill this role for small projects at parks as they arose. The request for a limited investigation permit would enable Ms. Perrault to undertake small archaeological investigations at state parks on an as needed basis. It would provide one additional archaeological resource person within the system that could assist State Parks in managing its properties. Mr. Berthelot requested that the Commission grant a limited investigation permit to Ms. Perrault.

Dr. McKillop asked what the geographic limits of the permit would be? Mr. Berthelot replied that it could be at any state park across the state.

MOTION: *A motion was made by Mr. Ray Berthelot and seconded by Dr. Mark Rees, to grant a limited investigation permit to Ms. Stephanie Perrault to conduct archaeological investigations at State Parks during until June 2016.*

Dr. Rees commented that this could result in Ms. Perrault essentially have a second job, although that was not the goal of the permit. Mr. Berthelot noted that this one more example of how the loss of the regional archaeologists is having effects at other agencies, with other staff having to pick up those responsibilities. Dr. Rees asked whether her responsibilities as Poverty Point site manager allow her the time to write up a report of work done at another state park? Mr. Berthelot indicated that if a potential project came up and it was clear that it would require more time than could be spared from Ms. Perrault's duties as site manager, then State Parks would have to find another avenue for dealing with the project.

Dr. McKillop expressed several concerns about this motion. First, the State is putting a significant emphasis on the Poverty Point site and its new World Heritage status and the emphasis needs to stay focused on that site. Second, the Commission had not seen Ms. Perrault's vita and therefore was not in a position to consider her qualifications for this potential new role. Third, with other permits, there is an annual or project report submitted to the Division and Commission detailing the results of any investigations undertaken through a permit – would there be a similar mechanism for Ms. Perrault to provide an annual report? Fourth, there is a concern for how widely across the state the permit would allow Ms. Perrault to travel and work. And fifth, while this solution might provide short-term relief for State Parks, it does not address the longer-term problem caused by the absence of the Regional Program. She suggested that in the meantime it might be more effective to try and utilize archaeologists at the various state universities.

Dr. McGimsey acknowledged that this situation raises challenges and that using the Poverty Point site manager to assist state parks at other facilities is not the ideal situation. He also noted that if Ms. Perrault does not do these tasks, it will fall to the Division to try and take them on; there are not archaeologists at most of the other universities around the state to take this work on, especially on a volunteer basis. And State Parks doesn't have the resources to hire archaeologists. He did note that he had done a half-day field project at Port Hudson recently but was very concerned about where he was going to find time to write it up. It is his concern that if more projects like Port Hudson came up, they would simply not get done. Using the Poverty Point site manager is an effort to take a resource and stretch it to cover areas that won't get covered otherwise. He noted Ms. Perrault is certainly qualified as she has done archaeology for over 20 years, (someone asked about her degrees), and noted that she has a MA degree from LSU. She has worked for a number of contract firms over the years.

Dr. Gray asked if the Commission could see a copy of her C.V. before considering the motion. He also asked for further details on the scope and scale of the investigations conducted under the permit. Dr. McGimsey noted that this would be variable depending not only on the individual project, but also the workload at Poverty Point and how available Ms. Perrault could be on a timely basis. It was noted that the Regional permits had been limited to a total of two 1x1 test units at any given site/project. Dr. Riser noted that the proposed permit would not be applicable to Poverty Point because the site has a station archaeologist to address issues at that site. Dr. McGimsey noted that it was not intent of the permit to allow Ms. Perrault to undertake investigations at the site. Ms. Hawkins noted that the Commission has the latitude to set limits on any permit it approves; perhaps a revised application with specified limits could be presented to the Commission at its December meeting.

Dr. McKillop asked about other options for conducting any necessary work. Could another archaeologist be issued a permit to undertake the work on a volunteer basis, using student labor. She noted that LSU has graduate students and others looking for opportunities as a possible partnership practice with other archaeologists. Mr. Berthelot welcomed the possibility that universities could be a resource they could call upon. As an example of the kinds of projects that come up, he noted the recent Port Hudson project. There was erosion along a segment of a visitor walking trail and it needed to be rerouted for safety reasons. An archaeological survey needed to be done prior to the reroute to ensure that no significant resources were impacted. Or there might be a waterline that broke at a site and needed to be repaired immediately. In both instances, it is very beneficial to have an archaeologist available to survey and/or monitor the project. Dr. McKillop is trying to develop alternative strategies rather than relying solely on Ms. Perrault for all of State Park's needs. Mr. Berthelot agreed with the emphasis on additional strategies with Ms. Perrault as one possible strategy that can be employed for these situations that State Parks can utilize.

Dr. Rees raised the issue of Ms. Perrault's workload. He also encouraged the use of volunteer archaeologists around the state. He would be happy to volunteer as a possible monitor at projects in his region. Dr. McKillop noted that perhaps this could be

expanded to archaeologists at other universities, while acknowledging that each of these volunteers would need a permit from the Commission. Mr. Berthelot suggested that prior to the next Commission meeting that he would acquire a copy of Ms. Perrault's vita, and work with Dr McGimsey to develop a specific proposal detailing what level of investigation the permit will allow. He also asked the Commission members to provide names and vitas of individuals who might be willing to assist State Parks with minor projects at their Parks. The discussion of Ms. Perrault's permit and other strategies can continue at the next Commission meeting. Dr. Rees noted that if there was to be a formal relationship between UL-Lafayette and State Parks, development of an MOU outlining that relationship would be an appropriate step, and an example of a partnership envisioned by the new HPP.

Poverty Point Station Archaeology Update – Dr.Diana Greenlee

Dr. Greenlee reported on the activities of the Poverty Point Station Archaeology Program over the last year. The first item was an update on the investigation of Mound F. The mound is a small, 30 m diameter rise in the very northeastern corner of the site. She did some additional remote sensing and excavated a 1x1 m test unit. The remote sensing effort included magnetic susceptibility, electrical conductivity, and resistivity, and clearly shows the western boundaries of the mound. The test unit profiles clearly show the base of the mound. Four dates have been obtained from the mound so far, and show Mound F to be the latest mound built at the site.

The Harlin Bayou stabilization project has been completed. Work was undertaken behind Mound B and along Ridge 6 north behind the dormitory. A total of four segments of the Bayou were stabilized. One segment was a continuation of the 2008 stabilization project to address new erosion above and below the prior effort. The project basically involved moving dirt from the north side of the bayou onto the eroding south bank and then armoring the new south bank with rock. All of the activities were monitored but only a few artifacts were recovered from the base of the stream channel.

Dr. Greenlee noted the inscription of Poverty Point as a World Heritage Site. A followup report addressing some concerns the World Heritage Committee had is due on December 8, 2015. Dr. Greenlee is working to complete this report. She also noted the publication of a public book with co-author Jenny Ellerbe on Poverty Point.

Dr. McKillop asked about the results from the downhole magnetic susceptibility work at Mound F. Dr. Greenlee indicated that the data supported the stratigraphic interpretations and identified the base of the mound. There were three cores where the soil stratigraphy and susceptibility profiles did not match and examining those differences will be a future study. Dr. McKillop asked if Dr. Greenlee had seen the results of the magnetic susceptibility study of the LSU Campus Mounds; Dr. Greenlee had seen them. Dr. Riser asked if there were plans for future long-term research at the site. Dr. Greenlee replied she had several reports that need to be completed first. She has spoken with Dr. Mike Hargrave about doing more remote sensing across the site and pairing that with targeted excavations of anomalies. There are not any proposals from outside researchers to work

at the site at this time, although one student is interested in looking at botanical remains from earlier excavations. And Jim Delahoussaye is examining the faunal remains from the site at this time. Dr. McKillop noted the importance of continuing research at the site to address specific research questions. Dr. Greenlee noted that one of her responsibilities is to update the overall site research design that was first formulated by Dr. Robert Connolly in 2003. Dr. McKillop asked if the Commission would like to see the updated research design.

Other Business

Ms. Doucet noted that the Poverty Point book by Dr. Greenlee and Ms. Ellerbe, Dr. Rees' book on Louisiana Archaeology, and a volume on archaeology of the Petite Anse region of Louisiana will be for sale at the Archaeology Month event at the State Museum.

***Motion:** Dr. George Riser moved that the Commission meeting be adjourned. It was seconded by Mr. Ray Berthelot. The Motion passed unanimously.*

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.