



## HENRIETTA LACKS COMMISSION

Chair, Mattie Cowan  
Vice Chair, Dr. Nettie Simon-Owens  
Jeri Lacks-Whye

Sen. William Stanley, Jr.  
Del. James Edmunds, II  
Hon. Ed Owens

Dr. Adele Newson-Horst  
Kristy Johnson  
Jason Studley

**Henrietta Lacks Commission Minutes**  
**Wednesday, June 26, 2019 – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Halifax Industrial Development Authority**  
**1100 Confroy Dr, South Boston, Virginia 24592**

**Members present:** Mattie Cowan, Dr. Nettie Simon-Owens, Sen. Stanley, Jr., Dr. Adele Newson-Horst, Kristy Johnson, and Ed Owens

**Members absent:** Del. James Edmunds, Jeri Lacks-Whye, Jason Studley

**VDH staff present:** Dr. Lauren Powell, Director of the Office of Health Equity; Jasmine Smith, Danville YHELI Program Administrator

**Others present:** Servant Courtney Speed, President of the Henrietta Lacks Legacy Group; Charity Howell, Outreach Representative for U.S. Senator Mark R. Warner; Lawrence Lacks, son of Mrs. Henrietta Lacks; Veronica Lacks, granddaughter of Lawrence Lacks; Richard Crouse, Assistant to Senator Stanley.

### **Call to Order**

Ms. Cowan, hereafter, “the Chair” called the meeting of the Henrietta Lacks Commission, hereafter, “Commission”, to order at 12:00 p.m.

### **Determination of Quorum**

A quorum was confirmed with six of nine members present.

### **Approval of Agenda**

After the additions of 7b; Henrietta Lacks Legacy Week, 7c; 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Discussion, 7d; Henrietta Lacks Documentary Discussion, and 7e; LEAD Virginia Contacts, the agenda was approved unanimously by a voice vote, motioned by Dr. Nettie Simon-Owens and seconded by Ed Owens.

### **Approval of March Draft Minutes**

The draft minutes from the March 19, 2019 meeting were approved, with a typographical edit, by a unanimous voice vote, motioned by Dr. Adele Newson-Horst, and seconded by Kristy Johnson.



## Henrietta Lacks Commission Minutes

### ***Action Items:***

- *ACTION: Staff will reformat draft minutes for final posting. Staff will post final minutes to Commonwealth Calendar and the VDH Commissioner's Meetings Calendar.*

### **Old Business**

#### **Program Director Position**

Dr. Lauren Powell reported that financial support within the agency is the current need for the Henrietta Lacks Commission new hire. The new hire would have to be exclusively dedicated to the Commission. There is currently a job description and the request has been elevated within the agency. Dr. Lauren Powell hopes to have a new hire by the next quarterly meeting.

A question was posed by the Chair, Mattie Cowan, to Senator Stanley that asked if there was anything that the Commission can do to get funding for the position. Senator Stanley noted that the Commission will need a budget amendment. The Commission can also seek out grants for funding for the new hire.

#### **Report Back on 2019 Second Conference on Bioethics Issues in Minority Health**

Dr. Lauren Powell reported that she has not heard confirmation of a third conference as of yet, however, she has been in contact with Dr. Stephen Sodeke to work with him on expanding the abstract into a short manuscript. The manuscript will not be based on scientific research, but instead on the proceedings from the conference and the discussion regarding the abstract that was submitted by the Commission.

There were some minor edits received from the Journal for Healthcare of the Poor and Underserved. The suggested edits were made and submitted. Dr. Lauren Powell will report back on this as updates are received.

### **By-Laws**

The by-laws were approved at the March 19, 2019 meeting with the single edit by a unanimous voice vote, motioned by Mr. Owens and seconded by Dr. Newson-Horst.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Communication Committee (Commissioners Johnson, Lacks-Whye & Newson-Horst)**

LEAD Virginia contacted the Henrietta Lacks Commission and requested a presenter for their visit to Halifax County. A contact sheet of LEAD Virginia participants who expressed interest in volunteering their professional talents to assist with the work of the Commission. The contact sheet was provided to each Commission member

### ***Action Items:***

- *ACTION: The Communications Committee will complete a write up on the LEAD Virginia presentation to be included on the webpage.*



## **Henrietta Lacks Commission Minutes**

- *ACTION: Following the June 26, 2019 meeting, the Commission will look over the contacts given and contact LEAD Virginia participants on any matters they can be of assistance with surrounding the Henrietta Lacks Commission*

### **Legal and Funding Committee (Commissioners Owens, Stanley, & Studley)**

Committee member, Ed Owens made a few comments and asked Sen. Stanley to provide updates on the forms needed to establish a 501C3 foundation. Sen. Stanley gave the Chair, Mattie Cowan a paper copy of the partially completed articles of incorporation, prepared by his staff. The Henrietta Lacks Foundation Inc., was reported to be an available name and was reserved in the instance that the Commission chooses to go forth with this name. It was agreed that the preferred name of a new 501C3 entity will be The Henrietta Lacks Life Sciences Center Foundation, Inc. Committee member, Sen. Stanley reported that the Commission and the Foundation are to be known as two separate entities.

#### ***Action Items:***

- *ACTION: The Commission will need to register the Foundation with the Virginia State Incorporation Commission as soon as possible.*
- *ACTION: The Commission will need to complete the donation received form as soon as possible.*
- *ACTION: Sen. Stanley's assistant, Richard Crouse, will send example bylaws to the chair.*
- *ACTION: Sen. Stanley volunteered to be the Authorized Representative on the Application for Recognition of Exemption documents (IRS form 1023) that must be submitted for the creation of the Foundation.*
- *STUDY: The Commission will follow up on the available name options for the Foundation (i.e. the Henrietta Lacks Life Science Center Foundation, Inc.).*
- *PLANNING: 1100 Confroy Drive, South Boston, VA 24592 will be used as the physical location for the Foundation.*

A suggestion was made by Ed Owens to have a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA). Dr. Lauren Powell noted that being that the Commission is a public body, a Non-Disclosure Agreement may not be appropriate, however, a NDA may be appropriate for the Foundation. Dr. Simon-Owens shared that it was recommended to her that the Commission consider NDAs to protect the information Commissioners discuss with others during this planning process and in the absence of the Foundation.

#### ***Action Items:***

- *ACTION: Dr. Lauren Powell will follow up with the Attorney General's Office regarding a Non-Disclosure Agreement.*

### **Advisory Council (Commissioners Simon-Owens, Edmunds, & Stanley)**



## **Henrietta Lacks Commission Minutes**

Dr. Simon-Owens reported that the draft letter to the proposed Advisory Council members, located in the meeting documents folder, can now be updated with edits based on the information provided at this meeting. Sentiments of appreciation were given to the VDH staff for the creation of the Henrietta Lacks Commission letterhead.

### ***Action Items:***

- *ACTION: VDH staff will make the necessary edits to the draft letter and send to the Advisory Council chair.*

### **New Business**

#### **Building of the Henrietta Lacks Life Sciences Center**

The Chair, Mattie Cowan, reported that Halifax County recently adopted a new strategic plan which includes the building of the Henrietta Lacks Life Sciences Center as one of the items listed. Halifax County is committed to this and stands behind the Commission. The elevator speech, developed by Mrs. Hope Harris-Gayles (SVHEC communications manager), was used to explain the Commission and its hard work. Positive responses were received on the elevator speech.

### ***Action Items:***

- *ACTION: There will be reports given at each quarterly meeting with updates on the building of the Henrietta Lacks Life Sciences Center.*

#### **Henrietta Lacks Portrait and Dedications**

The Ambrose Kennedy Park will be dedicated as the Henrietta Lacks Educational Park.

#### **Henrietta Lacks Legacy Week**

The Chair, Mattie Cowan, reported that the Commission wishes to have Henrietta Lacks Legacy Week in the month of October. This will be a week-long event that will work to shed light on the contributions and impact that Henrietta Lacks had in science and technology, as well as to the ongoing work of the Commission and her connection to Halifax County, VA.

A suggestion was made to have a Health Disparities Fair that consists of screenings, vital signs, community engagement, and education.

A suggestion was made to have a Henrietta Lacks Legacy Day created during the school year that is dedicated to education and essay projects surrounding Henrietta Lacks. Black History Month and Women's History month were the two suggested timeframes for this. Sen. Stanley stated that the New College University can be used to host an event in Martinsville, VA.



## Henrietta Lacks Commission Minutes

### ***Action Items:***

- *STUDY: VDH staff will gather information for the Henrietta Lacks Legacy Week in the month of October and will report back.*
- *ACTION: A conference call will be set up to go over this information within the coming weeks.*
- *PLANNING: The Commission agreed on the week of October 20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> and planning will begin.*

### **100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Henrietta Lacks**

Dr. Newson-Horst reported that NPR would like to know what the Commission is planning to do for the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Chair, Mattie Cowan reported the interest of completing a documentary. The documentary will consist of 25-30 minutes discussing who Henrietta Lacks is and her contributions.

Due to a documentary already being worked on by some Lacks family members, there was a discussion on collaborating on this, rather than creating a new documentary.

### ***Action Items:***

- *STUDY: Research and inquiries will be done on the potential collaboration for a documentary and information will be reported back at the next quarterly meeting.*
- *ACTION: Dr. Newson-Horst will take planning for the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration to the Communications Committee and is the point person matter. Reports will be given at the conference call and the next quarterly meeting.*

### **Virginia State Baptist Usher's Union Advertisement**

The Chair, Mattie Cowan has reported that she is a member of the Virginia State Baptists Usher's Union and plans to purchase a one-page ad for the journal being created for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Virginia State Baptist Usher's Union that will highlight Henrietta Lacks.

### ***Action Items:***

- *ACTION: Dr. Newson-Horst and VDH staff will put together the full page ad surrounding Henrietta Lacks and the Commission.*

### **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will take place during the regularly scheduled quarterly window, in September 2019. The date is pending the response and availability of Commissioners based on a Doodle poll.



**Henrietta Lacks Commission  
Minutes**

***Action Items:***

- *ACTION: Staff will send out a Doodle Poll to determine staff availability for the meeting.*

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Meeting minutes recorded by Jasmine Smith

