



SOUTH CAROLINA CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM & MILITARY MUSEUM

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

W. Allen Roberson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 13, 2024

COLUMBIA, SC—The South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission will meet on Thursday, August 15, 2024, at 10:30 A.M. This meeting will be conducted in person. Any member of the media or the public who may wish to attend, is welcome! The meeting will be held in the Museum's Main Gallery. Please contact Rachel Cockrell at (803) 737-8020 if you have to attend by cell phone, to obtain her cell phone number. The meeting agenda is as follows:

- I. Greetings to the Commission, Members of the Media, and Visitors**
- II. Tour of Museum on Collection Storage Project, Construction Problems, and Flood Damage**
- III. Review of February 22, 2024, Meeting Summary (No Quorum)**
- IV. Old Business**
 - A. *Status of New Commissioners:* Ongoing
 - B. Election of New Officers will be in early 2025
 - C. *Columbia Mills Construction Project:* The Museum is currently closed
 1. Closed on June 1
 2. Problems with reopening in the Gallery
 3. Originally scheduled to reopen on October 3
 4. May be extensive delays due to necessary repairs
- V. Ongoing Museum Operation – FY25 Budget**
 - A. *FY25 Budget Request Funded*
 1. Budget Request Priority 1: Recurring Funding for Existing Unfunded Vacant Position: As a Program Manager I Band 7 Chief Curator budgeted at **\$75,000** with Fringe Benefits at 44.88% or **\$33,660**, totaling **\$108,660**.
 2. Budget Request Priority 2: **\$108,413** (Recurring) or 10% increase needed for the Museum's Annual Base FY24 Operating Budget of \$1,084,130, because of the rising costs of our monthly bills.
 3. Budget Request Priority 3: **\$177,000** (Nonrecurring) to Complete the Purchase of selected Rare SC military artifacts from *The Joe Edens Collection*
 4. Budget Request Priority 4: **\$213,425** (Nonrecurring) to Renovate the 365 square foot "Gist" rotating exhibit gallery, including raising the ceiling, modifying duct work, installing track lighting, and building a large built-in exhibit case to display the *Congaree River Collection* of recently recovered Civil War artifacts by Dominion Energy of South Carolina. This archeological project received substantial news coverage and attracted the interest of the Governor. The Museum will lobby Dominion to for funds for the eventual exhibit.

- B. *FY25 Budget Request Not Funded* - Budget Request Priority 5: **\$15,000** (Nonrecurring) to update the 2020 Feasibility Study on renovating the upstairs Congaree Room for expansion.

VI. Ongoing Museum Operation – FY24 Annual Attendance

- A. **27,142** FY23 SC Confederate Relic Room & Military Museum Annual Attendance
 B. **41,198** FY24 Attendance, primarily because of the Vietnam exhibit, better programs, and better PR. I believe this is the highest attendance in 50 years
 C. **41,431** The Museum was open only 11 months because we closed in July because of the Atrium Construction

VII. FY24 Museum Programs

- A. *Programs*
1. *Lunch & Learn* is now the *Noon Debrief*
 2. While we are closed, we have partnered with the Richland County Library to have our summer programs there
 3. June 28, Joe Long gave a great program on North Vietnam's *Hoa Lo Prison*, known as the "Hanoi Hilton." We had good attendance and reviews!
 4. On August 16, Joe will do another program on American Revolutionary War Polish hero, *Thaddeus Kosciuszko*
 5. Will be developing more off-site programs to be held at area libraries while we are closed
 6. When we reopen, we will have our usual programs plus additional Teacher Workshops like we had during the last school year, that Commissioner Walter Curry participated in. We had strong attendance and great reviews!
- B. *Collections:*
1. Museum Uniform Conservation Program is ongoing. Received approximately \$12,000 from SCV for uniform conservation.
 2. Conserved Bomar and Bland uniforms
 - a. Costs: \$52,830.00
 - b. Donations totaling \$20,382
 3. SCV National Conference in North Charleston

VIII. Palmetto State Military History Foundation Status and Report

IX. Next Commission Meeting Date and 2025 Meeting Schedule: October 17, 2024

Any questions regarding these proceedings may be addressed to museum Executive Director Allen Roberson, 803-737-8096 or arobers@crr.sc.gov. The South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission members are comprised of three members appointed by the Governor, two members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, one member appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate on recommendation of the SC Division Commander of Sons of Confederate Veterans, two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and one member

appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives on recommendation of the President of the SC Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

Founded in 1896, the SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum is the oldest museum in the Columbia area. The museum focuses on South Carolina's military history from the Revolutionary War to the present. The museum is located at 301 Gervais Street (in the same building as the State Museum). Visit www.crr.sc.gov for more information.

** This meeting has been posted in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act*