

GOVERNOR'S SYMPOSIUM 2012
NATIONAL HERITAGE: HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE
REPORT OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Organizing Committee Governor's Symposium 2012

Members:

- Mr. Paul Middelberg – Chairman;
- Mr. York, Neville – Secretary;
- Ms. Bosch, Elsje;
- Ms. Henry, Marcellia; and
- Mr. Peterson, Cedric

Permanent advisors to the Committee.

- Dr. Havisser, Jay;
- Ms. Plantz, Astrid;
- Ms. Reyes, Clara; and
- Mr. Thompson, Reuben.

March 1, 2013
Philipsburg, Sint Maarten

1. Introduction

The Governors Symposium 2012 with the theme *National Heritage: Historical, Cultural and Economic Importance*, was held on Monday December 17, 2012 at The Westin Hotel, in Dawn Beach. It was the first Governors Symposium. His Excellency Governor Holiday through by decision ORG-12/0033 of October, 23, 2013 established and charged the Organizing Committee Governor's Symposium 2012 with the organization of the Symposium.

The purpose of the Governor's Symposium 2012 was to place the National Heritage of Sint Maarten – tangible and intangible – in the spotlight as a nation building initiative by highlighting Sint Maarten's national heritage and drawing from various experiences to emphasize the benefits of the restoration and preservation of national heritage.

To execute its tasks towards the organization of the Governor's Symposium the committee met every Friday starting October 19, 2012 and concluded its work with an evaluation of the Governor's Symposium 2012 on March 1, 2013. This report of recommendations is the result of the committee's review of the presentations delivered and the resulting questions and answers.

2. The Symposium

The event was organized in The Westin Hotel and a number of national, regional and international government officials and subject matter experts were invited to share and exchange their knowledge and deliberate on National Heritage during the day. The symposium was officially opened with an opening address by Governor Eugene Holiday entitled "*In Governance Heritage Matters*" and featured UNESCO Executive Board chair person Ms. Alissandra Cummins as Keynote Speaker. The following is a list of the invited and featured speakers:

a) Government

- Ms. Silveria Jacobs, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs

b) National

- Mr. Louis Brown, acting Secretary General VROMI,
- Dr. Jay Havisier, Specialist for Monuments & Archaeology at the Ministry of VROMI, ,
- Mrs. Maria van der Sluijs-Plantz, Vice Chair Strategic Development TMF Group Holding B.V.
- Mr. Neville York, Head of the Culture Department, and
- Ms. Clara Reyes, performing artist & choreographer

c) Regional and International

- Ms. Alissandra Cummins, Keynote Speaker, the Director of the Barbados Museum & Historical Society and chair person of the Executive Board of UNESCO
- Alicia Barnes, Commissioner USVI Department of Planning & Natural Resource
- Mr. Michael Newton, Coordinator on Curaçao of the UNESCO Caribbean Heritage Course
- Mr. Arthur Murphy, Director of Heritage Resources for the National Parks Antigua
- Mrs. Maria van der Sluijs-Plantz, Vice Chair Strategic Development TMF Group Holding B.V.

The speakers through their presentations provided some good ideas and thoughts for follow-up. Some 100 invited delegates attended the symposium.

3. Recommendations

Considering the symposium's objective the committee based on its mandate debriefed Governor Holiday on its evaluation of the symposium on February 1, 2013. The debrief included a presentation of the lessons drawn from the presentations made by the various speakers. These lessons have been summarized in 7 focus areas and captured in 16 concrete recommendations for consideration by all stakeholders including government. The following is an outline of the Organizing Committee's recommendations from the Governor Symposium 2012:

1. Monument Council

Establish the announced monument council to advise on the development of national heritage policy and the preservation of Sint Maarten monuments.

2. National Heritage Education

- a. Include national heritage in the standard school curricula.
- b. To implement this an expert workgroup should be commissioned to develop a National Heritage Education Program (NHEP) for the schools.
- c. Appoint a National Heritage Educator to educate teachers on how to teach children the National Heritage of Sint Maarten.
- d. The NHEP should include a training program for stakeholders in the hospitality industry.

3. Maintenance and Preservation Of National Heritage

- a. Government should ratify the UNESCO treaty for the safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage.
- b. The existing monument list should be reviewed, updated and published regularly.
- c. The nomination process for monuments should be reactivated.
- d. Strengthen national heritage preservation legislation including greater monitoring, enforcement and penalization.

4. National Heritage Facilities

Invest in the development and improvement of national heritage facilities, such as: Museums, National parks, Art galleries; and Center for the Performing Arts.

5. Public Information Campaign:

National heritage awareness should be promoted via a public information services making use of multi-media such as Radio, TV, Mobile Applications, School agenda.

6. Community responsibility

- a. Maximize youth involvement in discussions and activities on national heritage.
- b. Foster corporate responsibility for the support of national heritage.

7. Funding

- a. Introduce tax incentives to support maintenance and upkeep as part of the monuments preservation legislation and policies.
- b. Establish a monument fund.
- c. Optimize use of donor agencies funding facilities.

4. Conclusion

The members of committee are grateful to the various speakers for their valuable input and thanks the symposium attendees and the public for their contributions and varied reactions. The members of the committee also wish to express their appreciation to His Excellency Governor Holiday for the confidence placed in them to organize the Governor Symposium 2012.

**On behalf of the
Organizing Committee Governor Symposium 2012**

Mr. Peterson, Cedric - Acting Chairman

Mr. York, Neville – Secretary