

RESOLUTION

FORT MONROE AUTHORITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESOLUTIONS

November 21, 2019

WHEREAS, the Fort Monroe Authority (FMA) was established by an Act of the Virginia General Assembly, as a political subdivision of the Commonwealth, charged with preservation, conservation, protection, and maintenance of the natural resources and real property interests of the Commonwealth, on the state property deeded to the Commonwealth following the closure of the U.S. Army installation at Fort Monroe; and

WHEREAS, by Presidential Proclamation on November 1, 2011 under the Antiquities Act of 1906, the Fort Monroe National Monument (Monument) was established as a unit of the national park system, consisting of cultural landscapes and outdoor recreation open spaces along the Chesapeake Bay shoreline, three historic buildings, the historic parade ground, and an easement over and inside the moated historic fortress; and

WHEREAS, on August 25, 2015, the Commonwealth transferred ownership of two parcels of land inside the stone fortress totaling 9± acres (Inner Fort parcel) together with a 112± acre parcel (North Beach parcel) to the United States of America (USA); and

WHEREAS, on October 25, 2016 the Commonwealth granted a Historic Preservation and Access Easement (Easement) to the United States of America by and through the National Park Service (NPS) for 92.7± acres around and including the historic stone fortress; and

WHEREAS, since the establishment of the Monument, the FMA and NPS have worked collaboratively to optimize efficient and effective preservation and adaptive management of these nationally significant structures and landscapes, having mutually adopted the overarching management theme of "*One Fort Monroe*"; and

WHEREAS, since the establishment of the Monument, it became clear to both parties that the significant separation between the 92-acre Easement boundary and the 112-acre North Beach parcel diminished the functionality and the cohesion being sought for *One Fort Monroe*, and that the closure of the physical gap separating elements of the Monument was highly desirable; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, NPS indicated it could accept a donation of 44 acres of land that would provide a physical connection between the two divided sections of the Monument to achieve an unbroken coastline along the Chesapeake Bay, from Old Point Comfort north to the end of the property; and

WHEREAS, on August 18, 2016, the FMA Board unanimously approved a Resolution to support transfer of the 44-acre parcel from the Commonwealth to the USA in order to buttress the partnership between NPS and the Commonwealth by completing the long planned connection to

better balance and rationalize the respective responsibilities of the partners for properties at Fort Monroe; and

WHEREAS, since August 2016 the NPS and FMA have worked to finalize the boundary of the additional donation, resulting in a 35± acre parcel to be donated to the USA and a 5± acre expansion of the Easement boundary; and

WHEREAS, the NPS notified the Commonwealth that the Minor Boundary Revision process was completed as of June 16, 2017; and

WHEREAS, at the request of the NPS the final survey boundary was recorded at the Hampton Circuit Court on December 8, 2017 in Plat Book 5 on Page 48; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, it is our understanding that certain senior officials of the Department of the Interior have ordered the NPS not to accept donation of the proposed 35± acres from the Commonwealth due to a misperception that the property carries with it excessive deferred maintenance responsibility; and

WHEREAS, the FMA Board commends U.S. Senators Mark R. Warner and Timothy M. Kaine, and U.S. Representatives Elaine G. Luria, Robert C. “Bobby” Scott, Robert J. Wittman, and A. Donald McEachin for introducing legislation (S. 2329 and H.R. 4345) in the U.S. Congress to require NPS to accept the donation of these lands from the Commonwealth;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT:

RESOLVED, that the FMA Board strongly urges the U.S. Department of the Interior to allow the NPS to accept donation of the proposed 35± acres of Commonwealth land in order to unify the Monument lands, and firmly cement the over-arching management objective in this state-federal partnership of *One Fort Monroe*, as previously committed to by the NPS.