

***Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park  
Federal Advisory Commission Meeting***

March 17, 2016

Middletown Town Hall  
Middletown, Virginia

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|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1) General Introductions                   | Jim Northup       |
| 2) Adoption of Minutes                     | John Adamson      |
| 3) Nomination Process Update               | Jim Northup       |
| 4) Park Foundation Document Process Update | Karen Beck-Herzog |
| 5) National Park Service Centennial        | Karen Beck-Herzog |
| 6) Cooperative Agreement Update            | Karen Beck-Herzog |
| 7) Trails Update                           | Karen Beck-Herzog |
| 8) Park Day Volunteer Event                | Karen Beck-Herzog |
| 9) New Business                            |                   |
| 10) Questions/Comments from the Public     |                   |

Meeting Notes

Commission members in attendance: Jim Northup, Designated Federal Official (DFO); John Adamson, chair, Belle Grove, Inc.; Karen Beck-Herzog, site manager, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP; Carl Bernhards, Middletown; Dave Blount, Private Landowner; Paul Coussan, Civil War Trust (by speaker phone); Stanley M. Hirschberg, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation (CCBF); Eric Lawrence, Frederick County; Lee Meyer, Warren County; Rob Nieweg, National Trust for Historic Preservation; Nicholas Picerno, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF); and Richard Redmon, Strasburg.

Commission members absent: Jeanne Frink, Commonwealth of Virginia.

Others in attendance: Bob Grogg, NPS Volunteer; Jered Hoover, Shenandoah County; Kristen Laise, Belle Grove, Inc.; Rachel Mahoney, *Northern Virginia Daily*; and Dave Stegmaier, District Office, U.S. Representative Barbara Comstock.

John Adamson, chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m., and asked that everyone attending give their name and affiliation.

The notes from the last meeting were approved.

Paul Coussan reported that he has received a letter confirming his appointment for the Civil War Trust to the commission. Jim Northup reported that the Town of Strasburg has recommended Rick Redmond for a second term. Mr. Redmond and Jered Hoover's papers have been submitted to the NPS Washington Office for processing and approval.

Karen Beck-Herzog reported that as a part of the centennial commemorations, each park will prepare a new foundation document. A portion of each document will be the same for each park and reaffirming the park's significance, interpretive themes, and the fundamental and other important resources and values; the second part will address the special mandates and address the park's data and planning needs. A regional person has been given the responsibility for shepherding these projects to completion. A draft is being prepared for the park and commission to review. Since Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP has a very recent general management plan, the goal will be to reaffirm those principles and objectives laid down in the plan.

Throughout the centennial year various park programs will be billed as "centennial events." The Vermont at Cedar Creek weekend, June 24-26, 2016, is such a program. Fee area parks will be giving out park passes to fourth-graders across the country. Belle Grove will be sponsoring programs for fourth-graders also.

The very first cooperative agreement—between the park and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF)—is currently being reviewed in the regional office. The agreement will enable several projects at the Thoburn property—a small parking lot, mowed trail, and investigations to determine the location of the cemetery—to proceed.

An agreement with Belle Grove has been drafted and is being reviewed locally. Once the parties here are in agreement, the draft will be forwarded to the regional office for approval.

The Potomac Appalachian Trail Club has agreed to volunteer for a project to build bridges over the 19th Corps entrenchments. They have looked at similar bridges at Fredericksburg and are figuring out how that approach may be adapted to conditions along the 19th Corps trail. Determining costs is also a major component of the initial evaluation.

Park Day, April 2, 2016, will be a workday on the existing Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation (CCBF) 19th Corps trail as well as cleaning up the unopened portion of the trail on National Trust for Historic Preservation property. The project is a partnership between the NPS, CCBF, and Belle Grove. Park Day is sponsored by the Civil War

Trust. Jeff Driscoll will give a talk at the end of the four-hour workday about the entrenchments.

### New Business

John Adamson and Kristin Laise reported that a great deal of work is being done to flesh out the story of slavery at Belle Grove. From 1783 to 1851, 267 enslaved persons lived and worked at Belle Grove. So many people will have left quite a record behind. The task now is to find that information and bring it to light. Initial work has yielded new information that is the impetus behind planning and producing new interpretive panels. These exhibits can be easily updated as new information comes to light. A Shenandoah University student is doing archival research. A Syracuse University Ph.D. student is doing both archeological and archival research. Researchers are looking for letters, diaries, court case records that will give details and fill gaps in the outline of what is known so that interpretation can change and provide an open window to the past.

### Comments

Nick Picerno reported that he had been in the visitor contact station and watched Shannon Moeck talk with visitors and spark their interest in what the park had to offer. He found her ability to engage them moving. Jered Hoover reported that Eric Campbell had presented a program for the Shenandoah County Parks & Rec Department and had been well received.

John Adamson adjourned the meeting at 9:49 a.m.

Those commission members and others who had the time then took a tour of the park for an update of what is being done or planned, followed by lunch at Belle Grove.

The next commission meeting is at the Warren County Government Center, June 16, 2016, 9 a.m.

### Handouts

Agenda

Meeting Notes for December 17, 2015

2016 Centennial Programs, Events, and Projects

Foundation Document, Natchez Trace Parkway