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**To:** Amy DuBois <[adubois@MathewsCountyVa.gov](mailto:adubois@MathewsCountyVa.gov)>, Mike Rowe <[mrowe@MathewsCountyVa.gov](mailto:mrowe@MathewsCountyVa.gov)>, "Paul W. Hudgins" <[phudgins@MathewsCountyVa.gov](mailto:phudgins@MathewsCountyVa.gov)>, Jackie Ingram <[jingram@MathewsCountyVa.gov](mailto:jingram@MathewsCountyVa.gov)>, "Melissa F. Mason" <[mmason@MathewsCountyVa.gov](mailto:mmason@MathewsCountyVa.gov)>

**Subject: Confederate Monument**

Members of the Mathews County Board of Supervisors,

I read this week's Gazette Journal article on the Board's considerations for the confederate monument. I have not had the opportunity to participate in any of the meetings to date but I plan on attending the September 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. I hope to receive some feedback from this email in advance of that meeting.

**Decision Process:** The article implies that the monument was erected without Board action or consideration. The monument was not erected by approval of a referendum. It seems illogical for a monument to be removed through a costly and time-consuming referendum when seemingly no local action was taken to erect it, take ownership and maintain the grounds in perpetuity. Furthermore, I don't see how a single referendum question can cover the complexity of this issue. Will the question address the future home of the monument, disposal or adoption of the monument as a County asset? It can go in many directions without answering all questions at hand - this is why we have an elected body to make these decisions.

**Ownership:** It is my understanding that a surveyor, Mr. Wayne Lewis, surveyed the vicinity of the monument and the County campus. That survey, which I have not seen, shows the County owning the corner where the monument resides. If this is accurate, it should indicate that the County owns the property and monument.

**Costs to the County:** I would imagine that some maintenance costs have occurred by groundskeeping activities related to the County. Are you able to confirm that County staff maintains the monument in any way?

**Facility Use Authorization:** As County property, has the County authorized 3<sup>rd</sup> party groups (Such as the Sons of Confederate Veterans) to plant flags and otherwise operate on County property? To include the vicinity of the confederate monument or Fort Nonsense.

**Meeting time:** Your website indicates typical alternating meeting times between 1PM and 6PM. The upcoming meeting is scheduled for 5PM which does not give the average working citizen an opportunity to be relieved from work and arrive on time. Please consider 6PM or later meetings when possible.

**Alternative locations:** It is my opinion that the monument should be treated as an offensive but historical item. It should not be destroyed but it should not be located on County property as though it represents the County and its citizenry. It is best served in a museum with appropriate historical context.

If the county does not immediately have the facilities to support the museum then the monument should be secured in canvas until relocation is planned and finalized.

**Stakeholders:** Which organizational groups have reached out to this board in support of removing the monument?

**Meeting Tone:** I'm sure that the meeting will be contentious, especially during citizens' comment period. I hope to see the Board control outbursts, threats (vague and direct), and otherwise severely divisive comments (like gathering militias and a 'war in Mathews') that aren't directly related to the monument.

Thank you for your time and consideration for my email and this subject.

Best Regards,  
Brent Payne  
Chesapeake District

[Response on behalf of Board of Supervisors:](#)

Many of your questions are the issues that require thoughtful deliberation by the Board with input from the citizens of Mathews.

There are many logistical issues in considering the removal/relocation of the confederate monument. A significant consideration is cost. In the absence of an individual or organization offering to pay for the cost of removing/relocating the monument, the cost would be the responsibility of the Board of Supervisors. (At this time there has been no formal offer by an individual or organization to pay for the cost of removing/relocating the monument.) Should the Board opt to proceed with exploring the removal of the monument, obtaining cost estimates is an important step because, depending on the cost, the Board may not be willing to use taxpayer dollars to remove/relocate the monument.

We have collected all of the information we can locate regarding the history of the monument. Clearly, given that the monument is in a public area, the area has been maintained by County staff to some extent. There are also one or more community groups who have also contributed to its upkeep.

It has been a challenge to schedule and plan for this meeting. The Board's goal is to enable citizens to participate and to provide for transparency. Your comments regarding the meeting time are appreciated and will be considered when scheduling meetings in the future. The meeting will be conducted in a respectful manner. Citizens will be permitted to express their views in accordance with the law. Outbursts or other conduct that disrupts the meeting will not be allowed.

Thank you for your email and for your involvement in our community.