

SUBJECT

Historical Activities Non-Departmental Account (NDA)

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

Matt Logan, Montgomery County Historical Society
Pofen Salem, Office of Management and Budget

EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATION

FY21 Executive Recommendation	\$165,000	0.00 FTE
Increase (Decrease) from FY20	\$15,000 10.0%	0.00 FTE 0.0%

COUNCIL STAFF RECOMMENDATION – CONTINUITY OF SERVICES BUDGET

FY21 Council Staff Recommendation	\$150,000	0.00 FTE
Increase (Decrease) from FY20	\$0 0.0%	0.00 FTE 0.0%
Increase (Decrease) from CE FY21 Rec	(\$15,000) (10.0%)	0.00 FTE 0.0%

EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDED ITEMS NOT INCLUDED IN CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

- Addition of \$15,000 to provide enhanced communications for the organization that is greater than the FY20 level of service.

CONTINUITY OF SERVICES FROM FY20

- Includes \$150,000 for general operating expenses to the organization.

POTENTIAL REDUCTIONS

- The organization's source of income includes the County, foundations, private donors, and other public and private grants. All these sources are subject to change due to the ongoing health crisis. The operating expenses for the organization, similarly, are anticipated to be reduced during the health crisis from fewer events.

POTENTIAL ITEMS RELATED TO COVID-19

- See ©2-3 for the proposed FY21 activities as it relates to the current health crisis.

This report contains:

Executive recommended FY21 budget

© #1

Proposed FY21 activities

© #2-3

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Historical Activities

This NDA provides funding for the Historical Society to support the Society's Education Program staff, educational and outreach programs for County residents, and to maintain the Historical Society's research library and museums.

FY21 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY20 Approved	150,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Operating Expenses	15,000	0.00
FY21 Recommended	165,000	0.00



FY21 Program Plan

Beginning March 16, we suspended all in-person programming and services, including our Sween Research Library, the Beall-Dawson House and Stonestreet Museum, our Speakers Bureau programs, and other talks, lectures, and stewardship events that had been planned for the final quarter of FY20.

As such, we have overhauled our programming to best serve the needs of the community given the current situation. We are making local history more accessible than ever in the following ways, which we will continue to adapt and improve upon in FY21:

1. We have moved our face-to-face programs online. Our new **"History Conversations"** program—which launched on March 31—helps residents stay connected remotely. With the suspension of our Tuesday Talks, Speakers Bureau presentations, and pop-up exhibits, we are now streaming "History Conversations" online twice each week so the public can still engage with local history. These programs feature our most popular speakers and topics and are suitable for all ages. In FY21 we will augment the program by recording videos from our campus—with docents and volunteer speakers—to provide virtual tours of the Beall-Dawson House and Stonestreet Museum. If these prove to be popular, we will also offer walking tours of areas of historical significance in and around the county. We are also reaching out to our Speakers Bureau venues to discuss the possibility of conducting lectures that they can livestream to their audiences. Many of these venues are retirement homes and senior living communities and we know that at this time they need a social outlet more than ever.
2. We are inviting Montgomery Countians to record their day-to-day experiences during this historic crisis. We have begun collecting journal entries, photos, video diaries, or other personal accounts will be of incalculable value to future historians. Our **COVID-19 Archive** will provide a permanent repository and ensure posterity understands how these historic events touched our lives in Montgomery County and shaped our thoughts and actions. We are also partnering with *Bethesda Magazine/Bethesda Beat*; they will donate for our permanent collection articles sent in by residents that share their experiences dealing with the virus. Beginning in FY21, if appropriate, we may begin sharing some of this donated content via our website.
3. We are launching a new podcast, **"Hometown Voices"** so our audience can hear directly from the people in our past as they tell their stories of helping to build the Montgomery County of today. Excerpted from over 40 selections (recorded in the 1960s through the present) from our large Oral History Collection, "Hometown Voices" will give Montgomery Countians an unfiltered view into the thinking of many of our most important and

interesting residents. The podcast will debut this spring, and episodes will continue throughout FY21.

4. We are upgrading our website to make local history—including our popular online exhibits, videos from History Conference sessions, episodes of “Paths to the Present,” and much more—easier to find. When visitors go to **“Montgomery History Connected”** on our website, they have 24/7 access to stories of our collective past that will challenge, comfort, and inspire. We launched this hub in March and will be expanding our online content throughout FY21 and beyond.

Some of our ongoing projects have been delayed, but not completely disrupted, by the closures, such as our work researching and documenting the county’s three recorded lynchings. Currently, only the first of three accounts is published. In FY21 we plan to publish the full accounts of the remaining two episodes of racial terror. Our accounts will provide a singular authoritative resource for county officials, the Remembrance & Reconciliation Commission, and the county at large as we come to terms with these events.

In addition, we are exploring different options for our annual events such as the Montgomery County History Conference. The conference normally takes place in January on the Montgomery College Germantown campus. Though our partners at Montgomery College are optimistic we will be able to hold the conference in person on their campus in January, we are creating multiple contingency plans for different scenarios, including streaming the presentations live for people to watch online.

Lastly, staff is working with our Board Development Committee and outside partners to explore new sources of revenue, such as archival consulting services and the sale of recorded lectures online. We are also working to secure local corporate sponsors for our new programming, “History Conversations” and “Hometown Voices,” as well as for upcoming online exhibits. We are pleased that we were able to secure emergency funding through both the Payroll Protection Loan program and through the county’s Public Health Emergency Grant funding; however, these funds will only cover payroll costs through the very beginning of FY21, hence the need to search for new revenue streams as membership payments and donations begin to decline.