

Senate Education Oversight Subcommittee

Summary Report on the

SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum

March 2016



The SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum collects, preserves, and exhibits the state's military history with a budget of \$1.2 million and a staff of 5-6. It became an independent agency in FY 15-16. It does not have a mission in state law and its commission does not have any specified duties except selecting a director. The museum should coordinate its exhibits with other state-funded museums displaying similar artifacts to prevent duplication. The museum should increase ticket sales, gift shop revenues, and fundraising.

Agency at a Glance

The museum's mission statement states "The South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum serves as the State's military history museum by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting South Carolina's military material culture from the colonial era to the present, and by providing superior educational experiences and programming." The museum has permanent and featured exhibits and special collections with an average of 22,000 visitors a year.

Issues

LACK OF STATUTORY MISSION

The museum has never had a mission defined in state law which has allowed it to act without legislative direction.

- **Legislative Recommendation:** The General Assembly should amend state law to include a mission for the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.

LACK OF COMMISSION DUTIES IN STATUTE

On July 1, 2015, the museum became a separate state agency and is governed by a nine-member commission. The only duty of the commission in state law is to select the director of the museum.

- **Legislative Recommendation:** The General Assembly should amend state law to include duties and responsibilities of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission.

MULTIPLE MUSEUMS WITH OVERLAPPING EXHIBITS

The SC Military Museum, the SC State Museum, and the SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum display military artifacts from the same historical eras. This can cause conflicting missions and duplication of resources.

- **Agency Recommendation:** The museums should coordinate their exhibits with the other state-funded museums that display historical military artifacts and memorabilia to avoid redundancy. This includes the SC Military Museum, the SC State Museum, and the SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The museum relies on its state appropriations for almost all of its expenses. The museum's foundation has no funds, revenues from the gift shop are carried forward, and ticket sales are 3% of the museum's revenue.

- **Agency Recommendation:** The SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum should seek to supplement state appropriations with increased levels of earned income through ticket sales and use of gift shop revenue to fund operations of the museum as well as memberships and fundraising for acquisitions through the foundation.

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Report on the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum

March 2016



Members of Subcommittee:

Senator John E. Courson, Chair
Senator Darrell Jackson, Sr.
Senator Greg Hembree

The SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum collects, preserves, and exhibits the state's military history with a budget of \$1.2 million and a staff of 5-6. It became an independent agency in FY 15-16. It does not have a mission in state law and its commission does not have any specified duties except selecting a director. The museum should coordinate its exhibits with other state-funded museums displaying similar artifacts to prevent duplication. The museum should increase ticket sales, gift shop revenues, and fundraising.

I. Agency at a Glance

The Wade Hampton Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy founded the Confederate Relic Room in 1896 with the primary function of collecting and preserving artifacts from the Confederacy. The Confederate Relic Room is the third oldest museum in the state and was originally located in the State House. During the mid-twentieth century, the museum moved to the War Memorial Building adjacent to the University of South Carolina and in 1998, it became a division of the South Carolina Budget and Control Board. In 2002, the museum moved to its present location in the Columbia Mills Building.

Mission

Although the SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum does not have a statutory mission, the museum created its own mission statement, which states: "The South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum serves as the State's military history museum by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting South Carolina's military material culture from the colonial era to the present, and by providing superior educational experiences and programming." The Confederate Relic Room became the "Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum" by proviso in the 2006-07 appropriations act. Its collection includes South Carolina artifacts from the American Revolution to present conflicts in the Middle East.

Governing Authority

Effective July 1, 2015, the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum was transferred from the Budget and Control Board and is now governed by the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission. The Commission has no statutory duties assigned except for the hiring of the director of the museum. Pursuant to §60-17-10, the commission has nine voting members who serve four-year terms. The members of the board shall be appointed as follows:

- (1) three members appointed by the Governor;
- (2) two members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;
- (3) one member appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate upon the recommendation of the South Carolina Division Commander of the Sons of Confederate Veterans;
- (4) two members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and
- (5) one member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives upon the recommendation of the President of the South Carolina Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

The current museum commission appointments include the following:

Position	Position Title	Current Members	Appointed By	Appointed Date	Expiration Date
Governor Appointee	Member	Miller, Robert "Alex" Jr.	Governor Nikki R. Haley	8/5/2015	6/30/2018
Governor Appointee	Member	VACANT			
Governor Appointee	Member	VACANT			
President Pro Tempore Appointee	Member	Dorn, George N. Jr.	President Pro Tempore of the South Carolina Senate, Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr.	7/28/2015	6/30/2016
President Pro Tempore Appointee	Member	Shealy, Voight	President Pro Tempore of the South Carolina Senate, Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr.	7/16/2015	6/30/2018
President Pro Tempore Appointee, Sons of Confederate Veterans	Member	Summers, T. Leland	President Pro Tempore of the South Carolina Senate, Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr.	7/28/2015	6/30/2017
Speaker of the House Appointee	Member	Christie, Roy M.	Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives, James H. Lucas	9/30/2015	9/29/2018
Speaker of the House Appointee	Member	Howell IV, Samuel W.	Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives, James H. Lucas	9/30/2015	9/29/2017
Speaker of the House Appointee, United Daughters of the Confederacy	Member	Van Schaik, Martha Rogers	Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives, James H. Lucas	9/30/2015	9/29/2016

Finances

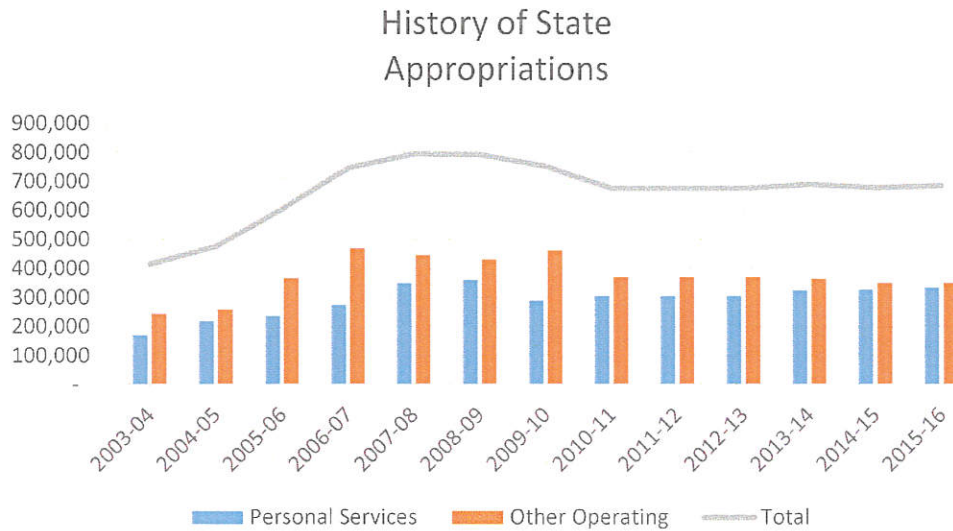
Revenues

The SC Restructuring Act of 2014 made the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum an independent agency. Thus, FY 15-16 is the first year that the museum has had a separate budget. Since 1998, the museum's budget had been part of the budget of the SC Budget and Control Board. The museum received an appropriation of \$824,175 in recurring state funds and an authorization of \$419,252 in federal and other funds in FY 15-16. In addition to these sources of revenue, the

museum receives gross revenues from the gift shop averaging \$38,000, ticket revenues averaging \$22,000, and donations ranging from \$5,000 to \$32,000.

Appropriations

Although the museum has not received any increase in state appropriations since 2011, proviso 30.1 of the FY 15-16 appropriations act provides \$25,000 in recurring funding to maintain the Southern Maritime Collection, a large collection of rare Civil War Confederate naval artifacts, archival material, paintings, and other items. In addition, an appropriation of \$390,198 in non-recurring state funds was included for the purchase of the C.A. Huey collection, a collection of English-imported arms and equipment used in the American Civil War.



Carry Forward Funds

The museum has not used most of its other funds revenue which continues to be carried forward. The largest of these funds was derived from proviso 63.9 in the FY 02-03 appropriations act which transferred the balance in the Installment Purchase Program (IPP) to the SC Budget and Control Board. A maximum of \$500,000 was to be used for the acquisition and maintenance of the Southern Maritime Collection and the remainder for costs associated with the museum. Currently it is carrying forward \$319,252 of these funds. The next largest carry-forward amount is the Gift Shop Revolving Fund which has been growing for the past three years. It is currently at \$153,679. The total amount of funds carried forward from FY 14-15 was \$627,387.

Ticket Prices

Ticket revenues over the last three years have averaged approximately \$22,000. The museum sells an adult ticket for \$6.00 with a \$1.00 discount for military and seniors over 62. Youth ages 10-17 pay \$3.00 and those younger than 10 are admitted free. Although not mandated by law, the museum provides free admission to school groups. For FY 14-15, the museum earned about \$23,000 from ticket sales.

Expenditures

For the past three fiscal years, between 91% and 99% of the museum’s expenditures have been from its state appropriations with very little of its other revenues used to support the operations of the museum. Approximately 41% of the expenditures are for salary and associated fringe (\$259,828 salaries and \$91,730 fringe) and another 30% (\$230,000 rent and \$30,000 energy surcharge) for rent on its state-owned space in the Columbia Mills Building. The only expenditures attributed to the gift shop revenues are for operation of the gift shop and not museum operations.

Staffing

Over the last four years, the museum has had a staff of 5-6 filled positions (FTEs) with 1 vacancy. In the past, the SC Budget and Control Board has completed many of the administrative responsibilities such as human resources and payroll so it has not been necessary for the museum to hire anyone to fill those roles. This agreement is expected to continue after July 1, 2015, even though the museum is no longer a part of the SC Budget and Control Board.

Volunteers

Currently, the museum has six fully-trained and qualified volunteers who are able to conduct tours and assist around the museum. Volunteers are primarily utilized by the curators of education and history. Education volunteers work primarily in three areas: interpretive and logistical assistance with tours and programs, leading education tours, and presenting specialized programs.

Since the museum is regularly approached by people interested in volunteering, they have put into place a competitive selection process that ensures that the most qualified applicants are accepted into the program. Once volunteers are selected, they receive approximately three hours of formal training, and shadow at least two tours before being assigned to lead a tour of their own. The training process for volunteers covers museum rules, familiarization with exhibits and major themes, and instructions on handling sensitive topics.

During the school year, the museum typically has three volunteers active in a week. Education volunteers are likely to give less than five hours a week during school tour season and very little during other seasons unless involved with a special program. If the museum does not have enough volunteers, then it cannot make full use of both galleries to accommodate larger school groups.

Operations, Programming, and Visitation

Collections

Pursuant to S.C. Code §60-17-30, “[n]o artifacts owned by the State in the permanent collections of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum may be permanently removed or disposed of except by a Concurrent Resolution of the General Assembly.” In an effort to control what artifacts are taken into the collection, the museum has developed a collections policy that requires the museum’s director to authorize any addition to the permanent collection. Currently, the SC Budget and Control Board has the authority to overrule this authorization. Because the museum has become an independent agency, this policy will need to be revised.

Under the museum’s policies, all artifacts in the collection will be consistent with the mission, purpose, and activities of the museum. The artifacts must have a connection with the military history of SC from the sixteenth through the twenty-first century; or illuminate how SC’s military history has been influenced by, or reflected in, the state’s political and cultural development; or be relevant to SC’s role in the military history of the United States of America.

Preservation

The museum employs a registrar, who is responsible for the preservation and archiving of the nearly 8,000 artifacts that come into the museum. Artifacts that are not on display are stored in a secured back room, where proper storage is severely lacking. The museum applied for a grant to purchase museum shelving artifact racks, but was unsuccessful in securing the funding.

Exhibits

The museum has permanent exhibits, featured exhibits, and special collections. The permanent exhibits follow South Carolina’s military history during the Revolutionary War, War of 1812 and Seminole War, Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish American War, World War I, World War II and military service in the 20th and 21st centuries. The current featured exhibits are “Paths of Destruction: Sherman’s Final Campaign,” which was put together to coincide with the

150th anniversary of Sherman’s burning of Columbia, and “Trench Maps: Military Cartography on the Western Front, 1914-1918.” The museum is in the process of collecting artifacts and creating an exhibit featuring South Carolina’s involvement in the Vietnam War. This featured exhibit is set to go on display in 2016.

The museum’s special collections currently includes the Martin letter collection. This collection contains ten letters written by Lt. James "Newt" Martin, a Newberry native who enlisted as a private in Co. E, 3rd SC Volunteer Infantry at age 29. Additionally, the museum is attempting to acquire the C.A. Huey collection to add to their special collection. The executive director requested and received \$390,198 in funding in the state budget for FY 15-16 to match the amount needed in private funds to acquire the collection.

In July 2015, the museum became responsible for the appropriate display of the South Carolina Infantry Battle Flag of the Confederate States of America, which the General Assembly voted to remove from the State House grounds and be transported to the museum.

Education and Programming

The museum offers free tours, programs, and curriculum for school groups. The museum’s exhibits complement the state's curriculum standards in Social Studies Standards (K-12), English/Language Arts Standards (K-12), Music Standards (1-8) and Visual Art Standards (1-8). The museum has a website, www.crrteach.sc.gov, which outlines the standards that the museum seeks to meet for these areas.

The agency has broadened its teacher outreach programs by providing free in-service training meeting space, as well as instruction on military history. It is also involved in SC curriculum developments, providing images and information for textbooks. The agency offers free Home School Friday history lessons and activities for area homeschoolers.

Visitation

With the exception of the drop between 2010 and 2011, when the museum experienced a twenty-five percent decline in visitation, the museum has seen a consistent incremental increase in visitation since 2004. The museum attributes the decline in visitors to a delayed response to the recession and uncertainty that occurred after the veto of the funding for the SC Budget and Control Board.



II. Issues

Lack of Statutory Mission

The museum has never had a mission defined in state law. The lack of statutory mission has allowed the museum to act without legislative direction. Absent this direction, the museum has decided how to best exhibit South Carolina's military history. The lack of a statutory mission has also given the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum the ability to move away from Confederate history and focus on other eras of South Carolina's military history. To ensure that the museum is focusing on activities as intended by the General Assembly, a mission should be added to the museum's statutory authority.

- *Legislative Recommendation*

The General Assembly should amend state law to include a mission for the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.

Lack of Commission Duties Set in Statute

The museum is governed by a nine-member South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission appointed by the Governor, President *Pro Tempore* of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Without direction and authorization from the General Assembly in state law, the commission has no direct authority or guidance on how to act.

- *Legislative Recommendation*

The General Assembly should amend state law to include duties and responsibilities of the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum Commission.

Multiple Museums with Overlapping Exhibits

In 1981, the "National Guard Museum and State Weapons Collection" was chartered under South Carolina law. Pursuant to S.C. Code §25-17-50, the museum "must be a military and historical museum charged with the responsibility for the collection, preservation, and exhibition of archives, books, records, documents, maps, charts, military equipment, uniforms, flags, and any other such articles. It may be a depository for materials considered relevant to national, state, or local history by the board. The museum collection must be open to the public at times determined by the board." In 1998, the name was changed to the "South Carolina Military Museum" by state law. Its collection includes South Carolina artifacts from the Colonial Era to present-day military conflicts. The museum is located behind the Columbia armory within the T. Eston Marchant SCNG Complex.

The South Carolina State Museum also has a Civil War exhibit which they are planning to expand. The exhibit is in the same building at the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.

The various museums display military artifacts and memorabilia from the same historical eras. To ensure that all the museums can fulfill their missions and prevent duplication of resources, they should coordinate their exhibits.

- *Agency Recommendation*

The museums should coordinate their exhibits with the other state-funded museums that display historical military artifacts and memorabilia to avoid redundancy. This includes the SC Military Museum, the SC State Museum, and the SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum.

Financial Support

External Support

The Palmetto State Military History Foundation, which was established to support the museum, currently has no funds. The foundation had lost its 501(c)(3) designation because it had not been fundraising or filing statements, but that status has since been re-established. The museum would like to use the foundation to run the museum's membership program and for fundraising for specific exhibits or collections. The museum membership program is currently operated by the museum and raises about \$1,000 annually.

The Confederate Relic Room was founded in 1896 and operated by the Wade Hampton Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC). It became a state agency as part of the Budget & Control Board in 1998. According to museum staff, the UDC owns a portion of the museum's collection. The UDC has meetings at the museum but does not support them financially. The Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) does support the museum financially, usually for specific items in the collection, and also hosts events there. For example, the SCV has donated about \$140,000 to conserve or purchase flags.

Museum Store

The gift shop had revenues of \$40,600 in FY 14-15 with expenses of \$34,670. The museum does not charge expenses associated with the salaries of its employees to the gift shop. The following table shows the revenues and expenses of the gift shop for the last three fiscal years:

	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	FY 14-15
Revenue			
	\$36,007	\$38,521	\$40,618
Expenses			
Contractual		1,653	
Supplies	14,245	11,674	32,513
Taxes Paid	1,839	2,245	2,157
Total	\$16,084	\$15,571	\$34,670

The museum carries forward the funds earned by the gift shop each year. The account had a balance of \$153,679 after FY 14-15. Staff indicate they use those funds if there is a shortfall in the budget and plan to use them as part of the funds used to purchase the C.A. Huey collection. The point-of-sale system used by the museum for the store and ticket sales crashed in April 2015 and they lost most of their data concerning pricing, inventory, etc. They did not have a backup of the data.

Ticket Sales

Revenues from ticket sales continue to be a small part of the agency's revenues (3%). For FY 14-15, the museum had ticket sales of \$22,912. The museum saw a steady rise in visitors from 2004-2010 and then, after a drop in 2011, the trend of rising visitation has continued but not yet returned to the high of 27,566 achieved in 2010.

- *Agency Recommendation*

The SC Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum should seek to supplement state appropriations with increased levels of earned income through ticket sales and use of gift shop revenue to fund operations of the museum as well as memberships and fundraising for acquisitions through the foundation.