



HB TSA OFFICERS

2023-2024

President, Founder

Honorable Albert McCrory

Mayor, Hobson City, AL

Vice President, Founder

Honorable Ed Jones

Former Mayor, Grambling, LA

President, Grambling

Economic Development Corporation

Vice President, Founder

for Technology

Honorable Darryl Johnson

Former Mayor, Mound Bayou, MS

Vice President, Founder

Cultural Heritage Tourism

Honorable N. Y. Nathiri,

Executive Director

Association to Preserve

the Eatonville Community,

Eatonville, FL

Vice President

Honorable Angie Gardener

Mayor, Eatonville, FL,

HB TSA Founding City

Vice President, Membership

Honorable David Allen,

Former Mayor- now Councilman

Prairie View, TX

Vice President, Marketing

Honorable Tanya Debose,

Honorary Mayor,

Independence Heights, TX

Vice President, Higher Education

Honorable, Dr. Michelle B. Robinson

Spellman College, Atlanta, GA

Vice President, Historic Preservation

Honorable Phyllis Miller

Grambling, LA

Treasurer, Founder

Honorable Johnnie Harrison

Tuskegee, AL

CFO, Founder

Honorable John McGowan

Founder

Commissioner Bullock county, AL

Former Mayor, Union Springs, AL

Secretary, Founder

Honorable Dyann Robinson

Tuskegee Institute, AL

Recording Secretary,

Honorable Jackie Walker

Tuskegee, AL

Honorable Johnny Ford
Founding President/CEO
Former Mayor-now Councilman,
Tuskegee, AL

HISTORY OF THE HISTORIC BLACK TOWNS AND SETTLEMENTS ALLIANCE, INC.

By The Honorable Johnny Ford

In 1881, Lewis Adams (Town) and Booker T. Washington (Gown) collaborated to found Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, now Tuskegee University, and Tuskegee Institute, Alabama (A historic Black settlement surrounding the school, created by Dr. Washington, that though never incorporated, was granted its own zip code: 36088). A seed for the collaboration between “Town” and “Gown” was thereby planted in central Alabama. In 1901, at the annual meeting of the National Business League (NBL), Dr. Booker T. Washington called upon the Mayor S. L. Davis, elected in 1899 as the first Mayor of Hobson City Alabama, the first incorporated all Black town in the state of Alabama, to give the national address, calling upon the African American communities to organize their own towns, settlements, and schools. The seed planted in Tuskegee, in 1881, by 1901 had grown into a national “Tree”. By then historic all Black towns had begun to grow. Among them: 1885, Princeville, NC; 1887, Eatonville, FL; 1887 Mound Bayou, MS; 1899, Hobson City, AL; 1901, the community of Grambling, LA, around what would become Grambling University. Now, today there are more than 1,000 historic Black towns and settlements, and more than 100 Historic Black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

In the fall of 2012 then Tuskegee Mayor Johnny Ford, a founder of the Alabama Conference of Black Mayors, and the National Conference of Black Mayors, now the African American Mayors Association, and the founder of The World Conference of Mayors, Inc, was invited by the late Mayor Bruce Mount to visit his town of Eatonville, Florida, which proudly calls itself, “The Town that Freedom Built”. Mayor Mount told Mayor Ford about the influence that Dr. Booker T. Washington had had upon Eatonville, and the founding of their historic Hungerford School. Mayor Mount showed Mayor Ford, the name of Dr. Booker T. Washington proudly displayed, along with a quote from Dr. Washington, inscribed on the permanent gate to the historic town of Eatonville. Both Mayor Ford, and Mayor Mount immediately recognized the relationship between Tuskegee and Eatonville. Mayor Mount also introduced Mayor Ford to N.Y. Nathiri, and the Association to Preserve the History of Eatonville, and to the fact that the late, great, author Zora Neale Hurston, had actually been born in Notasulga, Alabama, near Tuskegee. Ford, Mount, and Nathiri recognized immediately the relationship (the historic trail) between Tuskegee Institute, Alabama (Booker T’s Town), and Eatonville (Zora’s Town).

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Honorable Deborah Delgado

City Councilwoman

Hattiesburg, MS

Honorable Lawrence Haygood,

Mayor, Tuskegee, AL,

HB TSA Founding City

Honorable Leighton Aldridge

Mayor, Mound Bayou,

HB TSA Founding City

Honorable Alvin Bradley

Mayor, Grambling, LA

HB TSA Founding City

Honorable John Moss

Indigenous Community

Lawton, OK

Honorable Queen Mother,

Dr. Sandra Ross

Wichita, KS

Honorable Anita Jackson

Council Lady,

Hobson City, AL

Honorable Lelia Foley Davis

First Black Woman US Mayor

City Council Lady,

Taft, OK

Honorable Frank Jackson

Historian

Former Mayor,

Prairie View, TX

Honorable Samuel Ings

Former Commissioner,

Former Mayor Pro Tem

Orlando, FL

Honorable JohnElla Holmes

Former Trustee,

Nicodemus Township

Nicodemus, KS

Honorable Queen Mother,

Dr. Delois Blakely,

Community Mayor,

Harlem, NY

HB TSA,

Ambassador/UN Rep.

Honorable Willie Calhoun

Former Commissioner,

District Heights, MD

Mayor Ford, returned to Alabama excited, and decided to nurture the “seed” planted by Dr. Booker T. Washington in 1881, and cultivated in 1901 (NBL) by Mayor S. L. Davis of Hobson City, by hosting an organizational meeting of what would become the Historic Black Towns and Settlements Alliance. He raised the money to cover the cost of the organizational meeting in the spring of 2013 at the Tuskegee Municipal Complex, located in Tuskegee, Alabama, and at the Kellogg Conference Center, located upon the historic campus of Tuskegee University, in Tuskegee Institute Alabama (36088). Mayor Ford invited the following mayors to join Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, in founding an Alliance of Historic Black Towns and Settlements: Eatonville, Florida, Mayor Bruce Mount; Hobson City, Alabama, Mayor Alberta McCrory; Mound Bayou, Mississippi, Mayor Darryl Johnson, and Gramling, Louisiana, Mayor Ed Jones.

The Mayors met. They agreed to organize, and elected Mayor Ford, as the Founding President, and elected Mayor Mount, Mayor McCrory, Mayor Jones, and Mayor Johnson, as co-founders. The Mayors continued to meet, and with the assistance of renown architect, Edward Fly, and Eatonville’s N. Y. Nathiri, developed a work program and a strategic plan. The HBTSA was incorporated in 2014, by The World Conference of Mayors General Counsel, noted civil rights icon, Attorney Fred Gray. Thanks to Ed Fly, the HBTSA, once it was incorporated, received a \$10,000.00 grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. In 2018, Mayor Ford went to New York and met with the Mellon Foundation and paved the way for Dr. Michelle Robinson, HBTSA VP for Educational Matters, to write the grant that resulted in the receipt of a \$300,000.00 grant, administered by Spelman University for the work of the HBTSA. The rest is history.

The seed that Booker T planted in Tuskegee in 1881, and cultivated in 1901 with his National Negro Business League, has not only “branched” into Booker T’s Five Towns, it now serves as a voice for over 1,000 historic towns and settlements across the country. The National Headquarters of the HBTSA is in Tuskegee, AL, (1205 East lakeshore Drive, Tuskegee, AL 36083) This is appropriate because the Black community of Tuskegee was the home base of Booker T. Washington who was responsible for the creation and the survival of so many historically Black towns, cities, and communities

The MISSION of the HBTSA is to work collaboratively to actively “Preserve, Protect and Promote” the heritage, history and culture of these historic places by utilizing their human, environmental, built (engineering, landscape, architecture) arts and humanities resources to nurture economic development and to support an enhanced quality of life for their residents, neighbors and fellow Americans.