



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION COMMISSION

Wednesday March 27, 2024

The meeting began at 5:01pm

Commission Members (in-person unless noted): Gloria Howell, Lily Kleinlein, James Sanders, Angel Thornsberry
Staff: Michelle Moss **Associates and Guests:** Eric Coyne Chancellor of Ivy Tech, Dan Enslow, Debra Vance

Introductions: Commissioners and guests shared introductions. Eric Coyne is the new Chancellor of Ivy Tech and is excited to continue partnerships and support of the commission and Angel Thornsberry is our newest Commissioner.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from Jan. and Feb. were reviewed. James moved to accept. Lily seconded. All approved.

Staff Liaison Report: No new updates.

Old Business:

- A. **Social Media/Newsletter Features:** Share any events, volunteer needs, and relevant activities with Michelle to post. Lily suggested highlighting various sites, museums, and memorials dedicated to Dr. King and civil rights history.

New Business:

- A. **Remembrance Week Social Media Posts:** Gloria summarized past events (B-Line walk, virtual book discussion, history tour, arts events). Even though we decided to take a break from event planning this year we would still like to commemorate Dr. King the week of April 4. Gloria noted that museums and national organizations offer lots of content online and through newsletters, which would could share (National Civil Rights museum, MLK Center in Atlanta, Southern Poverty Law Center, and the Schomburg Center) and she also suggested highlighting MLK's family and descendants this Remembrance Day, because all in their own way have been activists and contribute to his legacy in meaningful ways. We agreed that trying to post daily the week of April 4, with a different family member each day and a memorial post on April 4. Michelle said that other commission FB pages will re-share our posts for more exposure. Work for this email/social media blast will happen via email between the meeting and next week.

- B. **Election of Officers/Departures of Commissioners:** Commission appointments- Both Da'Ja' and Imani expressed that they plan to resign from the commission and both were told they need to submit a letter of resignation. Imani was an NAACP appointment, and Da'Ja' was a City Council appointment. The council will be voting on a potential new member this evening. Gloria said there are members in the Monroe County Branch NAACP who might be interested in being more involved in the community in this way.

Quorum- Michelle confirmed that quorum is total number of open seats, so our quorum will always be 4.

Elections- Michelle noted that we need to elect a new Vice Chair and vote on all officers this month. After discussion a slate of Chair: Gloria, Vice Chair: James, Secretary: Lily was put forth and approved by consent. Due to potential changes to the commission composition this slate of officers may be re-visited over the summer.

- C. **Theme/Speaker for 2025 Birthday Celebration:** James proposed focusing on the theme of DEI this year due to various states working to dismantle it at colleges and other institutions. He suggested looking into D'Angelo Taylor of

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Belmont University's new "Office for Hope, Unity, and Belonging." He has connections with Mr. Taylor and knows he would have a lot to speak on. Angel noted that the SpeakOut website had many speakers with expertise in DEI and we also discussed local connections such as Rashad Nelms and Vicka Bell-Robinson from IU. In addition to discussing the potential speaker, we discussed programming elements of the Birthday Celebration and all expressed interest in continuing to improve the content to include more artistic elements and less formal speeches outside of the keynote address. We discussed whether it is required to ask all of the city and county elected officials to have a speaking role, and if so is there a way to ask that it be more representative of the Black community. Ideas for programming changes included working with IU or the community to include spoken word art, dance, music from other groups (such as a community choir or IU Soul Review), and including older youth. James suggested the keynote be presented from center stage. Gloria brought up the idea of including as part of the program, or as a program of its own, an oratorical contest to reflect that piece of MLK's life and to include more older youth. This could be a part of MLK Day, Black History Month, or a stand-alone contest. Michelle asked all to consider local connections for arts/music or presenters so that we can reach out to gauge interest early.

- D. **Be More Awards/Juneteenth Involvement:** Last year the commissioners volunteered at the Juneteenth city celebration and Michelle shared that we could volunteer with that again, the date would be Saturday June 15. Additionally, she is looking for more volunteers for the Be More Awards and would like to see a more involvement of an MLK representative to be part of the process in the future. This year's event is April 25 and she asked that any commissioner who would like to attend the event, table at the event, or help present an award reach out to her ASAP. The BVN will be presenting 8 awards to outstanding community volunteers, including our own James Sanders who is being recognized for his outstanding service to Boards and Commissions! Congrats to James!! Michelle said there is a potential connection between the Day of Service on MLK Day, the 40 Days of Peace, and the Be More Awards and hopes that the commission will become more involved in the coming year with connecting these pieces.
- E. **May MLK Meeting Planning:** We usually look at the date for the May meeting to determine if it should be moved due to Memorial Day. This year the meeting would be May 22, before the holiday. No changes will be made.

Public Comments (non-MLK Commissioners): None

NAACP Update: No updates.

Commission on the Status of Black Males Update: James is excited that the Be More Award he is being honored with comes with a \$1,000 prize, and noted that the funding will be a great support to the events the CSBM is planning and will help with covering games, prizes, and toys for their holiday drive as well as in planning the Black Male Youth Summit in September. The CSBM welcomed two new commissioners, they are planning a more active role in the health screenings for the Juneteenth celebration, and are looking into creation of a pamphlet with health screening milestones that they can hand out to improve health screening awareness (for example, what age someone should get their first colonoscopy). Finally, they are working on the Youth Summit for September which is one of the highlights of the year!

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Announcements:

Gloria shared that Neal-Marshall BCC is presenting the annual Herman C. Hudson Symposium Friday and Saturday. Panel discussions, book discussion, dance party. Free and open to the public.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Upcoming Meetings:

April 25, 5:00-6:00 pm, Kelly Conference Room (#155)

May 22, 5:00-6:00 pm, Kelly Conference Room (#155)

June 26, 5:00-6:00 pm, Kelly Conference Room (#155)