



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

February 26th, 2025

Meeting began at 6:07pm

Commission Members (in-person unless noted): Angel Thornsbury, James Sanders (Zoom), Latonya Wilson (Zoom), Julie Roberts (Zoom)

Staff: Michelle Moss

Associates and Guests:

Introductions: James began the meeting.

Approval of Minutes: As we did not reach quorum, we were unable to approve the November and January minutes.

Staff Liaison Report: Michelle has received feedback from the MLK Celebration, and has been positive. Folks missed the children being involved. There have already been discussions about how to get this age group engaged. Payments for the MLK event have been processed. Swank copyright didn't cover a public screening, only a classroom screening. Still pending on that as we had to register Swank as a vendor (total was around \$345, money came out of MLK overage budget), but everything else has been paid.

Old Business:

- A. **Revisit subcommittee for planning activities for children at tabling events:** Having activities for kids and families focused on fun. First tabling event would be Juneteenth. Julie can no longer serve on this subcommittee. James can be available for that day. Latonya wants it to be something educational and fun but may be out of the country during the Juneteenth event, will know more by the end of the academic year. Latonya is willing to do research and groundwork. Michelle encouraged James and Julie to share any ideas they have via email. James encourages the group to have open communication and revisit for next March. Latonya asked what the budget would look like, Michelle said that the account has some wiggle room.

New Business:

- A. **Remembrance Day planning:** Michelle proposed a revisit of the walking tour but in a different capacity, such as opening it up to the public. A week ago, Michelle was contacted by BLEMF for a potential collaboration about the walking tour, the BLEMF tour will have a focus on music in the African Diaspora. Resilience Lady production has a performance in the end of March, commission could put together a guide to be available on productions such as this. Julie raised questions about the tie-in. Michelle encourages the group to look into BLEMF (www.blemf.org). If we want the commission to be a collaborator with BLEMF, we need to let them know soon. Michelle suggested for Remembrance Day, we collaborate with the Library to put together an event for children and families, such as a reading and then an activity or something at the History Center. City wants the MLK Commission to do

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something for Remembrance Day. James is in agreement and willing to do what we can in the short amount of time. Angel showed interest in the Library idea. Latonya raised a suggestion of signage or a billboard to not let Dr. MLK's message fade. Latonya will look into estimates for billboards or the local newspaper or the Bloom magazine. Michelle said the timing would be difficult for a billboard, but the newspaper would have more flexibility. Michelle asked for Latonya to share her findings with the group via email. Michelle said she will move forward for the commission to be listed within the City's walking tour materials (self-guided).

B. Yearly planning goals outline: Revisited the proposal from January of inviting a member of the King family to our annual event. Michelle encourages us to think and plan early to meet a deadline of middle-of-November. Julie thinks it is a very worthwhile project, but doesn't think this is feasible for this year, and would be looking at more so 2027 or 2028, especially if it is a partnership with IU. Angel agreed with Julie. Latonya doesn't feel that it would hurt to put out an ask. Latonya would like us to explore highlighting Coretta Scott King's involvement for 2026. Michelle believes that this year should focus more on a woman as our last 2 speakers have been men. James agrees and would definitely be willing to seek out donations to have a member of Dr. King's family to come speak. James expressed that he does not have that level of experience in fundraising and sought ideas from the group. Michelle said we had a good turnout for fundraising this year, if we nail down a speaker in April it would help with garnering sponsorships. Michelle needs to figure out if the City would be okay with us pushing our annual event to a different time. Julie revisited the timeline being tight for this ask. Michelle will bring some initial pieces for our March meeting and bring Andrew Shannon to give us a better idea of what this would look like. Julie asked Latonya about her initial thoughts on a speaker centered on Coretta. Latonya provided a few suggestions, including historians, AAADS at IU, and gender studies. Julie provided a comment of with the current climate, there may be a high level of asks being put out there for donations.

Public Comments (non-MLK Commissioners): Not present at this time.

NAACP Update: Julie was not present for this portion of the meeting.

Commission on the Status of Black Males Update: Will be awarding the Outstanding Leaders of Tomorrow at the Black History Month Gala next Saturday.

Announcements: Michelle promoted the Be More awards. James thanked Michelle for getting a ticket for the Black History Month Gala.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.

Upcoming Meetings:

March 26, 6:00-7:00pm, City Hall Kelly Conference Room (#155)

April 23, 6:00-7:00pm, City Hall Kelly Conference Room (#155)

May 27, 6:00-7:00pm, City Hall Kelly Conference Room (#155)

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