



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

August 27, 2025

Meeting began at 6:04pm

Attendance:

Commission Members (in-person unless noted): Angel Thornsby (Zoom), Julie Roberts, Gloria Howell, Brittany King, Latonya Wilson, James Sanders

Staff: Michelle Moss

Associates and Guests: Dan Enslow

Introductions:

Approval of Minutes: April, May, and June minutes were approved.

Staff Liaison Report: These meetings moving forward will not be recorded. The contract for AACE has gone through to signatures. Michelle has sent out an email to two professors at IU Jacobs about further performances for the MLK event. Gloria had sent out recommendations for MCs, Michelle will be reaching out within the next week.

PRIDE - Aug. 23: We decided against this tabling due to the cost of \$175 per vendor.

Bloomington Volunteer Fair - Sept. 6th. (8am-12:30pm): Fernandez Plaza outside City Hall. I will be there, and I will push MLK Day On, and 40 Days of Peace.

Umoja Day Block Party - Sept. 6th (1:00-4:00pm): NMBCC Courtyard. I have not signed up for this yet, but we need to reserve a space by August 29th, if we are interested. I can head that way after the Volunteer Fair, but I won't be able to assist with setup. I could arrive by ~2pm and stay through the end of the event.

1. James will be there for voter registration.

La Fiesta del Otoño 2025 - Sept. 20 (12-4pm): Switchyard Park Pavilion. I have signed up to split a table with BVN and MLK. I will again be pushing MLK Day On and 40 Days of Peace.

1. Michelle's intern will be there as well.

Lotus Festival - Lotus at the Library, Sept. 27 (12pm - 4pm): MCPL Downtown. I have not signed up for this one yet. I would be doing the Black Inventors bracelets and pushing MLK Day On and 40 Days of Peace.

Black Y Brown - CANCELLED

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MLK Focused Events - Michelle talked to **Banneker Center** about their annual Pancake Breakfast. They have tried to get a Commissioner to attend the breakfast the last two years, but due to IU Breakfast last year, and their late invitation the first year, nobody from the Commission was able to attend. They would love to get at least one Commissioner to attend this year if possible.

1. Michelle no longer has an IU contact, and has not heard about the IU Breakfast for this upcoming year. Gloria is going to ask Rachel M., who works for the President's office.

Michelle also spoke with **Stone Belt Arc**. They reached out very late in December last year to see if someone from the MLK Commission would be able to participate in an MLK Panel Discussion. This Panel met the day after MLK this year, so it is likely to be held after MLK Day again. They would love to get an MLK representative to attend.

Old Business:

1. Nametags
 - a. Moving forward we will not have Commission-specific name tags. Please return them to Michelle as soon as possible.
2. MLK Event performers and other pieces
 - a. Gloria has someone in mind for remarks for the event. Phil Amerson. He is retired from pastoring. Gloria will make the ask.
 - b. Gloria is open to any other suggestions if folks have them.
 - c. For the program, James had the idea of having a slideshow of events that Commission has participated in. Gloria suggested putting a call out to the community about getting photos that can be showcased by the Commission.
3. MLK Day On/40 Days Service Committee
 - a. Angel expressed interest in helping coordinate volunteer opportunities. If anyone else is interested, email Michelle. Partnership with Bloomington Volunteer Network. Brittany said she can join the committee as well. Suggested more involvement in the Banneker pancake breakfast.
 - b. Gloria suggested we be the leading voice in celebrating MLK Jr all year, we could do some type of calendar of programming from the Commission.
4. 2026 Remembrance Week Committee
 - a. Reading to students this year was great, but Michelle would like us to consider something more public reaching. A committee may be a good way to proceed with these efforts.
 - b. If anyone else is interested in being on this committee, please contact Michelle. Gloria said she can help with this.

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New Business:

5. Efforts outside of the MLK Event
 - a. Latonya is wondering if we could consider asking the community to do something/be mindful of something, then meet back with the community after some time. Getting energy going and getting more support for the community. Small yet tangible. Gloria wonders if it could connect to the Remembrance Day. Michelle offered the idea of doing a book club with Traci Parker's book about Coretta Scott King.
 - i. James offered the idea of paying her for a book signing or even a book reading. Good event idea for Morgenstern's. Michelle brought up the concern of noise at Morgenstern's, and Gloria suggested the Neal Marshall Library.
 - b. There is a push for the Commission to do more in the community. James expressed how the Commission wanted to do more to have an impact outside of the MLK Event. James suggests we move forward with a book signing with Traci Parker's book. This was seconded.
6. Latonya suggested that Dr. Parker could have an ask in her talk for the community. Gloria said that this could land well in the community. Michelle said that if Dr. Parker was otherwise engaged in other things, it could be a good virtual opportunity. Gloria will circle back on this.
7. Michelle suggested that we ask participants to bring hats/gloves/scarves to the MLK Event, and then we could donate them. We will need to discuss and choose where these items would go.
8. 40 Days of Peace
 - a. Michelle would like to set up a time with Brittany and Angel to see what this could look like.
 - b. Michelle is going to wait a few weeks to talk about these opportunities. At the end of September, Michelle will send an email to everyone to join if they would like to.
9. Revisiting our meeting time
 - a. Is this still a good time for everyone? Gloria did a quick check in, seems like this still works for the majority.
10. All Faith Alliance
 - a. Poverty simulation occurring in October, Michelle will be in attendance as an MLK Commission representative to strengthen our ties.
11. November and December meetings
 - a. We need to pick a different date for both months. November 19th was selected for the November meeting. For the December meeting, December 10th was selected.

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Public Comments (non-MLK Commissioners): Dan had an idea: An idea that has come to mind is, in the face of rapidly changing environments, how did Dr. King sustain / inspire himself? The Dr. King Center in Atlanta might have information about what authors and writings served as the foundation for his inner journey? This would flow towards a reading list and a handout of his cherished authors and passages?

NAACP Update: Saturday September 6th, book signing. Will be inviting her to the September 8th meeting to present the book. Promoting events. Looking for ways to be more visible and being a voice in the community.

Commission on the Status of Black Males Update: On September 11th the Black Male Youth Summit is happening from 10am-2pm in City Hall Council Chambers. Have selected a dynamic group of speakers. Planning their Winter Wonderland event soon at the Banneker center, will keep us up to date on details for that event.

- Michelle suggested that as a commission we help with one of the activities at the Winter Wonderland event.

Announcements:

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 7:07pm.

Upcoming Meetings:

- September 24th- 6-7pm, City Hall Kelly Conference Room (RM #155)
- October 22nd- 6-7pm, City Hall Kelly Conference Room (RM #155)
- November 19th- 6-7pm, City Hall Kelly Conference Room (RM #155)
- December 10th- 6-7pm, City Hall Kelly Conference Room (RM #155)