



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

Tuesday January 25, 2022

The meeting began at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom call

Commission Members: Jess Davis, Gloria Howell, Lily Kleinlein, Treon McClendon, James Sanders, Dianne Shewmaker (no audio)

Staff: Michael Shermis

Associates and Guests: None

Approval of Minutes: Commissioners reviewed the previous meeting minutes (December 14) via email. Gloria made a motion to approve the minutes from December, Jess seconded. All approved.

Staff Liaison Report:

A. **Celebration Finances Updated:** Michael shared that there are a couple of outstanding bills (printing, hotel, BCT) but the rest of the expenses should be paid. There is still \$1000 from CFRD coming in and we will have around \$3500 leftover (usually we have about \$1000). This could allow us to raise the budget for the speaker next year. James asked how long we are allowed to hold on to funds we receive in a fiscal year. Michael said that there is nothing that says we have to spend the money because of the type of account it is in. There is, however, some pressure to spend down these types of accounts if they are too high. Michael noted that in our case, with the potential of a more expensive speaker, it is unlikely we would be pressured to spend all of the money each year. It does, however, allow for other events, supplies, or other uses as needed.

Jess asked Michael if he had heard anything about reappointing the Commissioners who were up for a new term, Michael will check in to see why Jess and Gloria didn't receive a letter yet but James has. He suspects it may have to do with which entity appoints them.

B. **Commission Support on Media Requests:** Michael requested that there be a Commissioner available to support him, as a spokesperson appointed as the media rep for the night of the Celebration. They would need to arrive around 5:00 and be available to answer questions/interviews up until the event begins. There were 7 requests, 4 at once, at the event and it was too much to handle on top of his other tasks. He also said that it should be a Commission member who is able to speak to the impact of the event, speaker background, etc. Usually these impromptu interviews tend to be from journalism students, not from an actual media source. He could prepare the spokesperson with logistics to be better able to answer questions. Jess said she would be willing to field questions but would prefer not to be quoted as the spokesperson. James noted that Jess should feel empowered to speak on behalf of the Commission at this type of event and that we are all on the commission equally. Gloria suggested we could create a set of talking points, process of planning, and general MLK-related questions. Lily said that she thought the talking points could be really great for all Commissioners because we might want to share with family, friends, community resources.

City of Bloomington Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration Commission

City Hall • 401 N. Morton St., Suite 260, Bloomington, IN 47404 • www.bloomington.in.gov/mlk
Hrs: 8am-5pm MON-FRI • ph. 812-349-3471 • fax 812-349-3483 • mlk@bloomington.in.gov



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

James suggested that we collectively accept interviews and Michael can direct these requests to anyone with a blue Commissioner pin.

Old Business:

A. Volunteer Training and Curriculum Implementation: Jess said that they did their training session, which went quite well, and that the first set of presentations were well received. There were a few presentations that needed to be rescheduled due to the pandemic and Michael is in the process of following up with those schools. Michael recorded the presentation that took place at Harmony School, which shows that the lessons were age appropriate, engaging, and that both students and volunteers really enjoyed them. He is in the process of editing the videos to cut out things like time the students spent writing, so that the videos could be shared in the future. Volunteers told Michael they had a positive experience, and he is still receiving volunteer applications from interested community members. James said that the training was fun and he enjoyed learning how to approach kids with difficult topics.

New Business:

A. Election: James initiated the conversation about elections and opened the floor for nominations for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. Jess asked if there are term limits, and James clarified that there aren't limits but it can be nice to rotate and give others a chance to step into leadership roles. James nominated Gloria for Chair, adding that he has no plans to leave the commission. Lily said that while she is open to the keeping her position, she wants to leave it open to others who would like a leadership role. She suggested that anyone interested should be able to attend most meetings and feel comfortable taking notes. Gloria nominated Jess for Vice Chair. Michael clarified that Vice Chair does not have to be Chair the next year. All nominees accepted and the vote was unanimous (Dianne Shewmaker had no audio and so didn't actually vote on this). Congratulations to the new officers, Chair Dr. Gloria Howell, Vice Chair Jess Davis, Secretary Lily Kleinlein!

B. MLK Celebration Debrief: Michael sent audience feedback over email, the most we've ever received and almost all positive. We had 18 responses, probably about three times larger than the best year, probably because we offered Cardinal tickets to The Mountaintop (a play they are putting on in February) and Gloria did a great job of pushing the survey on her friends in the front row! He has also received lots of informal praise from people in the community. Jess was surprised at the large audience who watched on CATS from home, saying it came up in several conversations that week for her. Michael agreed and said that in general, the pandemic made this the most difficult year yet. The program had so many unavoidable, last-minute changes. Michael summarized that people told him the event itself went really well and people enjoyed the entertainment in general, Eddie Cole was marvelous, the food got rave reviews. There was so much extra food that he donated much of it to Shalom Center. James asked about the closing speaker; Michael said that he was supposed to give a 2-4 minute simple closing but he ended up talking more than 10 minutes. Michael

City of Bloomington Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration Commission

City Hall • 401 N. Morton St., Suite 260, Bloomington, IN 47404 • www.bloomington.in.gov/mlk
Hrs: 8am-5pm MON-FRI • ph. 812-349-3471 • fax 812-349-3483 • mlk@bloomington.in.gov



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

was quite surprised that he corrected that he wasn't representing the Muslim community since it came directly from him. James said that in the future we should be very clear about what it means to be the closing speaker and that it took away a little bit from the keynote as well as kept people later than they may have wanted. Michael said that the co-emcees did a great job, all agreed. Gloria said that she appreciated the BCT and their safety considerations for the pandemic and she felt that people were handling the protocols with ease. Gloria said that IU President Whitten told her she really enjoyed the program and was pleased with the BCT protocols. Lily thought the productions for the AACE were well done and enjoyed seeing Gloria's surprise appearance in one of the videos. James said he really appreciated Michael supporting the Commission's vision for the program and the changes we asked to make from what was normally done. Gloria echoed and said she particularly appreciated Michael's heavy lifting on the logistics.

Public Comments (non-MLK Commissioners): None

NAACP Update: Gloria said that the first meeting of the year is rescheduled for this evening to coordinate with the City's Black History Kickoff Event. At the meeting they will be discussing a lot of important issues, including a recently vacated school board position.

Commission on the Status of Black Males Update: James said they are planning the Youth Summit. They are also deciding whether to update the mission statement and what initiatives they would like to focus on in the year ahead.

Announcements:

Treon thanked everyone and said that this will be his last meeting. He is transitioning to Indianapolis for a new job. He's enjoyed being part of the Commission and thought this year's event was especially engaging; he thoroughly enjoyed listening to Eddie Cole. All congratulated Treon on his new job!

Gloria is anticipating a very busy Black History Month with numerous opportunities to engage with the community through special events. She is keeping a list of IU and City events and will share with the commission over email, she encouraged us to send anything her way that we know of that is happening in the community. Two events she wanted to highlight were the IU NMC Kickoff honoring the Black Church tradition, through a service called "Hats and Handkerchiefs," service led by Dr. Wise. The City kickoff is Feb. 1 at the FAR Center, focusing on Health and Wellness. Most of the events are either virtual or hybrid so that everyone can attend at their comfort level.

Adjournment: James moved to adjourn the meeting, Jess seconded. Meeting adjourned at 5:55 pm.

Upcoming Meetings:

March 22, 5:00-6:00 pm, location TBD

City of Bloomington Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration Commission

City Hall • 401 N. Morton St., Suite 260, Bloomington, IN 47404 • www.bloomington.in.gov/mlk
Hrs: 8am-5pm MON-FRI • ph. 812-349-3471 • fax 812-349-3483 • mlk@bloomington.in.gov



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

April 26, 5:00-6:00 pm, location TBD

City of Bloomington Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration Commission

City Hall • 401 N. Morton St., Suite 260, Bloomington, IN 47404 • www.bloomington.in.gov/mlk
Hrs: 8am-5pm MON-FRI • ph. 812-349-3471 • fax 812-349-3483 • mlk@bloomington.in.gov