



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

**Wednesday January 24, 2024**

The meeting began at 5:12 pm

**Commission Members (in-person unless otherwise noted):** Da'Ja'Nay Askew (virtual), Gloria Howell, Lily Kleinlein, James Sanders

**Staff:** Michelle Moss **Associates and Guests:** Dan Enslow (virtual)

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from December were reviewed, approved as written by consent.

**Staff Liaison Report:** Michelle spoke about the success of the event, more than 300 community members attended despite the cold weather. All payments are in process and the current balance before paying the invoices is \$10,408.52. The total budget was about \$9,000. Commissioners discussed feedback about the event: PopKorn Kernels with a Twist was a popular snack and we could expand next year with adding warm beverages. There was some confusion with the Legacy Award and so the plaque wasn't handed out when the award was announced and there were other instances where communication with the presenters could have been refined so they knew exactly when/what they were doing. All agreed that the presenters and participants in the program did a great job with their components. The behind-the-scenes operations went really smoothly thanks to the excellent staff from CFRD! Gloria shared that she spoke with Jesse, our keynote speaker, and he was very impressed with all the performances. Negative feedback did come in that the Mayor began knitting and using her iPad during the later parts of the event. It was not well received by the people that saw her, and the keynote speaker even shared with the commission that he noticed her pick up the project and assumed she wasn't happy/wasn't paying attention to his message. Generally the official remarks from the County Commissioners were also not well received and it went on too long to have both video and personal remarks. People did enjoy the musical performances (although the set up was awkward and we could try to think of ways to play music or expedite setup), and the closing remarks from Rev. Gilmore. Dan shared that he felt that the event was very engaging and continues to be an important part of the community.

**Old Business:**

A. **Social Media:** Share any events, volunteer needs, and relevant activities with Michelle to post.

**New Business:**

- A. **Sponsor Thank You Cards:** Michelle brought note card for commissioners to sign for participants and sponsors.
- B. **Review MLK Bylaws:** Michelle passed out bylaws and noted they have not been updated since 2015. We could revisit and revise them if we choose to.
- C. **Commissioner Re-appointments and New Commissioners 2024 (Gloria, James, Jessica):** The commission has two open seats as Jess decided not to reapply. Michelle said there are at least 3 open applications for review and that commissioners can also spread the word with potential members that the application is open. Hopes are that the appointment process will be improved under the new mayoral administration.
- D. **Newsletter Articles/Features:** See above, social media. Next newsletter will primarily focus on Black History Month.

**Public Comments (non-MLK Commissioners):** Dan suggested that the commission link with NAACP, Multifaith Alliance or Building Bridges to host 2 community building workshops (one in the spring and one in the fall) on developing our own

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inner strength and foundations for a more loving community. He sees that we are moving into an increasingly tense and divided future. He asked for permission to speak on behalf of the commission to proceed with this project and to not our support of a joint collaboration. Gloria asked him to submit a written proposal of what the event would be, what the groups would offer, and other details before we officially move forward. Michelle said this type of event could fit for the Remembrance Week but that this year it falls right between Easter and the solar eclipse, making it more challenging to plan events that week that don't conflict. All thought that planning a less intensive Remembrance Week and perhaps saving this type of event for fall would be a better fit.

**NAACP Update:** Gloria noted that Imani is continuing to become very busy with her student obligations and may not have the time to continue with the commitment to be the NAACP liaison. They are considering whether it might be a good fit to create a protocol where the Freshman Rep for IU NAACP is the liaison to the commission each year to create a consistent role and turnover. She then shared that Monroe County NAACP is meeting Feb. 6 at 6:30 at Banneker Center (with a virtual option) and that anyone may attend or be added to the weekly newsletter for more information about organization activities. There was an MLK Day Breakfast at Banneker Center, but all agreed that the day was quite busy and the notice of the breakfast came out too late for many of us to attend, but that the gesture was very kind and Jess did attend the event.

**Commission on the Status of Black Males Update:** James said they are ramping up for Outstanding Leaders of Tomorrow awards (nomination form is still open for young men or women). They will choose the winner at the next meeting and announce at the Black History Month Gala. There will also be a large plaque with past winner names held in City Hall. They are also taking inventory of bylaws, elections, and looking for new members. They are looking forward to repeating their popular events again this year, including Million Father March, the Youth Summit, and more!

**Announcements:**

- We discussed how to run elections for the commission since we are low on members. We were in the same place last year and ended up not holding an election for new officers. Michelle said she will speak to the other staff liaisons to see what the procedure should be in our situation.
- Gloria won't be at the February meeting because there is a conflicting Black History Month event on campus. There will be several intriguing events this year (most open to the public) including cinema, talks, gallery walks, and more! There will be some collaborations between IU and the city; Gloria will send the whole calendar to Michelle to share.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 6:07 pm.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

February 28, 5:00-6:00 pm, Hooker Conference Room (#245)

March 27, 5:00-6:00 pm, Hooker Conference Room (#245)

April 24, 5:00-6:00 pm, Hooker Conference Room (#245)

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