



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

Wednesday April 24, 2024

The meeting began at 5:08 pm without quorum

Commission Members (in-person unless noted): Aniah Fountain, Gloria Howell (zoom) Lily Kleinlein, Angel Thornsbury
Staff: Michelle Moss **Associates and Guests:** Dan Enslow, Debra Vance (zoom)

Introductions: Commissioners and guests shared introductions and welcomed new Commissioner Aniah Fountain.

Approval of Minutes: No quorum, March minutes will be reviewed at a later date.

Staff Liaison Report: Michelle shared that there is currently \$4,620.66 in the account as a starting point for next year's event. It is much more than usual at this time thanks to some very generous donors last year.

Old Business:

- A. **Social Media/Newsletter Features:** Share any events, volunteer needs, and relevant activities with Michelle to post.
- B. **Connecting with Imani Chambers:** Gloria will reach out to Imani to remind her to submit a letter of resignation and the NAACP has already chosen a new appointment to the commission who will take on that role next.

New Business:

- A. **Juneteenth Event (T-shirts, final commitments):** Michelle shared that June 15 is the city's Juneteenth Celebration. Last year we volunteered at the event and purchased t-shirts to wear. Michelle asked new commissioners who want t-shirts to give her sizes. We decided to table and will consider volunteer opportunities once the sign-up opens.
- B. **Action Items for 2025 Speaker:** Michelle noted that last month we seemed to be looking at DEI as our topic and asked about reaching out to some of the suggestions to gauge interest in being our keynote speaker (James' contact in TN, Angel's contact from IU). Gloria and Debra said that they are not as interested in this topic for the event because they see it every day at work and it isn't something that our community has much empowerment toward change at this moment. Gloria also noted that DEI may be too close to last year's education focus and suggested that we save those speakers for a different event like a think-tank or smaller collaboration with IU. Ultimately, we decided not to reach out to any speaker with an offer until we are certain that is the direction we want to go rather than asking and then backing out. Commissioners agreed to come to the next meeting with themes and anyone we think would fit within it. We can choose the theme first and then reach out to potential speakers mid-summer. Furthering the discussion on the MLK Day event, Gloria suggested considering a different direction entirely than the keynote address (panel discussion, moderated discussion/interview, or artistic performance). She said often other formats are more engaging for a wider audience and some people are willing to lower their speaking fees for something other than a keynote. We typically pick speakers who are newer voices, fit within our budget but also bring fresh perspectives, and the community often enjoys hearing these new voices. Sometimes to get high profile people, we would need to think outside the box of how to make it more affordable. Lily noted that years ago (2015) we hosted a filmmaker, screening his film about Bayard Rustin (*Brother Outsider*) on the night before MLK Day, and it was really well received as an alternative to a keynote.

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

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- C. **Review/Update Commissioner Contact Information:** If any commissioner has contact information to update, share this with Michelle for our contact list (email, phone, home address).
- D. **Newsletter/Article Request of Commissioners:** Michelle said that she's been struggling to get the newsletter out quarterly without content input from commissioners. She asked if commissioners would be willing to take turns each quarter submitting a piece for the newsletter. Topics could be local events, newsworthy stories, playlists, fun art/media content, book recommendations, really anything that would be of interest and add variety to the mix. All agreed. August will be the next newsletter deadline.
- E. **NAACP MLK Commissioner Appointment Update:** See discussion above in old business.

Public Comments (non-MLK Commissioners): Dan shared he's been watching a show about MLK and Malcolm X on Disney comparing their approaches. He suggested a screening of this show in the week prior to MLK Day followed by a discussion about the ways they were beginning to come closer together toward the end of their lives. Lily noted that buying screening rights is often very expensive, and Michelle said that we could get around this by asking people to watch the show on their own and we host a discussion after.

NAACP Update: Gloria updated that the next meeting is the first Tuesday of May at Banneker. Debra said that it may be cancelled because of the election primaries.

Commission on the Status of Black Males Update: None

Announcements: Michelle invited all to attend the Be More Awards at the BCT 4/25. Free and open to the public.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 5:50 pm.

Upcoming Meetings:

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

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

July 24, 5:00-6:00 pm, Kelly Conference Room (#155)