



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

Wednesday May 22, 2024

The meeting began at 5:04 pm, quorum met 5:30pm

Commission Members (in-person unless noted): Aniah Fountain, Gloria Howell (zoom), Lily Kleinlein, Julie Roberts, James Sanders, Angel Thornsby (zoom)

Staff: Michelle Moss **Associates and Guests:** Dan Enslow (zoom), Debra Vance

Introductions: Commissioners and guests shared introductions and welcomed new Commissioner Julie Roberts, liaison for the NAACP Monroe County Branch.

Approval of Minutes: March and April minutes were reviewed. James moved to approve, Julie seconded. All approved.

Staff Liaison Report: Michelle shared she is ordering a new plaque for the Legacy Award Winners since the first one is full (cost just over \$400) and completing it with nameplates for 2 recent winners (just under \$20 each).

Old Business:

- A. **Social Media/Newsletter Features:** Share any events, volunteer needs, and relevant activities with Michelle to post. Next newsletter will go out in the coming weeks. Aniah is going to send Michelle some information about the foundation of MLK Day as a national holiday, and Gloria will send materials about the 70th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education. Julie suggested posting about the Indiana Landmarks Juneteenth celebrations, including a live performance by Liz Mitchell on Sunday June 16 in Indianapolis.
- B. **Juneteenth Event:** Michelle reserved a table for the MLK Commission at the city Juneteenth event: June 15 from 2-7pm. In addition to helping Michelle with tabling, volunteer shifts are available from 1:30-6:30pm in 2 hour blocks. Interested commission members should email Michelle in the next week their availability and she will register us as a group. Additionally, anyone who needs a t-shirt (optional) should reach out to Michelle this week with sizes and it will cost around \$20, split evenly between the purchaser and the commission.

New Business:

- A. **Action Items for 2025 Speaker:** Michelle summarized planning and action items to date. In addition to previously suggested speakers Gloria, Michelle and Dan sent ideas for review. They included:
 - 1. Sandra Chapman (investigative journalist and documentarian *The Girl in the Yellow Scarf*). Chapman's film is about her investigation into the unsolved murder of a young Black woman from Martinsville, Carol Jenkins. She has particular interest in solving cold cases that involve racial injustice. Her film was screened at IU and Gloria thinks it would be well-received by Bloomington community.
 - 2. Keith Beauchamp (investigative journalist, documentarian, filmmaker of *Till*). Beauchamp also has extensive experience with investigating cold cases and injustices from "sundown towns" and has been part of an effort to solve some of these cases. He spoke at a different event at IU and Gloria thinks that he could bring a lot to our community and has expressed interest in re-visiting.
 - 3. Dr. Tony Jean Dickerson, historian who speaks to quilting and storytelling through artwork in Black communities. Michelle said that this could be an interesting presentation in our art-loving community.

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4. Smitty Smith from the National Center for Race Amity: The Other Tradition. Dan suggested that this group which works on cross racial/cross cultural collaboration and friendship to make a better world is in alignment with the commission and one of the chairs (Smith) would make for a compelling keynote speaker.

We reviewed the suggested speakers and how each could be part of a re-vamping of the program, including less formal speaking roles and more artistic, multi-media, or moderated conversations. Ideas included hosting a film the weekend before MLK Day or as a feature at the event, showing clips and hosting a Q+A, a mixed presentation with a moderator, and generally agreed to continue to refine and update the event. James moved that we ask Keith Beauchamp to be our presenter as he meets our previously stated search criteria as someone with name recognition, cost effective (he spoke at IU for \$5,000 + travel last year), he has familiar work, and he has shown interest in being involved with our community. Lily seconded and noted that *Till* is a film that many people have seen and is now widely available. Commissioners voted by voice and all approved the motion to ask Beauchamp.

We decided to ask him to create a multi-media presentation, be part of a shorter keynote and moderated conversation or a split format of both of those. Additionally, we discussed ways that we might also be able to involve Sandra Chapman as she is more local (Indianapolis) and her work overlaps with Beauchamp's. It would be an opportunity to share the history that these sorts of injustices weren't siloed in the south but occurred locally too. To fund both we could partner with Indiana Landmarks, Creative Collaboration Grant at IU Cinema, IU Media School, Black Film Archives or other groups. We discussed inviting Chapman as a guest to the 2025 MLK Day (introduce Beauchamp) and as our 2025 Remembrance Day event presenter. Gloria suggested that the two could do some work with IU Media School on MLK Day prior to our event and that would increase the likelihood of funding support from various schools at IU and increase the town/gown collaboration. Gloria will start making some connections on the above since she has a positive working relationship with each and will report back.

Public Comments (non-MLK Commissioners): Dan suggested that commission members look into the National Race Amity Center as they are doing interesting work that may intersect with ours. <https://raceamity.org/>

NAACP Update: Julie announced that the NAACP now has a monthly book club which has been filled with interesting books and conversations. All are invited and details can be found in the NAACP email newsletter.

Commission on the Status of Black Males Update: James announced that the CSBM is hosting free health screenings during the Juneteenth celebration. Additionally, they are planning the Male Youth Summit (September) and Million Fathers March (August). They may expand or switch the first day of school greetings to a different school this year.

Announcements: None

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:16 pm.

Upcoming Meetings:

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

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

August 28, 5:00-6:00 pm, Kelly Conference Room (#155)

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