



## CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

### DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION COMMISSION

Wednesday January 24, 2018

The meeting began at 4:32 pm

**Commission Members:** Marcus Debro, Nicole Griffin, Lily Kleinlein, James Sanders

**Associates:** Dan Enslow, David Hummons

**Staff:** Michael Shermis

**Approval of Minutes:** Nicole made a motion to approve the December minutes, James seconded, all approved.

**Staff Liaison Report:** Michael shared news that the commission will be renamed to delete the comma in its title.

#### **Old Business:**

**A. MLK Celebration Review:** All agreed that the Fairview Show Choir was great and loved that they were joined by the choral ensemble for a song at the end and it was decided that we would ask them to perform again next year. The diversity and enthusiasm of the group was much appreciated. Commissioners also enjoyed the keynote presentation by Rev. Middlebrook and thanked James for helping make the connection.

**B. Stories of Peace:** All of the projects are being filmed in the coming weeks. Michael shared that there will be an event to feature the videos on Feb. 24 and he will send an invitation when the details are set.

**C. Nonviolent Civic Engagement Initiative:** Michael and Lily shared a brief update. Plans for the group are still somewhat vague, but a postcard was handed out at the MLK Celebration with MLK Principles of Nonviolence, Michael and Rafi are going to do a presentation at the middle school in February and will use it as an opportunity to engage with youth, and the planning is moving forward with focus areas of substantive, references, and logistics of the initiative.

**D. Multi-Commission Bicentennial Project:** Marcus and Michael attended a joint meeting to discuss honoring the City's bicentennial in a way that incorporates different commissions. Plans are vague at this point but they hope to do a youth contest and a celebration leading up July 4<sup>th</sup>. Marcus was tasked with reaching out to the schools. He said that the schools are interested, but need more details first.

#### **New Business:**

**A. 40 Days of Peace Presentations:** There are 3 presentations planned for Feb. 5. Nicole is checking to see if her schedule allows her to help. Other volunteers should reach out to Michael ASAP.

**B. MLK Remembrance Day Planning:** Michael began discussion about a potential Peace March on the B-Line in April. Marcus suggested we plant flowers in Rev. Butler Park to kick off the event (an origin story to "Bloomington" is that settlers saw flowers and named the city such). B-Line March could start at Rev. E.D. Butler Park and go all the way to the bridge over Grimes Lane. City Parks Dpt. said we could plant flowers in the Park. Michael would like to have a couple of volunteers to work with him on the content of the event: who to invite to speak, activities, etc. Marcus agreed as the first volunteer. Last year the Blacks in Government from Crane and Black Graduate Student Association from IU assisted with our event and we could potentially reach out to them again.

**C. MLK Birthday Celebration 2019 Speaker:** We discussed potential speakers for 2019: Michelle Obama (or for 2020), one of the two lawyers from NAACP Defense Fund that we connect with last year, and Elizabeth Eckford (Little Rock

**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](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/mlk)

Hrs: 8am-5pm MON-FRI · ph. 812-349-3471 · fax 812-349-3483 · [mlk@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:mlk@bloomington.in.gov)



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High School). All agreed that it would be great to ask Elizabeth Eckford and Nicole pointed out that the photographs of her being escorted into the school are part of IU's collection. The photographer for this famous piece of history, Will Counts, lived locally and worked for IU. His wife is still active in the Bloomington community.

**D. Rev. Mary Beth Morgan Invitation to Address Commission:** Mary Beth Morgan asked Marcus to address the commission at some point regarding the funding burden of service projects when grants are not available. She would like to brainstorm ways to spread out the volunteer projects so that one organization doesn't have to incur high costs of hosting multiple projects. Marcus visited the events at her church and said they were really engaging. All agreed that it would be great to offer support for this need and we are open to a discussion with Rev. Morgan.

**Announcements:**

- Dan announced that there is a strong growing energy in the Noah's Arc Interfaith group and David added that they visited similar groups in Indianapolis. Right now they are looking to discuss the roles of racism and politics into the process of interfaith efforts. They would like to plan a series of signature events. They would like a diverse audience and planning team.
- James announced that the Commission on the Status of Black Males is moving forward with their initiatives for the year. They have about 45 men of color signed up for their big reading initiative and could use more.
- Mary and Nicole are both stepping down from the commission in 2018. Thank you for your leadership and involvement with the commission! We now have three open spaces on the Commission.
- Next month we need to appoint Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary for 2018.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 5:11 pm.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

February 28, 2018 4:30-5:30 p.m. (McCloskey)

March 28 2018 4:30-5:30 p.m. (McCloskey)

April 25, 2018 4:30-5:30 p.m. (McCloskey)