



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION COMMISSION

Wednesday September 25, 2019

The meeting began at 5:02 p.m.

Commission Members: Marcus Debro, Gloria Howell, Lily Kleinlein, Donté Miller, James Sanders, Dianne Shewmaker

Associates and Guests: David Hummons, Debra Vance

Staff: Michael Shermis,

Approval of Minutes: Gloria made a motion to approve July and August minutes, Donté seconded. All approved.

Staff Liaison Report:

- A. **Commission Membership:** Michael said he is pressing for the Mayor to fill the last open spot for the Commission.
- B. **Restorative Justice Workshop:** Michael shared an update about the restorative justice workshop. It went well, almost filled to capacity with generally positive feedback from the participants. There was good conversation by CJAM and PACE and the program is going to continue on with some of the participants in attendance. A lot of the discussion was around the issue of housing and the UDO.

Old Business:

- A. **Progress Report: 2020 MLK B-day Planning and Funding:** Michael announced that the keynote speaker has been confirmed, contract returned. He then shared an update from IU which led to a long discussion about how it would impact our celebration. IU has decided to hold a large Bicentennial Event on the afternoon/evening of MLK Day, and they will not hold the annual MLK Day Breakfast. They are going to be announcing a big name speaker (end of September), which they expect to fill the IU Auditorium for a Bicentennial Celebration at 4 p.m. (free tickets) and also hold a special Platform Dinner after their event. There was a miscommunication and the City wasn't included in any of the planning or information coming out about this change until last week. This complicates things for our 6pm event and Michael expects that our numbers will be down significantly as community members will be unlikely to go to both events since 5+ hours of sitting is a lot. Since this announcement, he's considered our options including that we could hold a large breakfast at the Convention Center instead of our evening event, but the \$10,000 additional price tag is prohibitive. We discussed many factors and issues: collaborating with IU at their event (unlikely at this point), changing the time of our event (not possible), asking the IU Big Name Speaker to come to our event too (unlikely due to the timing of the dinner), whether IU will still sponsor our event (probably, TBD), who the IU Representatives could be for our event with the Provost and President going to the IU Dinner (Gloria and Donté suggested Dr. Valerie Grim or Jakobi Williams who both work in a similar field as our keynote). We also discussed what we could do to build traction and increase our attendance from new or untapped sources. Suggestions included reaching out to local activist groups, and Gloria suggested reaching out to those in Indianapolis area, including Indy Black Lives Matter, black churches, civic groups, and others who may not be on the IU Bloomington radar. James suggested reaching out to small towns south of Bloomington and creating a Facebook sponsored ad. We discussed press release and poster timing. Lily noted that many in the community may not have the time or ability to wait in line for these free IU event tickets, so there could still be plenty of Bloomington residents looking for the ease of coming to our free and open event.

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



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Michael handed out a 2019 sponsor report, totaling \$9,050. He's been going back and forth with IU about the potential of funding and expects they will follow through with some level of support. He handed out a spreadsheet of past and potential donors and asked that at the next meeting we hold a "signing party" with fundraising letters. Each Commissioner can make personal notes on the paper letters, rather than personal emails or phone calls outside of meeting time. He shared last year's letter so that the commission members have the chance to make updates. Michael noted that CFRD never gave the \$1,000 donation for our 2019 event, so they will be donating that and another \$1,000 after January 1 for the 2020 event.

New Business:

- A. **Compassion Games Funding for Service Projects:** Michael said that traditional funds from Service for Peace aren't available for service projects, but they reached out to let him know of another pot of funds. Compassion Games is a program which provides a 3-to-1 match (you raise 3, they give 1). Money we raise for the speaker and media sponsorships, additionally any in-kind food or supply donations from businesses to local projects could be used for the funding match (volunteer or staff time cannot be counted). With these flexible standards Michael thinks that we could potentially raise \$10-15k and then would get up to \$3-5,000 which would fund several projects. Michael noted that delving back into this kind of grant distribution would be complex and a lot of work but he's willing to proceed forward with the possibility of this working. He will do the prep work on the funding end and also work with local agencies about the potential. Service Projects could take place during the 40 Days of Peace.

Public Comments (non-MLK Commissioners): None

NAACP Update: Dianne noted that Freedom Fund Banquet is coming up on October 5. Debra shared that Dawn Johnson is the keynote. Tickets cost \$50 and can be purchased at BCT Box Office before the end of the month.

Commission on the Status of Black Males Update: James said they had a representative from the Indy CSBM visit to publicize the Indiana Black Male Conference, which will take place on October 29. They hope to go as a Commission and also bring local youth to the conference. They are also working on the Santa event at Banneker, including activities, Santa photos, snacks, and gifts. They would like to include the MLK Commission in some way.

Announcements:

- Michael said that if the service projects come through, we will probably have to schedule a second December meeting to approve projects.
- Gloria congratulated David on his retirement from IU! A fabulous event was held to honor him earlier in the month.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings:

October 23, 5:00-6:00 p.m. (McCloskey)

December 4, 5:00-6:00 p.m. (Hooker) **NOTICE DATE AND LOCATION CHANGE**

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