



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

**Commission Meeting**

**Wednesday February 24, 2016**

**Commission Members:** Marcus Debro, Barbara Fuqua, Nicole Griffin, Lily Kleinlein, Dennis Laffoon

**Staff:** Michael Shermis

The meeting began at 5:30 pm with introductions. The commission has new members: Dennis Laffoon, Marcus Debro, and Mary Tourner (not present)

**Approval of Minutes:** Lily made a motion to approve the Jan. minutes, Dennis seconded, all approved.

**Staff Liaison Report:** Michael shared that he continues to stay busy with MLK follow up- the financial reports, volunteer sign-in sheets, photos, and yard signs for all 52 projects. There will be a final report at the end of February which will be submitted to Service for Peace, the Community Foundation, and Serve Indiana. There were no new financial changes to note. Michael received a call from Dan Enslow about his concept for a collaboration with Bethel AME, but all agreed to wait until Dan attends a meeting before moving forward.

**Old Business:**

**Birthday Celebration Review:** Michael said that we had 325 attendees at the celebration and that is on track with our usual attendance of 300-400.

**New Business:**

**Scheduling:** Dennis teaches at 6:00 on Wednesdays and asked if there is a possibility to change our meeting time. We decided to try 5:00 on the same Wednesdays we already meet if Mary is able to arrive that early. Michael will check and get back to everyone.

**Brainstorming Speakers and Public Suggestions: Isabel Wilkerson, Ta-Nehisi Coates:** Michael received two suggestions from the public. He said that Coates was recently at IU and drew a large crowd, but because of his recent visit might not be ideal for next year. Michael will check on Wilkerson's availability. He also received a suggestion for the biographer of A. Philip Randolph, who was prominent in the Labor Movement. Nicole suggested we narrow down a speaker in the next couple of months. She asked that all ideas be sent to Michael, and he will bring the list of past suggestions in March.

**Brainstorming Youth Involvement:** Michael shared the history of our youth involvement and why we are looking to change the format in the future. Here were some of the ideas:

- Michael had the idea to connect with the theaters in town and talk with them about creating a 5-10 minute play (involving youth) for the event. It would not only involve youth but would add another artistic element.
- Lily suggested inviting a youth service project to speak about their project (Girl Scouts, Project School).

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City Hall · 401 N. Morton St., Suite 260, Bloomington, IN 47404 · [www.bloomington.in.gov/mlk](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/mlk)

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- Dennis suggested the high school AV Clubs attend the various service projects and take video or photos that we can show at the event that night. He said it would take a little work that afternoon to compile, but could bring more people to the event because they would want to see the videos the kids created.
- Marcus suggested partnering with Fairview for the theatrical performance.
- Marcus also asked if we have ever considered partnering with area children's choirs (Bethel doesn't have one but 2nd Baptist might).
- Marcus also said there are a couple of service learning groups at North and he could touch base with them for ideas.
- Lily suggested formally recognizing the youth volunteer ushers at the event.

Nicole tasked everyone to reach out on the ideas they presented to see if they are feasible. She also said that while traditionally we have had a keynote speaker, it might be possible that we use more of our local arts talents (youth and adult) to put together an entire celebration based on these types of presentations rather than a big name speaker.

**WTIU's Documentary on Lee Hamilton- MLK Support:** Lee Hamilton is receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom and WTIU is creating a documentary about it. They are soliciting funds to help support the documentary and approached the King Commission because of Hamilton's interest and support of Dr. King. Any funding we would agree to give would have to be raised especially for this purpose. They are asking \$500 and up. Michael said we do have a media sponsorship where WTIU provides about \$1,000 worth of media at no cost, but that does not obligate us to donate to this cause. Nicole and Lily both thought that it would be a good cause to support but that we are not in the position to sponsor at \$500. Commissions do not typically sponsor events or projects, so this would set a new precedent. All agreed that we need to pass on this opportunity.

**Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs Collaboration:** The Commission on HLA would like to collaborate on a voting awareness event. Their staff liaison invites MLK Commission members to participate in the event. Lily agreed to represent the commission as a partner on this event.

**Bethel AME Collaboration Event:** Dan was not present to give an update.

#### **Liaison Reports:**

**NAACP:** Dianne was not present, so no update was shared.

**Commission on the Status of Black Males:** We will have updates quarterly from David, who will still be our appointment to represent on this commission even though he is no longer on the MLK Commission.

**Announcements:** None

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 6:02pm.

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