



Joint Meeting

Virginia Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission and King in Virginia Subcommittee

Senator Jennifer L. McClellan, Chair

Gibson Room (Room 114), Coker Hall
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia

Tuesday, March 13, 2018
3:30 P.M.

SUMMARY

Senator Jennifer McClellan, chair of the Virginia Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission (the Commission) called the joint meeting of the Commission and the King in Virginia Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) to order.

Emancipation Proclamation and Freedom Monument Updates

The chair updated members on the status of the Emancipation Proclamation and Freedom Monument (the Monument). The contract with the Monument's artist, Thomas Jay Warren, is anticipated to be finalized and signed prior to the Commission's next meeting, which will give the project a tentative completion date of August 2019.

Prior to the installation of the Monument on Brown's Island in Richmond, an existing sculpture at the site, the Mill, will be relocated to a new site on Brown's Island, pending approvals from the City of Richmond. At the time of the meeting, the relocation of the Mill had been approved by the City of Richmond's Public Art Commission and Urban Design Committee and was scheduled to come before the City Planning Commission for review.

At a previous meeting, the Commission delegated authority to the chair to sign a reimbursement agreement with Venture Richmond on behalf of the Commission to cover the costs of relocating the Mill. The agreement, signed and effective as of February 20, 2018, allows Venture Richmond to coordinate and manage the preparation of the new site and the relocation of the sculpture, which will be contracted out to the architectural firm 3north. With a quorum present, the Commission voted to authorize the chair to disburse funds to reimburse Venture Richmond for the costs of moving the Mill, estimated at \$21,300 for design and permitting fees and \$82,500 for construction costs.

Donations to the Monument fund, with the Virginia Capitol Foundation as fiscal agent, are currently being accepted. When a budget for the Monument is finalized, the Commission's Fundraising Work Group will meet to begin soliciting funds.

King in Virginia Project

In 2018, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. King, the Commission is hosting a series of 12 Beloved Community Roundtables across the state in each of the localities that Dr. King visited, focused around the theme of Dr. King's final book, "Where Do We Go from Here." Each program will feature a panel

discussion, moderated by Senator McClellan, followed by audience discussion, and will be recorded and livestreamed by WCVE PBS and made available on the Commission's Facebook page and website.

The chair gave an overview of the first King in Virginia event, which took place at Virginia Union University in Richmond on March 1. The program featured a welcome from Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney and a panel discussion with panelists Jamar A. Boyd II, Senator Henry L. Marsh III, Delegate Delores McQuinn, Ben Ragsdale, Dr. Jim Somerville, Dr. Corey Walker, and Rev. Janie Walker.

The second event in the series was scheduled for later in the day following the Commission's meeting and was to feature panelists Pastor Lehman Bates, Dr. Andrea Douglas, Dr. Wesley Harris, University of Virginia President Teresa Sullivan, and Charlottesville Mayor Nikuyah Walker in Old Cabell Hall at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

Events have also been scheduled for April 24 at First Baptist Church of Farmville and June 6 at First Baptist Church of Williamsburg. Members of the Commission and Subcommittee discussed plans for scheduling the remaining eight events to take place in Danville, Hampton, Hopewell, Lynchburg, Newport News, Norfolk, Petersburg, and Suffolk.

The Commission had previously discussed an oral history project in association with the King in Virginia Project. Currently the recorded Beloved Community Roundtables, which feature panelists who interacted with Dr. King or witnessed his visits to Virginia, are serving as a means to collect and preserve firsthand accounts of Dr. King's time in Virginia.

150th Anniversary of the Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868

Dr. Gregg Kimball of the Library of Virginia outlined the Library's plans to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868. The Commission voted at its previous meeting to participate in the commemoration, which involves the following events in 2018:

February 15: The Virginia Capitol Foundation's Capitol Celebration featured the unveiling of the Virginia Constitution of 1868 in the Old House Chamber. Several descendants of the Convention's African American delegates attended the event.

March 21: Historian Brent Tartar will give a talk at noon at the Library of Virginia, entitled "Constructing a New Virginia." The talk will give an overview of the time period and of the significance of the Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868.

April 12: Library of Virginia archivist Greg Crawford will give a noon talk, "You Have No Right to Refuse to Register Me!" at the Library of Virginia, using local and state election records to show the history of African American disenfranchisement.

May 17: A 6:00 p.m. roundtable discussion at the Library of Virginia, "Race and the Right to Vote," will examine the legacy of the Constitutional Convention of 1867-1868 and will examine African American suffrage in a contemporary context.

50th Anniversary of *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*

Dr. Kimball gave an overview of events planned for the anniversary of the 1968 Supreme Court case, *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*. The upcoming programs, detailed at GreenvNewKent.com, will include panel discussions, an open house at New Kent Historic Courthouse, a tour and history presentation at George W. Watkins Elementary School, and musical events.

Other Business

The chair detailed events hosted by the King Center in Atlanta to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination, which will include Beloved Community Talks, a 50 Acts of Kindness Project, and a March for Humanity on April 9 in Atlanta. The Civil Rights Museum in Memphis will also host commemorative events, which will include a two-day MLK50 Symposium and a bell tolling at 6:01 p.m. on April 4.

Members also discussed the Commission's work beyond 2018 and the potential for partnering with the American Evolution 2019 Commemoration. The year 2019 will also mark the 60th anniversary of the closing of Prince Edward County Schools and the sesquicentennial of the adoption of the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Next Meeting Date

The Commission's next meeting was tentatively scheduled to precede the next King in Virginia Beloved Community Conversation in Farmville on April 24.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.