



Joint Meeting

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

Senator Jennifer L. McClellan, Chair

Room 201, Blow Hall
The College of William & Mary
Williamsburg, Virginia

Wednesday, June 6, 2018
3:00 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. The chair welcomed Delegate Robert M. Thomas, newly appointed to the Commission by the Speaker of the House. Henry Broadus, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Public Affairs at The College of William & Mary, offered a welcome on behalf of the university.

Emancipation Proclamation and Freedom Monument Updates

The chair updated members on the status of the Emancipation Proclamation and Freedom Monument (the Monument). The final contract with the Monument's artist, Jay Warren, is expected to be signed in early June. The timeline outlined in the contract will give the Monument a 2019 completion date.

The chair noted that the contract requires Commission approval on certain deliverables during the construction and installation process. Because approvals may be required at times that the Commission is unable to meet, the chair will request delegation of authority at the Commission's next meeting to grant specific approvals regarding the Monument.

The chair also updated members on an exhibit at the Valentine in Richmond, "Monumental: Richmond's Monuments," that will open on July 4, 2018, and will feature the Emancipation Proclamation and Freedom Monument. The Commission is loaning maquettes of the Monument to display at the exhibit. The maquette of the female figure was damaged when it was moved out of the General Assembly Building in 2017 but will be displayed in the exhibit as-is. The Valentine has offered to let the Commission host a fundraising event at the museum while the maquettes are on display.

King in Virginia Project Updates

The King in Virginia Project has completed three Beloved Community Conversations in 2018 in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination, held in locations in Virginia that Dr. King visited. The first was held in Richmond at Virginia Union University on March 1, the second in Charlottesville at the University of Virginia on March 13, and the third in Farmville at First Baptist Church on April 24. The Beloved Community Conversations, focused on the theme of Dr. King's final book, *Where Do We Go from Here*, featured panel discussions examining

where each community is today in achieving Dr. King's vision of a Beloved Community. The programs were livestreamed and recorded by WCVE PBS.

Upcoming programs are planned for Williamsburg on June 6 following the Commission's meeting, Danville on July 11, Suffolk on July 26, and Lynchburg on August 1. Senator Mamie Locke offered September 26 as a tentative date for a program in Hampton. Following Hampton, programs remain to be scheduled for Hopewell, Newport News, Norfolk, and Petersburg.

Reverend Tyler Millner, who originally proposed the King in Virginia Project, emphasized that the Subcommittee's work should culminate in a report, based on the panel discussions at each event, summarizing actions to be taken in working toward Dr. King's Beloved Community.

American Evolution: 2019 Commemoration

Kathy Spangler, Executive Director of American Evolution, gave members an overview of programming planned for Virginia's 2019 Commemoration, which will include major conferences and summits, educational programming, and a mobile app, Virginia History Trails, to guide users through Virginia's historic sites. Ms. Spangler noted that the 2019 Commemoration maintains partnerships with many organizations statewide and is open to a partnership with the Commission. The Commission voted to officially partner with the 2019 Commemoration, with specific opportunities for partnership to be determined.

Commemoration of Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to United States Constitution

In 2018, 2019, and 2020, several anniversaries marking 150 years since the process of adopting the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution will occur. On July 20, 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment was ratified by the states; on February 25 and 26, 1869, the Fifteenth Amendment passed both houses of Congress; on October 8, 1869, Virginia ratified the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments; and on March 30, 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified by the states. Members discussed ways in which the Commission might commemorate these anniversaries, emphasizing the importance of tying programming to the specific anniversary dates. Members suggested issuing a press release to bring attention to the anniversaries, posting on the Commission's social media, offering floor speeches while the General Assembly is in session, hosting or partnering to host panel discussions, and organizing a student art and essay contest, similar to one the Commission held to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation.

The Commission voted to commemorate the 150th anniversary dates for the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments (July 20, 2018; February 25–26, 2019; October 9, 2019; and March 30, 2020) with programming to include an art and essay contest and events tied to the anniversary dates.

Comprehensive Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Inventory and Long-term Planning

An aim of the Commission is to compile and maintain an inventory of commemorative events related to Dr. King as well as an inventory of locations in the state named in honor of Dr. King. The chair requested that members research and submit known events and locations in Virginia to Commission staff, with the tentative goal of including an initial inventory in the Commission's 2018 annual report.

The Commission participates annually in the Virginia Union University Community Leaders Breakfast in January. The chair informed members that organizers of the breakfast are reworking the event to make it a community celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Members discussed the possibility of the Commission hosting its own annual event honoring Dr. King but agreed to first compile an inventory of commemorative events and look for opportunities for partnership on existing events.

Next Meeting Date

The Commission's next meeting was tentatively planned for July in order to consider upcoming Monument approvals.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.