

DRAFT MINUTES

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL STATUES IN THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

March 3, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Senator Louise Lucas

Delegate Jeion Ward

Dr. Edward Ayers

Dr. Colita Fairfax

Chief Anne Richardson

Ms. Margie Vanderhye

Ms. Julie Langan, Ex Officio

ATTENDEES:

Deputy Secretary Joshua Saks

DHR STAFF:

Ms. Stephanie Williams

Ms. Jennifer Pullen

WELCOME

Ms. Langan welcomed everyone and introduced Chair Lucas.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lucas called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m.

Ms. Langan took attendance by roll call. Chair Lucas asked members to introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Chair Lucas asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Vice-Chair Ward made the motion. Dr. Ayers seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 16, 2020 MINUTES

Chair Lucas asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion to approve the December 16, 2020 meeting minutes was made by Dr. Ayers. Vice-Chair Ward seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Langan gave a summary of written public comment since the December 16, 2020 meeting. She stated that all written comments have been posted to the Commission's webpage. She reported that the majority of public comment received was focused on suggestions for sculptors.

There were no oral public comments.

COMMENTS FROM THE BARBARA JOHNS FAMILY

Chair Lucas recognized the Barbara Johns family.

Joan Johns Cobbs told her personal story of why her sister (Barbara Johns) was motivated to strike based on conditions of their school and educational materials given to them.

Robert Johns expressed that he was honored by the selection of Barbara Johns. He would like the family to be involved in the selection of the photo the sculptor will use to create the statue. The family would like Barbara Johns' cap and gown/graduation picture used. Unfortunately, many of the family photos were lost in a house fire after the Brown v. the Board of Education case.

Ernest Johns thanked everyone on the Commission and stated that it is a honor to have Barbara Johns selected.

PROGRESS AND BUDGET UPDATE

Ms. Langan thanked Chair Lucas and Vice-Chair Ward for obtaining the approval of the General Assembly and gave a general breakdown of the expenses. See PowerPoint.

Ms. Langan confirmed that the Robert E. Lee statue had been removed from the Capitol and that ownership had been transferred to the Virginia Museum of History & Culture.

Ms. Langan told the Commission that she spoke with three, Fourth grade classes about the selection Barbara Johns and that they were very engaged and interested.

Ms. Langan emphasized that the Commission will welcome input from the Johns family regarding the artist selection.

DISCUSSION

Chair Lucas liked the idea of the top 5 artists selected and being able to communicate with them.

Vice-Chair Ward was glad the family will be involved.

Ms. Vanderhye expressed she thought the process made sense and noted the thoughtfulness it will take to make history by selecting a sculptor.

Dr. Ayers was inspired by the family's comments and asked if there will be an opportunity for public comment. Ms. Langan confirmed there will be an opportunity for both written oral public comment.

Vice-Chair Ward noted that a docent from the Capitol had reached out to her expressing excitement about showing visitors the new statue.

Dr. Fairfax asked that the Commission's website reflect that the family is involved with artistic process.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lucas called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice-Chair Ward made a motion which was seconded by Dr. Ayers. The motion passed unanimously.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 11:09 a.m.