

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

MEETING MINUTES

October 25, 2022

APPROVED

ATTENDEES:

Committee Members: Charles Avery, Erica Bush, Valerie Bush, Tammy Carter, Carlotta Coates, Gertrude Evans, Mary Randolph, James Roberts, Larry Roeder, Larry Simms

Absent: Dwight Brooks, Gladys Burke, Glory Howard, Joyce Jackson, Sylvia Smith, Michelle Thomas

Guests: Alvin Dodson, Janet Wiggins, Helen Avery, Charlotte Coates,

LCPS Staff: Melissa Tello, Kathleen Devens, Sara Howard-O'Brien, Donna Torraca

Erica Bush and Charles Avery welcomed the Committee and guests to the meeting. Janet Wiggins noted that she had reached out to Mr. Hankerson. No other public comment was offered.

Review of Meeting Minutes:

The Committee reviewed the October 11th meeting minutes. Janet Wiggins offered that the word "his" could be removed from the Douglass Commemorative Consortium info on Page 3, first line, as the comment applied to all three organizations. Seeing no other suggested changes Valerie Bush made a motion to approve the October 11, 2022, minutes as amended. Jim Roberts seconded, and the minutes were approved.

DDI Kiosk Option Review & Kiosk Subcommittee Report:

Chris Watson, Supervisor of Digital Experience for LCPS, provided an overview of the Arreya digital signage platform that LCPS uses. This platform provides options for Interactive and Non-Interactive kiosks that are cloud-based and can be updated easily. LCPS chose this for use in their school facilities because it is based on the presentation rather than individual kiosks so each school can have its own information at each school or facility. Arreya can be loaded onto websites, can link with Facebook and other platforms, and is easy to use. Chris provided examples of non-interactive displays used in schools and interactive displays that are found in museums. He noted that different presentations can be scheduled for different times of the day. In response to the question of what staff manages the schools' websites, Chris advised it is non-technology staff, usually front office personnel. Arreya has staff available to assist with program design. LCPS staff will share the presentation and links cited with the Committee.

Erica Bush asked if a webpage or website dedicated to The Historic Douglass High School was a possibility. Chris said he would follow up with the developers and see if that was a possibility.

Valerie Bush reviewed ideas the Kiosk Subcommittee had compiled and a phased approach to load information. She asked the Committee to review the draft list and the phases and provide feedback. The Subcommittee is awaiting direction from LCPS regarding who would be inputting the information the Committee compiles for inclusion in the kiosk. There is a great

deal of information that needs to be gathered and compiled. She clarified that the School Board and Board of Supervisors' minutes would be historical and related to Douglass High School.

Playground Update:

At the October 11th meeting, the Committee provided comments on the Heroes playground panel provided by Loudoun County Parks & Recreation. One of the comments was the need for a bus that was more reflective of the 1940's. Sara Howard-O'Brien shared a photo of a bus in front of Douglass High School with a driver standing in front of the bus. Larry Roeder explained that the Edwin Washington Society and specifically Neil Steinberg had created the image. Sara clarified that the playground panel would be an artistic depiction of the bus, not the actual photo but that the Committee could potentially use the photo in another capacity in the building. Sara asked the Committee if the bus in that photo would be a good example to submit to P&R and the Committee agreed that it was.

1941 Area Furniture Update:

Melissa Tello shared the status of commemorative elements. All items are either being fabricated, ordered, or have been received with the exception of the amphitheater panels which are being proofed for content, and the timeline panels which will be reviewed later in the meeting and then proofed for content at a later date.

At the October 11, 2022 meeting the Committee inquired what type of furniture would be provided in the stakeholder rooms. Melissa reviewed the furniture in all areas including the conference room, stakeholder rooms, main room, and small office area. Furniture is expected to be ordered in the next day or two. The archival document cabinet is the only item that is on backorder for 1-year. Larry Roeder mentioned that the Edwin Washington Project had inquired about hangers along the top of the walls to allow the hanging of posters and pictures without putting holes in the walls. A question was asked about the provision of computer equipment in the stakeholder rooms. Computer equipment is not provided. This aspect is addressed in the MOUs. A question was also asked about the seating capacity of the main room. While the number will depend on whether it is only chairs or tables with chairs, the room is expected to seat 150-200 people.

The Committee inquired when the building would be open. Melissa shared that the earliest possible date would be sometime in January for building "outfitting" (moving in of furniture)

Douglass Commemorative Consortium:

Carlotta Coates stated that three groups plan to meet in person within the next month to discuss tours and other items. They have met with Parks & Rec regarding dates they would like to hold for various events. The Consortium will provide an update at the next meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Timeline Subcommittee: Gert Evans, Gladys Burke, Dwight Brooks

Gert Evans reviewed the draft timelines received from the design team for the front room timeline. She explained the layout and that touchscreen information would be available to elaborate further on the pictures and documents provided on the wall. There is potential for

some overlap in the information provided in the kiosk. The timeline wall would use the Arreya program and LCPS would be able to load and assist with this. A list of options for the timeline touchscreen is included in the packet. Gert asked the Committee to review and provide comments on additions and deletions.

Charles Avery asked who the quote was from in the front hall timeline “Our duty as citizens is to provide the best educational facilities possible for our children”. The quote is by Welton Henderson who was the Principal at the Leesburg Training School in the 1934-1935 school year. Gert stated that this quote is depicted in the letter from Gertrude Alexander to the parents and teachers listing the officers appointed at the first County-Wide League meeting.

Gert reviewed the timeline to be located on the back wall of the stage. This timeline “Cherish the Memories” reads from right to left and starts in the 1940’s where the front timeline wall ends. The back hall timeline covers the 2000’s and provides pictures and some content.

The Committee suggested:

1. That more information be provided at the bottom of the timeline to describe the pictures shown above and that the wider “blank or open” spaces be filled in
2. Possibly format so that pictures do not run together
3. Make the years less prominent/obstructing the view of images behind and/or numbers more transparent
4. How would it look to have the years at the bottom instead within the pictures

Mural Subcommittee: Larry Simms, Joyce Jackson, Larry Roeder

Donna Torraca provided an overview of the seven mural submissions received from the Call For Artist placed on September 9th. There are five local artists, one Florida artist, and one Colorado artist. Artwork was submitted by Kaeley Boyle, Danielle Ferrin, Kim P. Kim, Sagetopia, Lilly Saffrey, Jason Tetlak and Rachel Wolfe. The proposals include painting on the DiBond panels, mosaic approach, and digital imagery. Donna reviewed the key points of each mural and directed the Committee to review their packets which contain each artist’s full submission which includes their resume and art samples.

Larry Simms asked that each Committee member review the mural submissions between now and the November 14th Committee meeting and provide any feedback to the Subcommittee with any questions, comments, and/or preferences to artist/mural for the Subcommittee’s consideration. The Subcommittee will provide a recommendation to the full Committee at the November 14th meeting.

Reconciliation Subcommittee:

The Reconciliation Committee has met twice with the third meeting planned for October 26th. Charles Avery shared that the focus for the meeting on the 26th was to review the “mission” of the reconciliation. Most members have submitted recommendations for reconciliation to County Staff.

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Closing: Charles and Erica thanked everyone for their time and reminded them that the next meeting is Monday, November 14, 2022. Time capsule submissions are overdue and can be emailed, delivered or handed in at the next meeting but asked that they get them in soon.

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