

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee

Location: Frederick Douglass Elementary School Library

APPROVED

MEETING MINUTES

September 13, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

ATTENDEES:

Committee Members: Charles Avery, Gladys Burke, Erica Bush, Valerie Bush, Tammy Carter, Carlotta Coates, Gertrude Evans, Margaret Good, Glory Howard, Joyce Jackson, James Roberts, Larry Roeder, Larry Simms, Sylvia Smith

Absent: Dwight Brooks, Mary Randolph, Michelle Thomas

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

LCPS Staff: Bev Tate, Sara Howard-O'Brien, Donna Torraca

Charles Avery welcomed the Committee and guests and asked if there were any public comments before the meeting began.

Alvin Dodson introduced himself and shared that he was from the Class of 1955.

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the August 23, 2021 meeting. Correction was made to Page 2, changing the word "several" to "many" and on Page 3 correcting a typo of "fin" to "fit". Glory Howard made a motion for approval and Valerie Bush seconded.

The Committee discussed the 911 twenty-year commemoration noting how various events are commemorated as a way of sharing experiences.

Cornerstone Discussion:

Mr. Roberts discussed the possibility of historic items being placed in the corner stone of the original Douglass High School building. He proposed that LCPS use sonar to see if there is indeed anything within the cornerstone. If there is something detected there could be a ceremony to reveal the contents. Mr. Avery also mentioned that the Outside Committee had discussed creating a new time capsule from this commemorative endeavor and placing it somewhere on the campus.

Mr. Roberts made a motion: *To ask LCPS to use whatever equipment is needed to determine if there might be items within the cornerstone and if so, uncover the contents during a public viewing.* Tammy Carter seconded. A roll call was taken. All 13 members present voted for the motion and the motion passed 13-0-4 with Dwight Brooks, Mary Randolph, Larry Simms and Michelle Thomas, absent for the vote.

Naming of Monument Sign for Campus and Front Peak of Roof Sign:

The Committee discussed the differences relating to the signage potential in the peak of the roof of the original building and the monument sign for the campus. After discussion of potential names, location of each and brief discussion regarding the historic State of Virginia white metal sign and corrections needed, Gladys Burke made a motion: *That there be two names, one for the building and one for the campus*". The motion was seconded by Tammy Carter.

After discussion on the motion, a roll call was taken:

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Charles Avery – Yes; Erica Bush – Yes; Gladys Burke – Yes; Valerie Bush – Abstain; Tammy Carter – Yes; Carlotta Coates – No; Gert Evans – Yes; Margaret Good – No; Glory Howard – No; Joyce Jackson – No; Jim Roberts – Yes; Larry Roeder – Yes; Larry Simms – No; Sylvia Smith – No;

Motion passed 7-6-1-3 with Valerie Bush Abstaining and Dwight Brooks, Mary Randolph and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Peak of Roof in Front of Building:

Four names were suggested for the Peak of the Roof signage:

- Former Douglass High School 1941-1968
- Formerly Douglass High School 1941-1968
- Douglass High School 1941-1968
- Historic Douglass High School 1941-1968

Joyce Jackson made a motion *to close name suggestions and to select a name of the four suggestions on the table*. Motion was seconded by Larry Simms and all were in favor. Roll Call was taken, and votes were as follows:

Former Douglass High School 1941-1968	None
Formerly Douglass High School 1941-1968	None
Douglass High School 1941-1968	Charles Avery, Tammy Carter, Gert Evans, Margaret Good, Joyce Jackson, Jim Roberts, Larry Roeder, Larry Simms
Historic Douglass High School 1941-1968	Erica Bush, Gladys Burke, Valerie Bush, Carlotta Coates, Glory Howard, Sylvia Smith

Douglass High School 1941-1968 was approved by a vote of 8-6-3 with Dwight Brooks, Mary Randolph and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Campus Monument Sign:

Names that were provided in the August 23rd packet were reviewed. Additional names suggested included:

- Douglass High School 1941-1968
- Douglass Education & Community Center
- Historic Douglass High School Campus
- Douglass Educational Resource Center
- Douglass High School Community and Resource Center

With twenty names on the list, Joyce Jackson made a motion *to table the discussion on naming of the campus until a clean list can be provided of the names suggested*. Gladys seconded the motion. All were in favor 14-0-3 with Dwight Brooks, Mary Randolph and Michelle Thomas absent for the vote.

Videography Project:

Larry Simms provided an overview of the videography project of oral histories for Douglass High School that has and is conducting in collaboration with LCPS. He shared with the group that LCPS was interviewing videographers, questions were being compiled, and names and

contact information were still needed from the Committee and community of any individuals that should or would like to be interviewed. A copy of the interview questions was in previous packets and will be shared with the Committee again prior to and at the September 27th meeting. A suggestion was made to have young people ask questions of the interviewees. It was also offered that if someone was needed to interview there is an LDAA scholarship recipient that is in media.

Stakeholders Collaboration Space:

Charles shared that the Co-Chairs had asked the three groups seeking space in Douglass High School to work together and report back to the Committee how they plan to work together and planned to carry the history of the building and community forward into the future.

Carlotta shared that she and Larry Roeder had met and she felt certain that, while they were unable to connect with Pastor Michelle she would be in agreement that, while each group has different missions and physical needs there are similarities to the organizations. This will also provide an opportunity to learn more about each group and collaborate on activities. The stakeholders can tell the story individually and collectively. Larry also offered that the Edwin Washington Project would be available to assist with scanning of any historic documents that the groups should come into possession of and provide an avenue for sharing that history. Tammy Carter offered that while the MLK Committee was not seeking dedicated space in the building, the event could be an avenue for sharing commemorative work that has been done each year.

Gladys Burke suggested a document that could be collaborated upon and submitted to the School Board and asked what the schedule was for presenting to the School Board at this time. Sara explained that at this time the plan is to have an Information Item before the full School Board on September 28 with a presentation by the Co-Chairs of the Committee regarding the progress to date, the need for a decision on dedicated space inside the building, and the Committee's recommendation for the office space requests. Dependent on the decision by the School Board at that meeting, the item could come to the School Board on October 12th for action.

Charles Avery liked the idea of bringing a document to the School Board so they can see and understand what these three groups can do. He noted that the three groups could preserve and continue the work of the Committee. There will be on-going work for the commemoration. The three organizations could keep the spirit alive. There was a suggestion to submit a Committee Resolution to the School Board with their recommendation that all of the stakeholders be given office space. Tammy Carter offered that long-term, the MLK Committee could show the history as a part of the MLK event which would also help keep the spirit alive. Charles Avery added that it is their mission to convince the School Board to provide space and to come with all recommendations of the Committee.

Meeting adjourned.