

**Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission
Meeting #12, September 20, 2004, 10:00 AM
Auditorium, The Lincoln Museum
Fort Wayne, Indiana**

Present were Dr. Jean Bandler, Dr. Darrel Bigham, Dr. Gabor Boritt, Ms. Joan Flinspach, Mr. Harold Holzer, Mrs. Lura Lynn Ryan, Hon. Tommy Turner, Hon. Frank Williams, Michael Bishop, Executive Director, Jackie Williams, Projects Manager. Congressional staff included Ms. Diane Liesman from the Hon. Ray LaHood's office.

Ms. Flinspach introduced Fort Wayne Mayor Graham Richard who welcomed the Commissioners and thanked them for their work. Mr. Holzer thanked Mayor Richard and commented that it had been an extraordinary weekend. Ms. Flinspach introduced Mr. Wickersham from Congressman Souder's office who welcomed the Commissioners on behalf of the Congressman. Ms. Flinspach introduced Ms. Elizabeth Frederick, retired Assistant General Counsel of Lincoln National Corporation, and a member of the board of The Friends of The Lincoln Museum. She stated that it was an honor to have the Commission in Fort Wayne.

Mr. Holzer called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m. He asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Judge Turner so moved and Chief Justice Williams seconded the motion. Prior to the vote, Dr. Bigham asked that the following changes be made to the minutes: (1) on page 2, line 2, insert the word "potential" before collaborative activities; (2) on page 2, line 2, change "will" to "could"; (3) on page 2, line 4, change the word "will" to "could." Dr. Bigham asked that it be noted that the list of potential collaborative activities (page 2, line 2) will be turned over to the staff for implementation. Mr. Holzer called for the vote to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Governor's Letters

Mr. Bishop noted that he is receiving responses to his letter sent to state governors. Representatives from Massachusetts and Oregon have contacted his office with questions. Mr. Bishop will compose a letter of welcome to those appointed. He has also received some nice comments about the Interim Report from the advisory board.

Organization of American Historians

Mr. Bishop recommended that the ALBC have a presence at the 2005 OAH meeting in San Francisco. Dr. Horton has encouraged the ALBC to rent a booth for \$1100. Dr. Boritt suggested that the Commission host a session. Ms. Flinspach moved that the Commission rent a booth at the 2005 OAH meeting. Chief Justice Williams seconded the motion. Mr. Holzer amended the motion to reflect booth rental and the option of a session and after discussion called for the vote. The motion carried. Mr. Bishop will contact Dr. Horton to confirm the booth rental and to explore the idea of a session. Mr. Bishop discussed having a Lincoln's corner in the OAH newsletter and an issue dedicated to Lincoln. Dr. Bigham reported that he discussed the production of a special issue of the *Journal of American History* with Dr. Horton.

Major Traveling Exhibit

Mr. Bishop urged consideration of a major traveling exhibit that would feature original documents. Mr. Bishop noted that reproduction educational exhibits - for airports, libraries, and similar venues – are listed in the Interim Report. To undertake the formation of a major exhibit he would contact the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian, The Lincoln Museum and other Lincoln institutions; he requested that the Commission endorse this idea. Mr. Holzer asked the Commissioners if they had any objection to sending a chairman’s letter. No objections were noted. Ms. Liesman asked if the institutions would charge the ALBC. Mr. Bishop responded that the Commission would have to provide financial support and that he is working on a strategic plan which would lay out the cost for this project. Dr. Boritt added that reproductions of this exhibit could be loaned to school libraries. Ms. Flinspach asked to confirm that the ALBC’s role would be to oversee progress, select the curators, recommend venues and review scripts, leaving the actual production with the curators.

Mr. Bishop asked Ms. Flinspach to report on a major exhibit being produced by the National Constitution Center and The Lincoln Museum. The exhibit will examine Lincoln’s Constitutional issues. The Lincoln Museum will submit a request for ALBC endorsement as a national traveling exhibit. Ms. Flinspach will recommend that the exhibit travel to all presidential libraries.

The Penny

Dr. Bandler met with Joe Pinder of the Finance Committee who drafted legislation for us. Congressmen LaHood and Jackson introduced the penny bill in the House. Senators Durbin and Bunning will introduce the bill in the Senate today (see attached). Our bill may piggyback on Congressman Castle’s (Delaware) to create a new issue of presidential silver dollars. Mr. Bishop hopes that the bill will pass this year. Dr. Bandler stated that a series of four new images will reflect Lincoln’s residence in Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, and Washington, D.C. The Lincoln Memorial will be replaced by an image emblematic of Lincoln as savior of the union. Dr. Boritt expressed disappointment at being left out of discussion due to his absence from the office. He noted that nothing is associated more with Lincoln than Gettysburg. Mr. Holzer asked that Commissioners let Mr. Bishop know when they cannot be reached.

Status of Funds

Mr. Bishop stated that he will be hiring a public relations manager. He has received many resumes but will also welcome suggestions from the Commissioners. Dr. Bigham requested that Commissioners receive a copy of the job description. Mr. Bishop planned to distribute financials at this meeting, but the fax was not readable. He will send financials via email. Chief Justice Williams shared that, as Budget Committee Chair, he is working with his budget director on a revised format that reflects general accounting principles. Chief Justice Williams stated that we have to look at funds raised, funds appropriated and funds received. Dr. Bandler requested that the Public Relations hire be coordinated with the strategic planning process.

PROJECT MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Williams stated her report addresses projects underway and will grow once the strategic plan is in place. She reported that a Memorandum Of Understanding is in process with both the Department of Education and the NEH. The NEH wants additional information, and the Department of Education wants more detail about planned projects. In response to Judge Turner's question regarding coordination with the National Park Service, Dr. Bigham stated that the Education Committee and the States Liaison Committee are coordinating with the Lincoln Site Superintendents. Mr. Bishop shared that the Director of the NPS will attend the next meeting. Mr. Bishop said that the ALBC has established contact through Dr. Bigham's direction; however, he thought that communication might be strengthened. Mr. Holzer suggested that one representative site director attend a future Commission meeting. Mr. Bishop will follow up and provide a list of sites. Diane Liesman stated that the Commissioners also should meet with the Secretary of the Interior.

Ms. Williams shared that Mr. Bishop soon hopes to have a memorandum of understanding with the NEA for the musical and art projects. Mr. Bishop reported that he has had successful meetings with those funding the "We The People" projects.

Mr. Bishop commented that the George Washington documentary he distributed for preview was an example. He urged that our production would bring Lincoln up to the present and add verve. Ms. Flinspach added that the National Constitution Center has a contract with the History Channel to produce a television series on Lincoln. Dr. Boritt commented that the History Channel productions are not always of the best quality. Ms. Flinspach will keep the Commission informed about the NCC's project. Mr. Holzer is exploring possibilities with CSPAN.

Before continuing with the meeting agenda, Chief Justice Williams complimented Dr. Bigham and Mr. Holzer on their outstanding presentations at the Colloquium. Dr. Bigham asked whether or not papers given by Commissioners would be added to the ALBC web site and added that he thinks Chief Justice William's *Lincoln Herald* column should be added to the web site. Dr. Boritt moved that we publish the Commissioners' written work on the ALBC web site. Mrs. Ryan seconded the motion. It was approved. Mr. Holzer suggested that Chief Justice Williams' last two issues of *Lincolniana* be added to the web site.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The proposal from classroom teacher James Percoco has been reviewed by Dr. Bigham and Bill Bartelt, a high school teacher, and Elaine Reed, Executive Director of the National Council for History Education. With the assistance of Mr. Holzer and Dr. Boritt, the Gilder Lehrman Institute will fund this project for one year with follow-up funding possible. Mr. Bishop and Ms. Williams will be working with Gilder Lehrman on implementation. Mr. Holzer said that Gilder Lehrman was impressed with the work to formulate curriculum materials and cited this as a pilot program. Mr. Holzer asked for a motion to move forward on these projects (see attached Education Committee Report). Chief Justice Williams so moved. Dr. Bandler seconded the motion. Dr. Bandler added

that Gilder Lehrman has not only offered funding but also serves as a resource. The motion carried.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Holzer read an email message (attached) from Dr. Horton expressing enthusiasm from people in Munich and Salzburg about an international Lincoln conference. Dr. Horton suggests that the Commission “immediately begin to form the international partnerships” necessary to produce such a conference. Chief Justice Williams so moved. Judge Turner seconded the motion. The motion carried. Dr. Boritt suggested approaching others. Mr. Holzer inserted that Gilder Lehrman expressed interest in Dr. Boritt’s proposal of having Lincoln’s words translated into multiple languages. We hope they will move forward with financing. Ms. Flinspach echoed Dr. Boritt’s comment about other places saying that diversity is critical.

MANDATE COMMITTEE REPORT

Coin

Dr. Bandler asked that new ideas go through the committee and then the committee will bring the ideas to the Commissioners. She said that the committee will try to make sure everyone has a voice in the discussion. Dr. Bandler reported that there will be no progress on the commemorative coin in this session. Mr. Bishop hopes to have the commemorative coin bill introduced in January. Ms. Liesman stated that Congressman LaHood will introduce the bill, but the Speaker will have to help.

Stamp

Mr. Bishop said, as of today, there is no progress on a commemorative stamp. He and Ms. Williams are in regular contact with the Post Office. Dr. Bigham said the 1959 Commission encouraged stamps be issued by other countries. Mr. Holzer added we could do this through the NGO. We could also take a proposal to the UN. Dr. Bandler will work with Mr. Holzer on this. Dr. Horton should participate in this, also.

Lincoln Memorial

Dr. Bandler asked if the MOLLUS organization had been contacted. She said we need to think about the themes for this celebration – Lincoln, Civil Rights and Union. Mr. Holzer said the record should show that we faxed Senator Durbin and Congressman LaHood our concerns about the memorial. Mr. Bishop confirmed that they wrote a letter to the Park Service with no response to date; however, the latest Interior Appropriations Bill did note the re-inking of the lettering on the Memorial.

Artifacts

Dr. Bandler shared that the Commission agreed to use the ALBC web site to provide interested museums space to solicit for Lincoln materials as loans or gifts. The committee surveyed Iris LaRue, Tom Lonnberg and Carolyn Texley--gaining suggestions of appropriate museums and definitions of Lincoln artifacts. Mr. Holzer suggested we include artifacts held by local societies. Dr. Bandler suggested offering logos, etc., to encourage people to donate Lincoln items to museums. Mr. Bishop asked whether the Commission is soliciting an inventory. Ms. Flinspach answered that The Lincoln

Museum wants to create a national database of 3D Lincoln items. Dr. Bandler stated that the Commission will be soliciting knowledge of what Lincoln materials museums have and what they might want to have. The next steps are to revise the questionnaire, identify museums and send the questionnaires.

Congressional Session

Dr. Bandler stated that there was nothing to report under Congressional Session.

PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Flinspach asked for input on the two new projects submitted with her report (see attached.) Dr. Bandler thought that newspapers could reprint Lincoln's speeches on the appropriate dates with corporate sponsorship. Dr. Boritt added that local papers want information to publish. Mr. Holzer suggested that an email blast be used. Ms. Flinspach responded that she would adapt the report to reflect that. Mr. Holzer suggested asking newspapers to print a column on "This Lincoln Day in History."

With reference to the African American documentary that Dr. Horton was enthusiastic about, Mr. Bishop stated that a decision would have to be reached as to whether to air it on PBS or BET. Dr. Bigham suggested that the African American piece be a subset of the Lincoln documentary, Abraham Lincoln in American Memory. Mr. Bishop added that PBS does not have a diverse audience. Mr. Holzer suggested that another way to reach this audience might be through Oprah Winfrey. Jim Thompson's firm represents her, so Mr. Holzer will approach him about this idea. Commissioners agreed with Dr. Bandler's suggestion of adding athletes, singers and others with the overarching theme of freedom. Chief Justice Williams reminded Commissioners that we planned to use sports figures, etc., to communicate the "Lincoln Moments." Mr. Holzer suggested adapting the Lincoln Moment by using children's voices reading some letters to Lincoln similar to the letters posted in The Lincoln Museum's permanent exhibit. Mr. Holzer stated that we must engage the African American community.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Boritt stated there was nothing to report.

STATES LIAISON

Dr. Bigham reported that Kentucky and Indiana are actively planning activities. Chief Justice Williams reported that Rhode Island has a state Commission and the Illinois committee is going to be directed by the new Presidential Library and Museum. Dr. Bigham noted that Indiana is moving ahead with a consortium of not-for-profit groups.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NPS Project

Dr. Bigham urged the endorsement of the reconstruction of two residences near the Lincoln home to restore the neighborhood where Lincoln lived. Ms. Flinspach so moved. Mr. Bishop shared that Senator Durbin has secured the funding. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Strategic Planning

Mr. Bishop shared that he and Ms. Flinspach have had numerous discussions about strategic planning. He said that Dr. Bigham referenced the Lewis and Clark web site designed by the Metropolitan Group as exemplary. Mr. Bishop said that he and Ms. Williams asked the Metropolitan Group to take them through a two-day workshop. He recommends that we hire them to develop a strategic plan, a marketing/communications plan, and web site enhancements. Mr. Bishop learned that when the total amount of a contract does not exceed \$100,000, we can send an RFP to three firms and make a competitive decision. Mr. Bishop's goal is to have a complete strategic plan by Lincoln's birthday 2005. The process of planning would include direct involvement of the Commissioners, outreach by email and at least one strategy session.

He stated he would like to have the authority to make the decision about which firm best meets our needs. Dr Bigham expressed that the proposal acted upon should include a budget and a timetable. Dr. Bandler stated that if the Commission votes to give Mr. Bishop the authority to decide, she would like a summary documenting how the decision was made. Dr. Bandler also requested that Mr. Bishop probe the fact that the firm's work experience has been primarily in the West and Midwest. Mr. Holzer asked the consultants be urged to think nationally when discussing marketing and PR. Mr. Bishop stated that fundraising will not be part of the contract. Mr. Holzer stated the motion before the Commission was to authorize the executive director to hire a firm to formulate a strategic plan and enhance the web site on a fast track competitive basis. Ms. Flinspach so moved. Chief Justice Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- November 29 – New York summit meeting with consultant, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Metropolitan Museum of Art
- Latter part of February to meet about the strategic plan
- Tentatively April 15, 2005 in Springfield, IL
- Summer – Washington
- Mid-October 16, 17, 23 or 24 at the Lincoln Boyhood Home

Mr. Holzer called for a motion to adjourn. Dr. Bigham so moved. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.