

Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission
Meeting #16, October 31, 2005, 1:30 p.m.
Conference Room of Senator Richard Durbin, U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C.

Present were Dr. Jean Bandler (on phone), Dr. Darrel Bigham (on phone), Dr. Gabor Boritt, the Hon. Richard Durbin, Ms. Joan Flinspach, Mr. Harold Holzer, Dr. James Horton, the Hon. Ray LaHood, Mrs. Lura Lynn Ryan (on phone), the Hon. Tommy Turner, the Hon. Frank Williams (on phone), Mr. Michael Bishop, Executive Director, Ms. Jackie Williams, Development Director, Ms. Jennifer Rosenfeld, Program Director, Genevieve Courbois, Assistant Program Director, and Roberta Schutz, Administrative Assistant. Congressional staff included Mr. Pat Souders from Senator Durbin's office, Ms. Diane Liesman and Joan DeBoer from Congressman LaHood's office, Mr. Kenneth Edmonds from Congressman Jackson's office, Amy Oberhelman from Senator Richard Lugar's office, Hedrick Belin and Maria Elena Campisteguy from the Metropolitan Group were present as fund-raising and marketing consultants.

Congressman LaHood chaired the meeting calling it to order at 1:30 p.m. He asked for approval of the minutes from the June 6th meeting. Judge Turner noted that his display of an option being considered for the Kentucky Lincoln Bicentennial Commission logo at the end of the June meeting was introduced for humor. He then moved for approval of the minutes and Dr. Horton seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Executive Director's Report

Congressman LaHood asked Mr. Bishop to present the Executive Director's report. Mr. Bishop introduced new staffers, Genevieve Courbois and Roberta Schutz. He noted that he has conducted numerous interviews for the Communications Director position and has more candidates to interview. The co-chairs will also participate in this hire. Mr. Bishop updated the Commissioners on the major activities of several projects. The potential venues for the Library of Congress traveling exhibit include the New York Historical Society, the Newberry Library in Chicago, the Huntington Library in Los Angeles, and possibly a location in the South. Dr. Horton suggested that the African American Museum in Boston be considered. Kunhardt Productions has submitted a proposal to create the documentary. The National Endowment for the Humanities deadline for proposals is November 3rd. Mr. Bishop's update on the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History Box noted that a prototype is being produced and will be made available to us for our use. As for the sculpture garden project, Mr. Bishop and Ms. Rosenfeld have met with officials from the District of Columbia to begin discussions about possible locations. The Commission now has a contact with the National Park Service who can assist us with most of the NPS projects, Ms. Laura Feller. Mr. Bishop praised the progress that the staff has made in creating the Governors' Council; 23 states are planning to share in the celebration. He asked the Commissioners to look over the list of states that are not yet participating and to assist in involving the other 27 states.

Mr. Bishop noted the progress on fund raising. The case statement is complete and the brochure is almost done. Members of the Lincoln Bicentennial Cabinet are being identified and recruitment is underway. Prospect identification, cultivation and solicitation are underway. Dr. Horton asked the Commissioners if anyone objected if he contacted Disney Corporation regarding its support of our activities. No one objected. The event in February is outlined in Mr. Bishop's report, and he encouraged the Commissioners to assist with fund raising. Mr. Bishop brought the Commissioners up to date on the branding of the Bicentennial. He noted that a preliminary meeting has been held with Terry McDermott from the National Council of Realtors and that the next step may be to ask him to serve as a Lincoln Bicentennial Cabinet member. The Commission has retained Metropolitan Group to create a brand, logo and tagline. To end his report, Mr. Bishop briefly outlined the activities of the February meeting (see schedule attached to his report) complete with a donor cultivation event featuring Liam Neeson as Abraham Lincoln with Harold Holzer as a narrator in Mr. Holzer's presentation of the Lincoln Family Album. The next steps for the staff include continuing donor recruitment, additional program development and refinement, and a visit to the Birthplace National Park in Kentucky on November 4th to plan for the February 12th, 2008 kickoff event.

Mrs. Ryan joined the meeting on the phone during Mr. Bishop's updates.

Programs Report

Congressman LaHood asked for questions regarding Mr. Bishop's report. There being none, he requested that Ms. Rosenfeld give the Programs Report. She noted that the Education Committee has met regularly and set a goal, "to ensure that the education activities celebrating Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday are useful to students and faculty, supportive of scholarly research, and help shed new light and interest on Lincoln and his world." High school lesson plans are under development with the goal of being completed in 2006 and placed on-line for teachers' use. The library initiative for youth is being planned by ALBC staff and the Association of Library Service to Children—a division of the American Library Association. Recruitment for the Speakers' Bureau and Writers' Corner has started. A list of participants to date is attached. The Organization of American Historians partnership is progressing. This organization has agreed to feature Lincoln in one issue of the *OAH Magazine*, and its staff has added Abraham Lincoln as a topic of its Speakers' Bureau. Some commissioners are listed as speakers there. The Education Committee's next steps are to review a proposal from National History Day and to set up a working group to plan the international conferences. Dr. Bigham noted here that the Association for the Study of African American History and Life be contacted with a proposal to co-host a conference on Lincoln in African American Memory. The staff is also developing a proposal for a panel to present at the 2007 OAH conference. Dr. Bigham reminded the Commissioners that events are being planned for the Boyhood Home in Indiana and for Gettysburg in 2008. He also recommended a conference call be held in the next week to discuss whether the Salzburg Institute would be a partner for the war, race and remembrance conference. Lastly he noted that discussion of a national conference on Lincoln's legacy possibly in January 2009 be held at Gettysburg and aimed at elementary and secondary teachers.

Ms. Rosenfeld noted the goal of the Public Participation Committee—to ensure that the participatory activities celebrating Abraham Lincoln’s 200th birthday are inviting, inclusive, and as comprehensive as resources allow. Mr. Bishop noted the progress with the Library of Congress traveling exhibition in his report. Ms. Rosenfeld reported that this committee has had extensive discussions regarding the Lincoln Memorial Rededication. From these discussions it has created an outline of activities to be presented to an events producer when selected. Dr. Bandler has created a committee approved outline for the format of the National Town Hall program. As mentioned in Mr. Bishop’s report, Ms. Rosenfeld reiterated that 23 states have liaisons appointed to the commission. The committee’s next steps are to work with the Library of Congress to discuss education collaborations, to finish developing a resource guide for state and local commemorations, and to fill the remaining 27 state liaison appointments.

Ms. Rosenfeld informed Commissioners that the Public Awareness Committee’s goal is to make the Lincoln Bicentennial a household name. The penny redesign has passed the House of Representatives and awaits a vote in the Senate. Congressman LaHood has added 5 more sponsors to the Commemorative Coin act. Congressman Jackson is developing a “Dear Colleague” letter to gather more sponsors. The staff is working with the Congressional Humanities Caucus to garner additional support. Mr. Bishop provided much of the update on the television documentary in his report. The next steps are to further the sponsorship of the Commemorative Coin proposal and to begin outreach to established celebrations to incorporate a Lincoln element into them during 2009.

The Legacy Committee’s goal, also a part of Ms. Rosenfeld’s report, is to ensure that the celebration has life beyond 2009. Mr. Bishop announced that Mrs. Taper has resigned as committee chair. He announced that Ms. Flinspach was considering taking on the leadership of this committee, provided she would be allowed to resign from the Education Committee and provided that no other Commissioners objected if she chaired two committees. Ms. Flinspach requested the approval of the co-chairs. They did not object. Ms. Rosenfeld noted that the staff has met with the DC Commission on Arts and Humanities regarding possible locations for the sculpture garden. The committee has approved guidelines for the Bicentennial Medallion program and that (SOS) Save Our Sculptures has been identified as a partner for the preservation of Lincoln public art. The committee’s next steps are to work with DC officials to locate the sculpture garden, review the Save Our Sculptures proposal and to select a foundry to produce commemorative medallions per the strategic plan.

Senator Durbin and Chief Justice Williams (on phone) joined the meeting during this report.

Development Report

Mr. Belin, of Metropolitan Group, fund-raising counsel, presented the Development Report. Progress has been made in securing a fiscal partner to provide us with the nonprofit status necessary to raise funds. The National Park Foundation has been identified as a potential partner and negotiations are underway with them. Dr. Bandler asked if the fee for providing this service has been ascertained yet, and Mr. Belin

responded that that information has not yet been decided. Names have been selected (although more can be added) for the Lincoln Bicentennial Cabinet. Recruitment materials are being developed and approaches are underway. Prospect research is underway with capacity to give \$100,000 over the life of the Bicentennial and an interest in Abraham Lincoln as factors. Donor cultivation will be next. Gift solicitation, donor benefits and follow-up are subsequent steps. Congressman LaHood asked for questions. Ms. Flinspach asked if any Cabinet members have been appointed yet. Mr. Bishop indicated that the team was close to asking Mr. McDermott. Dr. Bandler urged all the Commissioners to help with fund raising and asked, if in a competitive setting, funders tended to choose between projects or expand their funding. Mr. Belin responded that for one-time occasions such as the Lincoln Bicentennial, they tended to expand their giving. Judge Turner noted that our competition will be felt within the Lincoln states of Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois where projects are also underway. Mr. Holzer asked if the Development Plan called for a grassroots campaign. Mr. Belin answered that that campaign will begin in February 2008. Ms. Flinspach recommended that the federal ALBC partner with the Lincoln states on projects that might be considered competitive and make the “ask” together. Dr. Horton asked if additions could be made to the “hot list.” Mr. Belin urged the Commissioners to do so and to give additional information to Jackie Williams.

Unfinished Business

Congressman LaHood called for Unfinished Business. Ms. Campisteguy from Metropolitan Group presented options for a logo and tagline. Discussion centered on the tagline. Ms. Flinspach presented concerns that the “Live the Legacy” tagline did not mesh with the Commissions’ emphasis on the “unfinished work.” Ms. Campisteguy urged consideration of options 1 or 2, because option 3 (all attached to the minutes) will not reduce well due to the amount of text on it. Dr. Bigham indicated that he preferred option 3. Dr. Horton strongly urged the use of the word, “freedom” if not in the tagline, then incorporated into additional text whenever possible. Mr. Holzer gave an example that on letterhead a Lincoln quotation could be used, but not as a part of the logo. Dr. Boritt suggested that such a quotation could be, “a new birth of freedom.” Congressman LaHood asked whether anyone wanted to vote on this decision or whether it should be made by consensus. It was agreed that the consensus of the Commission was to use Option 1 with the brand message using “freedom.”

Congressman LaHood moved to the next topic under unfinished business, the Gilder Lehrman Education box. Mr. Bishop noted that the Education Committee will have a proposal for the Commission’s consideration at the February meeting.

New Business

Congressman LaHood brought up New Business. A proposal from the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War was presented for endorsement. After brief discussion Mr. Holzer moved and Dr. Horton seconded the motion to endorse this proposal (attached to minutes). Congressman LaHood asked for the vote and the motion carried. Another proposal for a bicycle and automobile trail through the Lincoln States was discussed. It was moved to approve this with no obligation for funding by Judge Turner, and Dr.

Horton seconded it. Dr. Bigham raised concerns about the automobile part of the proposal noting that an automotive trail already existed and a second one could be confusing. Dr. Horton amended the motion to exclude the automobile portion of the proposal, and it was seconded. The motion carried.

Mr. Bishop noted the proposed dates for the Spring meeting at the Boyhood Home in Indiana and asked the Commissioners to respond with information regarding what date works best for them.

Congressman LaHood adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan L. Flinspach,
Secretary