

Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission
Meeting # 3, February 12, 2002, 11:30 a.m.
In the Members' Room at the Library of Congress,
Washington, D.C.

Present were Dr. Jean Bandler, Dr. Darrel Bigham, Dr. Gabor Boritt, Hon. Richard Durbin, Joan Flinspach, Dr. James O. Horton, Harold Holzer, Hon. Ray LaHood, First Lady Lura Lynn Ryan, Hon. James Thompson, Hon. Frank Williams and Jackie Williams, Interim Director of the ALBC. Congressional staff included Diane Liesman, and Joan Mitchell with the Hon. Ray LaHood's office; Mark Palmer and Pat Souders from the Hon. Richard Durbin's office. Kim Taylor attended the meeting on behalf of the Hon. Jim Bunning. Carrie Apostolou, Clerk of the Senate Subcommittee on Legislative Branch Appropriations of the Appropriations Committee was present. Susan Cavanaugh of Mrs. Ryan's office and Doug Richardson from Governor Thompson's office attended.

Harold Holzer, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. He was presiding for Senator Durbin, who was delayed. Mr. Holzer welcomed everyone and introduced guests, John Webster from the Library of Congress. Other guests participating later in the meeting included members of the public relations firm, Jasculca/Terman and Associates Inc., Meg Williams and Emily Vartanian from the Library of Congress Legal Counsel's office.

Mr. Holzer asked for approval of the minutes from previous meeting on November 19, 2001. Chief Justice Williams moved that the minutes be approved as presented. Dr. Boritt seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Mr. Holzer asked Ms. Flinspach to give the report from the Search Committee. Ms. Flinspach noted that all the advertising has been placed and resumes are being received. A matrix has been constructed for Search Committee members to track the skills and qualifications of candidates. Mr. Holzer asked how many resumes have been received to date. Ms. Flinspach estimated 14. Congressman LaHood asked how the committee would proceed. Ms. Flinspach explained that the Search Committee would evaluate resumes, select top candidates for conference call interviews and, from those interviews, arrive at a slate of semi-finalists who would then be interviewed in person. Congressman LaHood asked if the committee intended to present one recommendation to the Commission or more than one finalist. Chief Justice Williams said that the committee would present a slate of finalists to the Commission to meet and interview. Congressman LaHood agreed that this would be a good approach. Ms. Flinspach told Congressman LaHood that the Search Committee welcomed the role the Commission wants to play in making the final decision. Mr. Holzer recommended that Ms. Flinspach contact James Robertson who was the second Executive Director of the Civil War Centennial celebration. Mr. Robertson can share his knowledge of the skills needed to carry out this job.

Mr. Holzer asked Ms. Williams to present her Interim Director's report. Ms. Williams noted that this report was attached and had been sent out in advance. See attached copy. She passed along Judge Turner's regrets that he was unable to join us for this meeting. Mr. Holzer advised Ms. Williams to begin a search for a domain name for the website. Mr. Webster commented that it might be easier to claim the name we want using the "dot gov" ending to the domain name rather than "dot org." Dr. Boritt asked a question regarding the budget (a part of Ms. Williams's report) noting that we are using a large portion of our budget for operating costs and not for projects. Ms. Williams explained that a number of the costs in the budget are start-up costs and one-time expenses.

Under Unfinished Business, Mr. Holzer asked for volunteers to serve on the Fund Raising Committee. Dr. Bandler suggested that we consider awarding challenge grants rather than funding entire projects. Dr. Horton agreed to consider a position on this committee.

Mr. Holzer led a discussion of subcommittees of the Projects Committee. Suggested subcommittees include Publications, State Liaison, Public Outreach and Education. Dr. Bigham and Dr. Horton discussed the differences between a Public Outreach subcommittee and an Education subcommittee. Dr. Bigham volunteered to serve on the Education Subcommittee. Mr. Holzer suggested that the Commission eliminate the Projects Committee as a whole, focusing instead on the project-specific committees listed above and others as needed. Dr. Horton moved that this action be taken and Dr. Boritt seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Chief Justice Williams commented on the need for an International Committee. Dr. Boritt volunteered to chair such a committee because the proposal that he has presented to the Commission for consideration is international. Dr. Horton stated that he would like to co-chair this committee with Dr. Boritt.

Mr. Holzer asked for volunteers for a Budget Committee. Ms. Flinspach and Chief Justice Williams volunteered. The co-chairs will also serve on this committee.

Senator Durbin introduced members of the Jasculca/Terman public relations firm from Chicago. Mr. Jasculca introduced his staff—Jan Kostner, Moira Daly, Mary Patrick, Shannon Guinn and Judy Slotnik. He made a formal presentation following the outline of an attached proposal sent to the Commissioners before the meeting. The presentation included videotaped comments by high school students about Abraham Lincoln. Following Mr. Jasculca's comments, Senator Durbin stimulated discussion by asking the Commissioners to consider what our legacy will be. Dr. Boritt remarked that he believed we should influence American culture. Dr. Horton observed that our role could be to enable others to finish Lincoln's journey—look where Lincoln was going. Dr. Bigham prioritized that first we should look at the mandates in the legislation, secondly we should extend the life of the commission, thirdly we should examine the projects in the appendix of this meeting's materials (attached), and fourthly, we should examine why Lincoln is relevant to us in our times. Mr. Holzer noted that in the video, the high school students did not use the words of Lincoln and that we should promote that vision. Dr. Bigham

recommended that our legacy should segue into the sesquicentennial of the Civil War. Ms. Flinspach urged that the Commissioners think in terms of making the documents and images of Abraham Lincoln universally accessible via the internet as our legacy. She equated this project to that of the Lincoln Centennial Commission which put Lincoln's image on the penny.

Senator Durbin brought the discussion back to the specifics of the Jasculca/Terman proposal by asking about the content of the website. Mr. Jasculca responded that asking Americans for their ideas of how to celebrate this historic event would be an element. A bibliography would be another element. He said that the website would grow and evolve. A webmaster will be needed to monitor it regularly.

Dr. Bandler liked the two-phase approach of the proposal; asked to add names to the national partner list; noted that she was not in favor of placing an educational center at the Lincoln Memorial; and inquired as to why the high school journalism competition would be this year. Mr. Jasculca answered that the journalism competition would be a media draw, would address one of our major audiences and build momentum. Ms. Flinspach suggested that the journalism competition could be adapted to an essay competition of younger children that would then be encouraged to continue learning about Lincoln during the years between the announcement and the celebration. We, and perhaps, the media could follow their progress.

Chief Justice Williams brought up the issue of a contract with Jasculca/Terman. It was the consensus of the Commission that the co-chairs should formalize this relationship. Congressman LaHood suggested that the soft launch be in Springfield. Mr. Holzer noted that Lincoln made his famous "House Divided" speech in Springfield in June and we could look at that date and location. Mr. Jasculca indicated that getting national media attention in Springfield could be a challenge. It was stated that if President Bush or Vice-President Cheney were at the event, the national press corps would be there. This idea received a positive response. Senator Durbin moved, and Governor Thompson seconded a motion that the soft launch will be held in Springfield in June. The motion passed. Mrs. Ryan asked that in addition to the soft launch date in June, Commissioners consider attending the opening of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library on or around November 19, 2002. She noted the scheduling conflicts this date presented for several of the Commissioners and said she would take that information back to her committee.

Meg Williams, Legal Counsel for the Library of Congress, was introduced and presented the Commissioners with information on the Ethics Rules that currently guide the Commission. Her presentation is attached. Several questions were asked throughout her report. After lengthy discussion, Senator Durbin recommended that Ms. Williams research ethics rules for other commissions and other entities in the legislative branch of government and bring those rules back to the Commission for consideration. If a different but existing set of rules could be found that better fit the Commissions' needs, Senator Durbin would be willing to take them to the Senate Ethics Committee to request adoption. Ms. Williams will report back to the Commission.

Mr. Holzer asked for a motion to go forward with the Advisory Committee. The present list can be amended as needed. Chief Justice Williams moved, and Dr. Horton seconded this motion. It passed.

Mrs. Ryan will check June 10th as a possible date for the next meeting to be held in Springfield in conjunction with the soft launch of the ALBC.

Many Commissioners had to leave to make travel connections, so the remaining items on the agenda were tabled until the next meeting. Mr. Holzer asked for a motion to adjournment. Dr. Bandler made this motion, and it passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan L. Flinspach
Secretary