

Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Meeting #35
Washington, D.C., Library of Congress, Jefferson Building, Whitall Pavilion
Monday, April 13, 2009, 10:30 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners present were Dr. Jean Bandler; Dr. Darrel Bigham (on phone); Mrs. Julie Cellini (on phone); Ms. Joan Flinspach; Mr. Harold Holzer (on phone); the Hon. Tommy Turner (on phone) and the Hon. (Ret.) Frank Williams (on phone). Ms. Jean Soman, Mr. Chuck Scholz, and Dr. Vernon Burton of the ALBC Foundation Board attended via phone. ALBC staff present included: Ms. Eileen Mackevich, Executive Director; Mrs. Jennifer Rosenfeld, Deputy Director; Mr. David Early, Communications Director; Ms. Sharon Cunningham, Accounting; Ms. Courtney Barefoot, Program Associate; Mr. Hasan Aloul, Program Associate; Ms. Teresa Caldwell, Town Hall Coordinator; Mr. Bryan Jack, newest ALBC staffer; Ms. Andrea Taylor, intern; and Mr. Suresh Venkitaraman, Administrative Assistant. Mr. Ned Bandler attended as a guest.

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Bandler chaired the meeting and called it to order at 10:34 a.m. Mrs. Cellini moved the approval of the corrected February 12, 2009 minutes and Mr. Holzer seconded the motion. It carried. The corrections were from Mrs. Soman, noting that, "A copy of Lincoln's photograph taken by her great grandfather Samuel Alschuler is in the Library of Congress exhibit. Her other great grandfather Colonel Marcus Spiegel was one of the highest ranking Jewish officers in the Union Army during the Civil War and he wrote more than 150 letters home during the war." Dr. Bigham noted that Ms. Mackevich, not Senator Durbin, responded that Dr. Burton will remain in charge of the University of Illinois computer center.

FINANCE REPORT AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

Dr. Bandler asked Ms. Mackevich and Ms. Cunningham to present the Finance Report. Ms. Mackevich deferred to Ms. Cunningham who gave the attached report with updates. The first update she distributed revised the information on the Town Halls. [It and all the updates will be mailed to the Commissioners not personally present at the meeting. All the updates will also be attached to these minutes.](#) Ms. Cunningham presented revisions to the Lincoln Memorial Rededication and Naturalization Ceremony. Ms. Mackevich stated that the Washington National Opera did not participate in this event due to an issue with its orchestra, hence the event is a great deal under budget. Ms. Cunningham noted that the budget would be revised again as additional invoices are received. On the Lincoln Memorial Breakfast, Ms. Flinspach commented that the tents were the greatest overage in estimated vs. real expenses and asked if they were indeed, heated. Staff responded that heaters were present. Under the appropriated funds report, Ms. Cunningham indicated that all of Mr. Aloul's compensation is now being paid with appropriated funds and that Mr. Bryan Jack has also joined the full-time staff to assist Mr. Early with Communications and the website. Ms. Mackevich thanked the Congressional Commissioners who enabled the passage of the full budget request of \$1,495,000 for 2009. Any unspent funds will carry over into fiscal year 2010 which will also aid the Commission's ability to complete its duties. Dr. Bandler requested a motion to accept the Finance Report. Ms. Flinspach so moved and Mrs. Cellini seconded the motion. It carried.

DISCUSSION

Dr. Bandler directed the Commissioners to the Areas of Discussion on the agenda. Since Dr. Burton had not yet been contacted to join the meeting, she asked that the discussion start with the organization, structure and content of the ALBC report to Congress. Dr. Bigham recommended that the report include research from the 1959 report and emphasize the Lincoln states. He suggested the following phases be part of the structure of the report:

- 2000-2002—the organizational phase
- 2003-2004—the preparing the interim report phase
- 2005-2006—the strategic planning phase
- 2006-sunset—revision of strategic plan, new executive director and implementation
- Evaluation—how did we meet our goals and objectives

He referred to the questions raised in the Executive Director's report on page 6; stating that they should be explored and answers included. Mr. Holzer stated that the report should record the interest-building events held during the organizational and planning phases. Ms. Mackevich will look at the use of these reports, our successes and failures, what would we do differently and the new audiences reached. Ms. Flinspach suggested that the outreach to new audiences was particularly relevant in building union, Lincoln gave his life to save the Union, building union, is furthering his work. Dr. Bigham added that the people involved from the Advisory Group to the State Liaisons and their work should be included. Mr. Holzer recommended that a committee be formed. Dr. Bandler agreed and asked Dr. Bigham to chair it. Mr. Holzer will speak to Senator Durbin and Secretary LaHood about it. Ms. Mackevich announced that Secretary LaHood must resign from the Commission due to a conflict between the Executive and Congressional branches of government. Dr. Bandler noted that the staff will have the editing and structural responsibilities. She asked Commissioners to let Ms. Mackevich know if they are interested in serving on this Final Report Committee.

By this time Dr. Burton had joined the call, so Dr. Bandler asked that discussion move to the growth and future development of the website. Mr. Early reported that the website had the highest number of hits of any website documented on Lincoln's birthday. Use continues to be high. Dr. Burton added that the University of Illinois will continue to provide technical support and will provide that support beyond the sunset of the Commission if selected to do so. He envisions the website as a democratization of Lincoln and suggested the following ideas as examples of how it could be shaped after 2010:

- Tour of Lincoln Sites by Lincoln Scholars
- Educational resource for the schools
- Electronic home for the digitization of Lincoln's papers
- A place to note international activities
- A study of how people learn

Dr. Bigham asked if we could imagine what technology will bring to life in 10 years. Ms. Mackevich stated that this was indeed a daunting question. She has been looking into projected costs of maintaining and continuing to expand the website and it will be expensive. Dr. Burton stated that his center works with the National Archives. Mr. Early stated that the U of IL center is the vanguard of computing. He listed criteria to be weighed by the Commissioners in selecting a permanent location, see p. 29 of the packets. He added that a location to host the website after the Commission's sunset should not dilute or absorb it into another website. Ms.

Flinspach commented that the Commission can't be binding the Foundation to the U of I. Dr. Burton offered to take any questions now or by email in the future. Hearing none, Dr. Bandler turned to the next topic on the agenda.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Prior to the Executive Director's report, Dr. Bandler asked that the Commissioners vote on any endorsements. Ms. Barefoot noted that we have been voting on these electronically and due to that efficient mechanism, we are up to date on these. Ms. Flinspach requested that Ms. Barefoot provide a breakdown of the endorsed activities by state in a map. She added that this would be an effective visual for the final report as it would provide a measure of the breath of the celebration.

Dr. Bandler asked Ms. Mackevich to present her report. Ms. Mackevich referred to the attached report and asked if there were any questions. She said that work is continuing on a land-grant college event to be held at U of IL or elsewhere in October. Dr. Bigham reminded the Commissioners of the role of Justin Smith Morrill of Vermont and asked that the Vermont State Historic Site be considered as a location for this event. Ms. Mackevich highlighted the work of Mr. Jack Kemp and the other members of the Abraham Lincoln Foundation Board. She believes that the Lincoln Douglass play, of particular interest to Mr. Kemp, will be presented this fall and asked the Commissioners to consider an event around the play that would recognize his contributions. The Commissioners agreed that she should continue to investigate this option.

Dr. Bandler asked Mrs. Cellini to present her report of the February 12 events in Springfield. Mrs. Cellini noted that her report had become so long that she decided to submit it in an email. [Staff will attach this email to the minutes.](#) Ms. Flinspach noted that the Illinois report should be added to the final report and those of any other states too.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Bandler asked Ms. Mackevich and Mrs. Rosenfeld to review the Public Programs report. Mrs. Rosenfeld presented a report on the birthday. Mr. Early added that on that morning, the website was receiving 22,000 hits per minute. Judge Turner noted the success of the Teach-In. Ms. Mackevich informed Commissioners that the Library of Congress had observed the outreach of the Teach-In and its success has spawned interest in doing one of their own.

Ms. Caldwell gave the Public Programs Town Halls report. She noted that she is still receiving feedback from the USS Abraham Lincoln Town Hall. The co-conveners of the Washington, D.C. Town Hall want to put together a conference as a part of their follow-up. Ms. Caldwell commented that response from the DC Town Hall included the observation that voting rights are rarely successfully discussed without a political context. She also updated panels and schedules for upcoming Town Halls. Ms. Flinspach requested that the effectiveness of the Town Halls be fully documented as this activity is the Commission's primary legacy for change. She also said she would like to see the Foundation take the Town Halls on for the future.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Bandler requested that Dr. Bigham present the Education Committee report. He quickly stated that the Bicentennial Schools certification program information needs to be emphasized. The Howard University Conference has 275 participants without students and is so full that some rooms may not hold all attendees. In addition to the scholarly panels, public

events are being held in the evening including the opening of an exhibit. All of the sessions will be taped and mounted on our website. C-SPAN is covering Friday's sessions. Dr. Bigham commented that the setting of this conference is an accomplishment of diversity. Mrs. Rosenfeld added that the attendees are coming from across the entire nation and that Dr. Edna Greene Medford said that the cross-departmental cooperation and participation at Howard has unified the campus.

Ms. Mackevich continued the report. She cited the work on the Oxford Conference. ALBC's role is to secure the keynote speaker and to assemble a Congressional panel. Roger Wilkins may participate. Mrs. Rosenfeld completed the report. Fifty states and seven nations took part in the Teach-In and lessons learned included dividing it into two levels in the future—an elementary level and an 8th grade level. Mrs. Rosenfeld recommends that the Teach-In be placed on the website and suggested that it could lead to future webcasts of greater specificity. Ms. Mackevich added that the Lincoln and Juarez program now wants to add a webcast.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Bandler asked Mr. Early if he had any information to add to the earlier discussion on the website. He announced that 430,000 of the Commemorative Coins have sold and that the Mint believed that 450,000 will have sold by today. The maximum return on this investment that we could receive would be \$5,000,000 less the expenses that the Mint would charge us. Since we have raised \$2,000,000 we are currently eligible for \$2,000,000 less expenses. Ms. Mackevich announced that the staff is continuing to submit proposals for funding including finding funding for the website as a legacy. Any subsequent funding can be added to our total for a greater return on the Commemorative Coin.

FURTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Bandler asked if there was further business. She commended the staff and our wonderful Executive Director for their dedication. Ms. Mackevich asked for thoughts and responses about having our next meeting in the Midwest during the second week of October. Dr. Bandler instructed the Commissioners to respond to this request in four days. They also need to check their schedules for a meeting in California in January.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Cellini moved and Ms. Flinspach seconded a motion for adjournment. The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan L. Flinspach
Secretary