

**Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission
Meeting # 5, September 23, 2002, 11:00 a.m.
In the LBJ Room of the United States Capitol,
Washington, D.C.**

Present were Dr. Jean Bandler, Dr. Darrel Bigham, Dr. Gabor Boritt, Hon. James Bunning, Hon. Richard Durbin, Joan Flinspach, Dr. James O. Horton, Harold Holzer, First Lady Lura Lynn Ryan, Mrs. Louise Taper, Hon. James Thompson, Hon. Tommy Turner, Hon. Frank Williams and Michael Bishop, Executive Director, and Jackie Williams, Staff of the ALBC. Congressional staff included Diane Liesman, and Joan Mitchell with the Hon. Ray LaHood's office; Pat Souders and Mark Palmer from the Hon. Richard Durbin's office. Susan Cavanaugh of Mrs. Ryan's office attended.

Mr. Holzer called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m. He informed the Commissioners that Congressman LaHood had had a death in the family and was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Holzer asked for approval of the minutes. Dr. Bigham moved this action, and Dr. Bandler seconded it. Motion carried.

Mr. Holzer asked for the Education Committee report first. Dr. Bigham, Chair of that Committee, reported that the minutes of the Committee's previous meeting were included in the Commissioners' binders. He said that the Committee had emailed since June and met this morning at 9:30 a.m. The Committee plans to submit recommendations in February. They are collecting recommendations from the following sources: past Lincoln celebrations, the website, the Commissioners, the Advisory Board, federal agencies, and national organizations. The Committee had drafted a mission statement, which Dr. Bigham submitted to the Commission for approval. Ms. Flinspach moved this approval, and Mrs. Ryan seconded it. The motion passed.

Mr. Holzer asked for the Search Committee Report. Ms. Flinspach noted that final interviews had taken place on June 10th with Senator Durbin, Mr. Holzer, Ms. Liesman, and Ms. Flinspach. From these interviews, Michael Bishop was selected as the recommended choice for Executive Director. His name was submitted to the Commissioners who responded via email selecting the recommended candidate. An offer was extended and Mr. Bishop began working for the Commission on August 12, 2002. Following this report, Mr. Holzer had the pleasure of presenting Mr. Bishop with his official written offer letter. Mr. Bishop accepted.

Mr. Holzer stated that this led us to the Executive Director's report. Mr. Bishop presented his report. He noted the funds that remain from the IMLS grant, announced that the staff moved into their permanent offices on the Friday before this meeting, and discussed the issues of working with the federal hiring process. Ms. Flinspach noted that the Search Committee wished to support Mr. Bishop's position in requesting a change in the ALBC legislation currently mandating that the staff be federal employees. Mr. Holzer added that Mr. Bishop and Ms. Williams did have temporary support staff.

The fourth item in Mr. Bishop's report also addressed the enabling legislation. He commented that we have a short time table to complete our report to Congress. In referring to the projects designated in the legislation, Mr. Bishop indicated that a commemorative coin might be a fundraiser. Dr. Bandler urged that the penny be kept and that we explore the idea of a commemorative coin. Mr. Holzer suggested the idea of different images on the back of the penny depicting defining moments in Lincoln's life. Senator Durbin encouraged us to look at the \$5 bill too. Mr. Holzer noted that the Lincoln image on it could be returned to the original image. Dr. Boritt raised the concept of a \$5 coin. Dr. Horton recommended that this issue be put on the website in order to solicit ideas from around the country. This prompted Mr. Bishop to note that the website was being rebuilt and that the new site would hopefully be up on October 15th.

There was little discussion about the stamp. Mr. Bishop raised the issue of the Lincoln Memorial. A proposal for a Lincoln Museum located underneath the Memorial was included in the meeting binder. He noted that there is no Lincoln Museum in the District and that the Old Soldier's Home is also being restored. Dr. Bandler asked about a cost estimate. Senator Durbin asked why was the National Park Service nervous about this proposal. Mr. Bishop responded that they were concerned about their growing costs and the reverence of the Monument itself. Mrs. Taper asked from where would artifacts be acquired. Mr. Holzer noted that the Jefferson Memorial's exhibit uses reproductions. Senator Durbin thought that the Smithsonian has items that could be used. He also raised the issue of how exhibitry is evolving and the roles of entertainment vs. education. Mrs. Taper responded that a balance between the interactive and the real is effective. Dr. Boritt urged that emphasis be placed on the Anderson Cottage or Old Soldiers Home. Mr. Bishop noted that he agreed with the importance of this structure. Dr. Horton encouraged that any study of it include transportation.

Chief Justice Williams joined the meeting at 11:47 a.m. The Commissioners took a brief break for a lunch buffet and rejoined with their meals at Noon. We returned to the issues in the Executive Director's report, addressing the three public relations proposals for a February event included in the Commissioners' binders. Mr. Bishop recommended hiring Susan Davis International. Her bid was the lowest. Mr. Holzer said that her work is well respected. Senator Durbin stated that he agreed and that so did Congressman LaHood. Senator Durbin referred the High School Essay contest to the Education Committee and Dr. Boritt suggested putting the Essay Contest on the website. Chief Justice Williams moved and Judge Turner seconded a motion to select Susan Davis International to plan the hard launch event of the ALBC in February. The motion carried.

In focusing the discussion on the February event, Mr. Bishop asked about the use of the Advisory Board. Senator Durbin said that it is to extend the reach of the ALBC, but that we cannot afford to underwrite their travel. He encouraged Commissioners to add more names and consider diversity. Governor Thompson arrived at 12:11 p.m. Mr. Holzer noted that the Advisory Board list is in formation. Mr. Bishop requested that Commissioners email him names. Chief Justice Williams asked if suggestions for February activities were in order. He suggested workshops and breakout groups. Mr. Holzer suggested asking Sam Waterston to read the Gettysburg Address. He noted that

the function of this event is to announce that we exist and that we have educational and scholarly activities. Dr. Horton said that the Advisory Board has some diversity. He recommended that Advisory Board members be invited using the ALBC letterhead to assist them in obtaining funding for travel from their own institutions. Lastly, he indicated that a public presentation with school groups would help us accomplish our event goals. Dr. Bigham reminded the Commissioners that the Education Committee will be surveying the Advisory Board for ideas and also put forth the idea of a panel discussion of the relevance of Abraham Lincoln today.

Mr. Bishop raised the issue of ethics and referred Commissioners to the Ethics Report in their binders. Governor Thompson's firm of Winston and Strong has volunteered to look into this for the Commission. They will be working with members of the Senate Ethics Committee to prepare Ethics Regulations to distribute to the Commission.

Mr. Holzer brought up the topic of future meetings. The next scheduled meeting is for Monday or Tuesday, February 10th or 11th in Washington, D.C. The question of meeting in November was raised. Chief Justice Williams stated that we could keep working through email and committees without meeting in November. Ms. Flinspach asked that the Staff and/or members of the Committee put together a strategic plan to use our meetings effectively and guide us toward production of the report to Congress. Dr. Bigham noted that there was a grid in the Commission Record, which would accomplish this. Mr. Holzer stated that we should let Mr. Bishop get his feet wet and look at the existing grid. Dr. Horton recommended a meeting for April 25 or 26th in Kentucky. Dr. Bigham noted that we also had an outstanding invitation to visit Southern Indiana and asked if they could be part of the same meeting. Chief Justice Williams stated that they were separate visits. Dr. Boritt reminded us to visit California. Senator Durbin said that we should invite regionally connected Advisory Board members when in their respective areas. Dr. Horton moved the above, and Dr. Boritt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Dr. Horton recommended that as Lincoln events occurred, we note them and funnel them to Mr. Bishop so that he is aware of Lincoln activities around the country. Dr. Bigham added that we include many of the upcoming sesquicentennial events. Judge Turner encouraged the promotion of the Abraham Lincoln sites. Mr. Holzer urged the other Committees to meet and plan. He then called for an adjournment motion. Chief Justice Williams moved this. The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Flinspach
Secretary