



**COMMEMORATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall Boston, MA, 02201

Held virtually via Zoom

JANUARY 16, 2024

Commissioners Present: Collin Knight, Cedric Woods, Michael Creasey, Carolyn Goldstein, Lynn Smiledge, Beth Prindle (David Leonard Alternate), Sam Tully-Chambers, Alison Frazee, Kristen Lafferty, Faries Gray, Liza Stearns, Amanda Zettel, Arthur Jemison, Rev. Mariama White-Hammond, Celia Richa, Nat Sheidley, Dr. Noelle Trent, Lydia Lowe, Dory Klein, Kara Elliott-Ortega, Juan Eusebio, Kyera Singleton, Joe Bagley, Byron Rushing, Bob Allison, Kenzie Bok, Jay Ash, Rosanne Foley, Jean-Luc Pierite, Council President Ruthzee Louijeune, Imari K. Jeffries (Segun Idowu Alternate), Juan Lopez, Senator Mike Rush, Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai, Amanda Zettel, Donald Wright (John Borders IV Alternate)

Commissioners Absent: Eric Hanson-Plass, Joan Ilacqua, Suzanne Taylor, Kimberly Barzola, Giordana Mecagni, Tatiana M.F. Cruz, Dave O'Donnell, Maureen Garceau

Staff Present: Genesis Pimentel, Commemoration Commission Manager; Murray Miller, Director of Historic Preservation; Sarah Lawton, Preservation Assistant; Thadine Brown, Director of Community Preservation; Gillian Lang, Historic Preservation Consultant in CPO; Karin Goodfellow, Director of Public Art

There were no members of the press present.

A full recording of the meeting is available on boston.gov/commemoration-commission

SESSION BEGINS - 6:00 PM

Director Murray Miller welcomed attendees, proposed adjustments to the agenda.

Commissioner Bob Allison made a motion to approve the adjustments. Commissioner Jay Ash seconded. None opposed. Motion was carried.

I. ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA

- a. Item 2: Discuss in more detail in Item 7
- b. Item 3: Proposing to Adjust Breakout Sessions from 30 min to 20 min with 4 people in each breakout room.
- c. Item 4: Reduce time allocation from 10 min to 5 minutes and move to after item 5
- d. Item 7: Add 10 minutes to Item 7B

II. ORDER OF BUSINESS



- a. Selecting a Chair: Murray Miller proposed that for this meeting, there would be an interim chair to allow for discussion of the Chair Selection process later in the meeting during Item 7. Murray asked if anyone would propose a motion to appoint Chief Mariama White-Hammond as interim chair. Jay Ash motioned to approve. Cedric Woods seconded. None opposed. Motion was approved.
- b. Interim Chair White-Hammond introduced herself and asked everyone on the call to introduce themselves, the work that people do, and their interest in the Commission.

III. INTRODUCTIONS

- a. Interim Chair White-Hammond facilitated the Introduction portion of the meeting, and the list of participants who introduced themselves can be found above in the “Commissioners Present” and “Staff Present” section of the minutes.
- b. Interim Chair White-Hammond facilitated the move into breakout rooms.

Due to time constraints, Interim Chair White-Hammond switched Agenda Item 4 and Item 5.

IV. REVIEW OF ORDINANCE

- a. Genesis Pimentel reviewed the ordinance that created the Commemoration Commission, highlighting the subcommittees, the goals of the Commission and subcommittees, and proposed topics for their first meetings.
- b. Interim Chair White-Hammond noted that proposals for meeting dates would be addressed and the question of whether people can be part of multiple subcommittees needed to be worked through. She opened the floor for questions and further discussions about the ordinance.
 - i. Commissioner Kenzie Bok discussed how during the creation of the ordinance, the thought behind subcommittees was to take this large amount of work and create dedicated work streams. She noted that all subcommittee meetings are open, so Commissioners can attend all but can also decide if it makes sense for people to decide to be “officially” members of more than one subcommittee.
 - ii. Interim Chair White-Hammond noted that Genesis Pimentel will be staffing all meetings but raised the question of if there was a desire for subcommittees to cross-pollinate and share resources. She expressed that it would be good to get things up and running and then worry about specifics.
 - iii. Commissioner Joe Bagley noted that it would be helpful to have the ability to reach out to other members in other subcommittees for resources.
 - iv. Commissioner Noelle Trent stated it would be good to know when other subcommittees would be meeting.



- v. Interim Chair White-Hammond suggested a newsletter or something similar that would collect the large amount of information that will be coming out of the subcommittee meetings.
- vi. Commissioner Alison Frazee asked how meetings will be advertised to the public and how will the public be engaged and heard.
- vii. Commissioner Imari Jeffries (Commissioner Segun Idowu alternate) asked about capacity and what is expected of Commissioners affiliated with organizations. He also asked if there were anticipated additional team members who would lend support to the subcommittees and their work or if that would be expected of the organizations.
- viii. Interim Chair White-Hammond responded that there isn't any explicit prohibition against organizational support or adding extra capacity. The goal moving forward is getting public engagement and moving along the things Commissioners want to do. She stated that she is trying to give staff capacity to work, trying to let the Commissioners lead, and recruit the public.
- ix. Genesis Pimentel noted that she has had a lot of community engagement and thinks a website for Commissioners might be good for organization and accessibility. She discussed public interest in a working group made up of the public.
- x. Commissioner Bok stated that she imagined that some of the sessions would be working sessions, so the public could watch the process and other sessions that are all about public testimony.
- xi. Commissioner Jeffries asked about how subcommittees would be staffed and what the capacity of staff would be to notetake, manage projects, and do follow up given how often the subcommittees are meeting and the amount of people in each subcommittee.
- xii. Interim Chair White-Hammond stated that Genesis Pimentel is the sole staffperson working on the Commission and subcommittees but depending on the scope of projects, the Commission would need additional capacity
- xiii. Commissioner Trent raised the issue that accessibility needs to be on the forefront of the Commission's work through the question of what the best mechanism for public survey and engagement is because there is a level of bias in not taking into account language barriers, literacy, and all workers' schedules. The Commission should find the best way to connect and solicit feedback.
- xiv. Commissioner Collin Knight asked about the process of inviting those who work in the fields the Commission will be engaging, such as BPS teachers, and if they should be mixed in with the public or if they should be engaged separately/in a different way, i.e. focus groups.



- xv. Interim Chair White-Hammond stated that the first question is: What is your first task? And the second question should be: Who are you engaging with to complete that task?

V. COMMUNITY PRESERVATION OFFICE INTRODUCTION

- a. Director of Community Preservation, Thadine Brown, and Historic Preservation Consultant, Gillian Lang, came into the meeting to give an overview presentation of the Community Preservation Office, the Community Preservation Act, and the work that their office has done so far. They also discussed the kind of work their office can fund.

VI. COMMISSION CHAIR/SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR SEARCH

- a. Interim Chair White-Hammond explained the leadership roles available and discussed the possibility of finding chairs by the next set of meetings.
- b. Genesis Pimentel added that it may be a good idea for people to write a paragraph stating their interest and intent in becoming a chair.
- c. Commissioner Bok stated that Interim Chair White-Hammond should still chair until there is an election for the official role and that the Chair should be a point-person to help put together agendas and work closely with Genesis.
- d. Commissioner Jeffries liked a co-chair model.
- e. Interim Chair White-Hammond stated the Commission should be intentional about diversity and asked for nominations.
- f. Commissioner Lydia Lowe liked the idea of self-nominating.
- g. Interim Chair White-Hammond decided people could self-nominate or nominate others by emailing Genesis Pimentel and that there should be a preference for a co-chair model for the Commission and the subcommittees.
- h. Commissioner Bok asked for a self-nomination deadline.
- i. Interim Chair White-Hammond proposed a deadline for nominations to be January 31, 2024.

VII. MEETING SCHEDULING

- a. Tried to schedule next meeting dates but did not have access to Zoom Polls, so the Commission will be scheduling the next meeting asynchronously online.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT - 8:20 PM

- a. Interim Chair White-Hammond adjourned the meeting.