

City of Keene
New Hampshire

MARTIN LUTHER KING, Jr. /JONATHAN DANIELS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

5:00 PM

Trustee's Room, Library

Members Present:

Derek Scalia, Chair
Melanie Everard (Late)
Ella MacDonald
Mandi Slate
Bill Hay, Vice-Chair
Yves Gakunde
Dottie Morris (Late)

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Director Parks & Rec

Others Present:

Emily Hague, Councilor

Members Not Present:

Karen Chabot

1) Call to Order and Roll Call -

Chair Scalia called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. Roll call was conducted. Chair Scalia welcomed Barbara Woods and Bob Sweet as guests.

2) Approval of Minutes – March 4, 2015

Councilor Hague made a motion to accept the minutes of March 4, 2015 with the following correction; remove Councilor Hague from Others Present. Ms. Slate seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3) Finance Report -

Mr. Bohannon reported the current balance is \$7,872.18. Mr. Bohannon reported the St. James Thrift Shop donation of \$750.00 has been accepted. He also noted the invitation/card that the Committee sent out is starting to become fruitful; four checks have been received totaling \$125. These donations will be presented at FOP Committee meeting next Thursday.

Ms. Slate made a motion to accept the Finance Report as presented. Councilor Hague seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

4) Welcome New Member-

Chair Scalia welcomed Yves Gakunde as a new member to the Committee; Mr. Gakunde was sworn in as a permanent member.

5) MONIFF Sponsorship –

Chair Scalia addressed the request (\$500) presented by Ms. Barakat at the last meeting; included as Page 6 in the packet. Councilor Hague asked if the Committee would still be recognized with the \$500 donation. Chair Scalia replied in the negative. Chair Scalia referred to the previous minutes pointing out they have already gone to print; therefore this Committee wouldn't even qualify for the half page ad. Chair Scalia reiterated the other options the Committee could be provided; as noted in the previous minutes.

Mr. Hay made a motion to grant the MONIFF request for \$500. Ms. Slate seconded the motion.

Chair Scalia commented he is not convinced this request falls within the Committee's mission. He pointed out this Committee will have no say about the award recipient, and will not be listed in the publications. This Committee will only be recognized during the actual award presentation and be mentioned on the webpage. Chair Scalia noted he would rather have seen this Committee be asked to help sponsor their film presentation/discussions program; which he thought was fantastic. Chair Scalia also recommended the Committee look long-term at its budget.

Mr. Bohannon provided the history of MONIFF's requests (3rd year) to this Committee for the new members. He recommended the Committee give heavy consideration to this request; pointing out the Committee is not really gaining anything from this sponsorship. He continued you are just giving money.

Mr. Gakunde asked if there was another way we can take advantage of this program. Chair Scalia referred to the previous minutes noting the Committee would have the option to distribute materials and setup a display. Ms. Barakat had also said there could be an opportunity for a Committee member to speak; Chair Scalia pointed out the logistics and that the event takes place in 15 days.

Councilor Hague suggested if the motion fails it would be important to communicate to the applicant the reasons why, and how we might reconsider in the future with different outcomes.

Mr. Gakunde asked if the request came in late because of us or them. Chair Scalia noted the applicant has been through this process before, they knew our guidelines. Chair Scalia also noted we did reach out to advise her (Ms. Barakat) of our guidelines. The application was received in February and placed on the March agenda for first reading per our guidelines.

On a vote of 7-0 the Martin Luther King, Jr./Jonathan Daniels Committee voted to deny the MONIFF request for \$500.00.

Chair Scalia will contact the applicant to advise them of the Committee's decision and to explain why/how this decision was reached.

6) New England Non-violence Communication Sponsorship –

Barbara Woods addressed her request (Page 7 in the packet) pointing out she is not asking for financial assistance from the Committee. Ms. Woods noted she is requesting non-monetary

Martin Luther King, Jr. /Jonathan Daniels Committee
April 1, 2015

sponsorship such as including the Committee name on flyers, emailing the final draft to an email list, and any other such promoting the Committee is able to do. Ms. Woods did discuss this event with the Committee at the last meeting. This event will take place June 6, 2015 at the Unitarian Universalist Church. Admission fees will be charged; \$85/day general admission, and \$65/day for sponsoring organizations. Ms. Woods reported any amounts earned over the maximum expenses will be donated to NENVC's parent organization, Institute for Peaceable Communities. Ms. Woods noted she would be happy to have a member of the Committee come to speak at the event. She would also be willing to distribute the Committee's flyer at the event.

Mr. Gakunde asked Ms. Woods if she was connected to any of the schools, Antioch or KSC. Ms. Woods replied she is not, but could. She and Mr. Gakunde will touch base after the meeting.

Chair Scalia advised Ms. Woods the Committee would vote on this application at the next meeting, May 6, 2015.

7) Keene Remembers Jonathan Daniels Update –

Chair Scalia reported this is the official name of the Colonial Theatre event developed by the St. James Committee. He reiterated Ruby Sales, Father Morrisroe, and Gloria Larry House will definitely be attending. Chair Scalia also reported that no response has been received from Senator Lewis. He noted that Larry Benaquist has updated the film so it will be shown in Blue-ray.

Mr. Bohannon reported there will be a sign posted at the Ashuelot River Park trailhead. Mr. Bohannon noted the woodworking was done by Peter Paonessa, of Keene Signworx. The ribbon cutting ceremony will also take place on this weekend (August 22-23). Mr. Bohannon will include the design/information in the next agenda packet for Committee review.

Ms. Morris reported although the students won't be here the college is thinking of how to tie in some things about Jonathan Daniels life, especially for the incoming students. Discussion continued with Chair Scalia suggesting they collaborate to see what groups will be here so that invitations can be sent out.

Chair Scalia commended KSC for the job they are doing pulling artifacts to put on display during Welcome Week.

Mr. Bohannon noted his discussions with Christine Weeks pointing out the website will be going away after a year. Mr. Bohannon commented on the amount of time and energy that went into this website; indicating he would hate to see it disappear. Mr. Bohannon recommended discussing with Ms. Spaulding the possibility of transferring some of that information over to the Committee's page on the City website. Chair Scalia agreed to bring the subject up with Pam Knight. Chair Scalia recommended this issue be placed on the next agenda for further discussion.

8) Fundraiser Update –

This issue was discussed under item #3) Financial Report.

9) Icons of the Civil Rights Movement - April 10th through May 10, 2015

Bob Sweet reported the exhibition opens on Friday, from 4 PM to 7 PM at the Historical Society. The artist will be speaking at 6 PM; the Historical Society will be providing refreshments. Mr. Sweet noted hundreds of invitations were sent out, and asked if Committee members received individual or a Committee invitation. Committee members noted they had not received individual invitations. Mr. Sweet also reported the group was unsuccessful in getting the artist on the radio. Mr. Sweet pointed out they have also tried to get the artist into the schools; the Committee meets tomorrow to work on last minute issues. Mr. Sweet noted the college has been very helpful. Pointing out this is the end of a two and a half year project Mr. Sweet thanked this Committee for helping to get it off the ground. Mr. Bohannon suggested Mr. Sweet contact Dan Mitchell during his Open Mic time; Councilor Hague also suggested calling Greg Pregent. In response to Ms. Everard, Mr. Sweet indicated the elementary schools had not been contacted. Ms. Everard suggested this would be a good fieldtrip for fourth and fifth graders. Ms. Everard will contact Nancy Ancharski who contacted the schools regarding this event. Mr. Sweet shared his experience while visiting Selma during Holy Week some years ago.

10) Future Events Updates -

Chair Scalia referred to the last meeting discussions, and noted the Committee should start collecting information on events for 2016 they think may be fruitful or viable. Ideas under consideration are as follows:

- Sandra and Rich Wallace's book "Blood Brothers" available for release in August 2016. The authors are interested in working with this Committee (book discussions). Chair Scalia agreed to contact Sandra Wallace.
- Ms. Morris is working on having Rev Dr. Amy Butler, the first female Pastor (NYC) address students sometime in the January-February timeframe. She may come to this Committee to ask for support in getting the word out. Ms. Morris will bring information to the next meeting for discussion.
- Ms. Morris reported 50 people from around the state met last Saturday to address statewide issues as they relate to social justice. The group plans to have a summit in October. Only 5 people from Keene were in the group and they are all from the college. Ms. Morris suggested it would be good to get more people involved. She indicated she would keep the Committee informed.

Mr. Bohannon agreed this was a good idea. He also reminded the Committee the Rec Center does have two vans available for transportation should the Committee want to attend these discussions.

- Public Art- Councilor Hague reported the Courthouse is out because it is owned by the County. Councilor Hague is still waiting to hear if the group would be interested in something for the Jonathan Daniels trail.
- Diversity/social justice in the schools due to racism in the Keene schools. Councilor Hague will provide the contact information for the person who approached her at the MLK Breakfast. Mr. Bohannon noted the programs that have been brought into the schools previously in the form of book readings/discussions. Ms. Everard indicated she would be

Martin Luther King, Jr. /Jonathan Daniels Committee
April 1, 2015

willing to help spearhead an event such as this. Chair Scalia also noted the growing concern with inequality in Keene that is creating a great amount of tension.

- Ms. Woods suggested community dialogue circles.

11) New Business -

1. Chair Scalia will contact Larry Benaquist for information regarding the quote Ms. Woods is trying to locate. He suggested it may have been on a t-shirt created by the Jonathan Daniels School. Chair Scalia agreed to share the information with the Committee via email.

12) Adjourn- Next meeting May 6, 2015

Chair Scalia adjourned the meeting at 5:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall
Minute Taker
April 2, 2015

Respectfully edited by,
Meghan Spaulding
Recreation Programmer
April 28, 2015