

Women of Virginia Commemorative Commission Meeting

Friday, June 26, 2015

Senate Room A, General Assembly Building,
Richmond, VA

Minutes

Members in Attendance:

Senator Whipple	Krysta Jones	Kitty Claiborne
Senator McDougle	Alice Lynch	Kathleen S. Kilpatrick
Susan Schaar	EJ Scott	Dr. Sandra Treadway
Secretary Nancy Rodrigues		

Senator Mary Margaret Whipple, Vice-Chair of the Commission, called the meeting to order. After each member was introduced, Senator Whipple recognized and welcomed Lillian Garland, a professional Elizabeth Keckley reenactor. Dr. Sandra Treadway then gave her report from the Subcommittee on Nominations for the Glass Wall. The first step of the process, setting the criteria for nominations, has been completed and approved by the Commission. Dr. Treadway then went on to explain that a database needs to be created in order to keep track of all of the names submitted, which the Senate Clerk's Office has already begun to compile and will be maintaining throughout the process. The second step of the process would be to ask for nominations to put into the database, to which a wide net would be cast in seeking these submissions. A form for nominations and a handout with information about the project was then passed around to members. This form would be intended for distribution to the public as well as posted on the Virginia Women's Monument website. The third step of the process would be to set deadlines for submissions: Dr. Treadway's initial thought was to ask for submissions by March 2016 during Women's History Month, but after some discussion it was decided that an initial deadline would be November 1, 2015 and a "last chance" push for submissions would be in March 2016.

Senator McDougle asked if there could be a way for individuals to view the list of those names already submitted so as not to repeat, or to add comments/support to a nomination already posted. Susan Schaar then expanded on that idea, proposing the idea of having a public forum for those who wish to come give nominations and remarks on those already nominated. Senator Whipple agreed that this was a good idea and suggested using Women's History Month as a good opportunity to schedule this gathering. Kitty Claiborne asked how we could better publicize the project and the opportunity for nominations. Alice Lynch directed everyone to the postcard that the Capitol Foundation drew up and has been distributing at various events.

Senator Whipple suggested publicizing the amount of names that will be available to be featured on the wall on any documents that are being distributed. Susan Schaar added that she had spoken with John Crank, and he said that 80-100 names per panel (with 4 panels total) would be the maximum number that would fit but 60-80 names per panel might look more elegant. This also drew discussion on how the names would be listed – members seemed to favor a chronological listing, but Senator McDougle cautioned that space should be left for those that might have been overlooked historically (new discoveries as time passes, etc.). Senator Whipple then said that 200 names should be advertised for nominations, as it will help people be more

selective about their submissions. Dr. Treadway asked that we share this list with her team of historical experts, then have the public forum in March, have the historians once more analyze the submissions, and then make the final decisions on the names. All names should be emailed to Maribeth Turner in Senate Committee Operations – names will be accepted even if they don't fit the criteria for length of time deceased as they will be considered for the future. Dr. Treadway asked who had already been voted on for the wall and at that point no one had been officially added to the wall. It was then moved and seconded that Pocahontas be added to the glass wall, and the Commission voted unanimously to do so. Alice Lynch said that she would send a press release with the nominations flyer and with the list of women that are being featured in bronze. Secretary Nancy Rodrigues added that she would reach out to NPR and AP News for statewide media interest efforts.

Alice Lynch then gave her report on fundraising, starting with the presentation of the postcards handed out earlier and that were also given out at Senator Whipple's event in Arlington earlier in May. Members suggested that the donation language be solidified on the card so people will understand the need for gifts. Alice said that the event allowed them to make several contacts in the Northern Virginia area, and several women have since offered to host like events at their homes. Alice then went on to list several donations that have been made to the Capitol Campaign project with special funds being designated for the Women's Monument specifically. One large gift that was given has led a grant to be matched, raising several hundred thousand dollars for the project. She feels confident from this one gift that other donors will see this and follow suit. She also explained that crowdfunding would not be a good idea to use as a tool until the closing of the project, as a point of strategy (crowdfunding had been suggested in the past as a way of involving the public in fundraising). Secretary Rodrigues asked that a list be provided with what has been pledged and what is actually in the bank. She wants to be able to show numbers to her fellow cabinet members for how much has been raised towards the overall goal. Alice explained that as a matter of discretion a lot of the "anticipated" gifts cannot be disclosed, but she did mention that a larger portion of the gifts have come from the efforts of members of the Commission.

Senator Whipple then looked to the members in attendance to share their reports of reaching out to their communities for interest in the project. Krysta Jones hosted a dinner for women leaders in the Arlington community that generated lots of interest and enthusiasm. EJ Scott spoke at several events in the Northern Virginia area, mentioning the monument and trying to encourage interest. Kathleen Kilpatrick mentioned that she had been talking to donors of past "like projects" – many out of state but still hopeful of their interest in giving. Secretary Rodrigues said that a Latino sorority at VCU has taken on the project as their fundraising initiative which will appeal to the grassroots side of the fundraising effort. Dr. Treadway gave a talk to the Richmond Chapter of the Virginia League of Women Voters and mentioned the monument and also made a contact with a reporter who she wants to reach out to for publicity. She also suggested using Women's History Month as a good time for "crowdfunding" and that nomination forms could be placed in the lobby of the Library of Virginia – Susan Schaar offered them to be handed out in the Capitol building too. There was discussion on various suggestions on how to publicize the project further ending with involving schools statewide in an essay writing exercise during Women's History Month. There was no member of the public who wished to comment, and the meeting adjourned at 12:03 PM.