

City of Keene
New Hampshire

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

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

5:00 PM

Trustee's Room, Library

Members Present:

Derek Scalia, Chair
Bill Hay, Vice-Chair
Yves Gakunde
Mandi Slate
Melanie Everard

Staff Present:

Meghan Spaulding, Recreation Programmer
Andy Bohannon, Director Parks & Recreation

Others Present:

Emily Hague, Councilor

Members Not Present:

Ella MacDonald
Dottie Morris

1) Call to Order and Roll Call -

Chair Scalia called the meeting to order at 5:09 PM. Roll call was conducted. Introductions were made for guests Bob Sweet and Rudy Fedrizzi.

2) Approval of Minutes – October 7, 2015

Ms. Slate made a motion to adopt the minutes of October 7, 2015 as submitted. Mr. Gakunde seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3) Finance Report –

Ms. Spaulding reported the current balance is \$7,703.06; no changes from the previous month.

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

4) Washington D.C. Trip – Andy Bohannon

Chair Scalia noted the Committee discussed this potential trip last month after Mr. Bohannon made the suggestion. Mr. Bohannon reported on a previous trip and the discoveries he made there (MLK Memorial). He confirmed the Rec Center does have two vans that could be used for the overnight (maybe two) trip. Mr. Bohannon continued participants would have to pay for their portion of the trip; the intent would be to see the MLK Memorial and the Jonathan Daniels sculpture. An alternative to taking the Rec Center vans is possibly partnering with the Cohen

Center; they sponsor a trip every spring for the students. Discussion continued with Mr. Bohannon noting for comfort in the vans he would suggest no more than 10 passengers (with luggage); pointing out eight passengers per van would be more comfortable. He also noted if there was a large interest hiring a tour bus is also a possibility; this would increase the cost. The trip would be open to Committee members first and then the general public. Mr. Bohannon also pointed out this would not be considered a quorum, per the City Attorney, as it is a field trip.

Chair Scalia asked the Committee if they were interested in pursuing the trip. Committee members agreed it was worthwhile to determine the cost and then put out feelers to see who was willing to go. Councilor Hague suggested putting it out to retirement communities around Keene. Mr. Bohannon will talk to Norma Jean Penny from the Cheshire YMCA regarding a similar trip they took several years ago. Chair Scalia agreed to work with Mr. Bohannon to explore the cost of the trip.

5) Our Kids Book Discussion Event – Rudy Fedrizzi

Chair Scalia noted previous Committee discussions regarding a community read focused on issues that Jonathan Daniels and Dr. King were passionate about. Chair Scalia asked Mr. Fedrizzi to discuss what is already in place (Healthy Monadnock 2020 and KSC), and what this Committee could potentially do.

Mr. Fedrizzi addressed the book commenting it is a great book, a hard read (400 pages), and also it is provocative and maybe depressing, along with being very apolitical. He reported the author, Robert Putnam, will be on the KSC campus March 25, 2016. Mr. Fedrizzi also noted KSC has other community read along opportunities coming up. Discussion ensued around the following topics:

- Could this be a good pairing between the Committee and the Monadnock Healthy Youth?
- The merits of the book and its relativity to the issues of income and inequality.
- Purchasing copies of the book.
- Breaking down the book for discussions/timeframe for events (January/February leading into the March event).
- How to play up the pairing of the Committee's work and the book.
- How this fits into the Committee's mission.
- Could the Library be one of the venues?

Mr. Fedrizzi suggested forming a small sub-committee comprised of members from both groups with a small budget. Mr. Hay and Ms. Slate agreed to serve on this sub-committee and provided Mr. Fedrizzi their contact information. Councilor Hague suggested keeping City Council members apprised of when these events are planned. Mr. Fedrizzi suggested the sub-committee could come up with themes relative to the book versus a chapter by chapter review that fit with the Committee's work.

Mr. Sweet also reported Claudia Rankine; author of "Citizen" will be at KSC in two weeks.

6) Membership –

Chair Scalia reported he reached out to those on his list and found that Wednesdays do not work for them. He reiterated the new member would fulfill the rest of Ms. Chabot's term. Councilor Hague noted Councilor Chadbourne's interest in the Committee. Mr. Bohannon suggested there may be interest amongst new City Councilors. Chair Scalia will contact the City Clerk's office to obtain contact information for Darryl Masterson and other candidates that ran for office. Ms. Spaulding will provide members the spreadsheet with member's terms. Discussion ensued regarding the student member position.

7) New Business –

1. Chair Scalia raised the suggestion of increasing voter turnout in honor of Jonathan Daniels that was discussed last month. Discussion ensued regarding the recent elections and the poor voter turnout. Chair Scalia noted this would be an apolitical campaign. The following is a list of comments and suggestions made by Committee members.

- Sport a sticker that says "I'm voting in honor of Jon".
- Do a campaign outside the MLK Breakfast to launch the initiative.
- How do we approach the young people? Motivate the 18 year olds in high school.
- Contact radio station about creating a PSA.
- Engage non-traditional students to do an infographic campaign on voting.
- Have a panel discussion with representatives from other countries. Contact the Partner City Committee regarding the Einbeck delegations return.
- Have someone get on the Dan Mitchell radio show to talk about this just before voting. Also utilize the KSC radio station utilizing a younger person (Mr. Hay will take care of this piece).
- Ask KSC to put in a plug for voting. Give students information on voting when they register for classes.
- Reach out to the KSC Democrat and Republican committees.
- Take out a large add with a three sentence statement (we are voting in honor of Jonathan Daniels...) signed by many people. Also make use of social media.

Chair Scalia commented it is not just a youth problem; he pointed out 83% of the voters did not turn out in the recent elections. Committee members agreed they were in favor of this project. A sub-committee was formed to determine the feasibility and costs. The sub-committee will consist of Chair Scalia, Ms. Slate, and Mr. Gakunde.

2. Ms. Everard reported on the book "Hold Fast" by Blue Balliett selected for the 5th-8th grade read (now out in paperback). She indicated she would write a grant to purchase the books after approval from the Committee. Ms. Everard will continue to work with Ms. Ancharski. Ms. Everard suggested the book could be read to the children at the Hundred Nights shelter, and that different people could also do it at different schools (after school reading). The proposal is to bring the author here for two presentations. She agreed there could also be a night session; noting this is probably a two year project after getting the schools onboard. Chair Scalia indicated he is in favor of at least exploring what this would cost; Committee members posed no objections. Ms. Everard will explore the costs and report back to the Committee.

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3. Mr. Bohannon noted conversations with Kevin Dremel about putting together a music festival at the Rec Center's new pavilion. The music genre would be folk music based on social equity promoting the ideas of Jonathan Daniels and Martin Luther King, Jr.

8) Adjourn-

Chair Scalia adjourned the meeting at 6:05PM.

Next meeting: December 2, 2015

Respectfully submitted by,
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall
Minute Taker
November 5, 2015

Respectfully edited by,
Meghan Spaulding
Staff Liaison
November 18, 2015