

City of Keene
New Hampshire

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

Wednesday, September 7, 2016

5:00 PM

Trustee's Room, Library

Members Present:

Bill Hay, Chair
Rev. Michael Hall
Mandi Slate
Yves Gakunde (Late)

Staff Present:

Andy Bohannon, Parks & Rec Director

Members Not Present:

Dottie Morris
Ella MacDonald
Melanie Everard, Vice-Chair

1) Call to Order and Roll Call -

Chair Hay called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM. Roll call was conducted.

2) Approval of Minutes – August 3, 2016

Mr. Gakunde made a motion to approve the minutes of August 3, 2016 as submitted. Ms. Slate seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3) Finance Report –

Mr. Bohannon reported a balance of \$8,762.66. Mr. Bohannon noted the \$500.00 annual appropriation from the City and the \$750.00 from the St. James Thrift Shop.

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

Mr. Bohannon indicated he would be discussing the balance with Ms. Spaulding as he doesn't remember bringing the St. James Thrift Shop contribution through the City Council process.

4) Wallace's Book about Jonathan Daniels – KSC Mason Library September 15th, at 6:00 PM

Chair Hay introduced Rich Wallace and Sandra Neil Wallace authors of the book "Blood Brother" due to be released next week. Chair Hay asked the Wallace's to speak to the Committee about the book; a biography of Jonathan Daniels and the book launch. Ms. Wallace noted she and Rich

hadn't heard about Jonathan Daniels until they moved here in 2009. She also noted they write books for young readers and adults. Ms. Wallace said the book took three years of research in addition to the extensive materials at KSC. Mr. Wallace explained there are 150 images in the book many of which were taken by Jonathan Daniels who was also an amateur photographer. Ms. Wallace said many didn't realize this about Jonathan Daniels; adding many of these photos have never been seen before as they were developed from the camera retrieved from his rental car after he was killed. Using these photographs the Wallace's were able to identify and interview the then teenagers about Jonathan Daniels. Mr. Wallace added the Brown Chapel, in Selma, provided great assistance in identifying and contacting the teenagers in the photos. The Wallace's noted the NAACP has endorsed the book and Ruby Sales has complimented its accuracy. Ms. Wallace said she thinks the book is very timely right now and resonates with the world; it reminds people that historically black and whites did work together in the 1965 Civil Rights Movement. Mr. Wallace noted the attention the book is getting already.

Chair Hay asked how close the final product was to what the Wallace's originally perceived. Mr. Wallace responded we had proposed a 20,000 word book with 32 photographs; we ended up with 65,000 words and 150 images. Mr. Wallace commented this is the most important book we have ever done. Ms. Wallace added people are also finding the epilogue very interesting. She noted we were very fortunate to get into some private collections for information on the last six months of Jonathan Daniels life.

Ms. Slate commented each of us has a story; she shared her experience having Jonathan Daniels mother as a tutor at the Jonathan Daniels Elementary School. Mr. Bohannon also shared his mother went to the eight grade prom with Jonathan Daniels.

Chair Hay commented on the timeliness of the book's release; two days after a primary and seven weeks before a General Election. Discussion continued with Ms. Wallace noting Jonathan Daniels died just two weeks after the Voting Rights Act.

Mr. Wallace noted the KSC event overlaps with the Redfern season and provided an itinerary for the event which will start at 6:00 PM. Ms. Wallace said they thought it appropriate to have the book launch at KSC as that is where their research began. She also noted all research materials will end up at KSC.

Chair Hay thanked the Wallace's for coming to speak with the Committee. Discussion continued with Mr. Bohannon suggesting to Rev. Hall that the Wallace's might be potential speakers for the next MLK Breakfast.

5) Get out the Vote -

Discussion ensued with regards to Ms. Slate's Letter to the Editor on behalf of the Committee. Chair Hay commented he thought it was going to be passed around for review; Ms. Slate noted the concern for time. Mr. Bohannon noted the letter was to the point and got the message across (get to the poles); something the Committee can support.

6) New Business -

1. Mr. Bohannon referred to Chair Hay's comment about knowing another author and suggested

this is something to put on the agenda when the Committee doesn't have a lot of business. Mr. Bohannon explained the how in the past the Committee would bring in an author, purchase books for distribution to the schools, and hold discussions at the schools and the Library. He indicated this might work into the education piece of the Committee's charge in promoting what Martin Luther King, Jr. and Jonathan Daniels were about. Chair Hay liked this idea; he added he had mentioned Jim Waller who is writing about genocide.

2. Ms. Slate asked if it would be appropriate to have a (private) Facebook page for the Committee. Mr. Bohannon noted the Committee does have a webpage that does need updating. Mr. Bohannon will discuss this process with the IT Department and report back to the Committee. Mr. Gakunde commented on this and other Committee's ability to use existing City social media. Mr. Bohannon suggested perhaps the Letter to the Editor could be published on the City's Facebook page on behalf of the Committee.

3. Rev. Hall noted last month he mentioned the KUC was sponsoring a concert (Concerts Across America) against gun violence. He felt since both Jonathan Daniels and Martin Luther King, Jr. were both killed by guns there might be some connection. Rev. Hall added Mayor Lane will be reading a Proclamation at the event because it is National Gun Violence Awareness Day as well. Rev. Hall noted they are still looking for singers and choirs. The event takes place September 25, 2016. Clai Lasher Sommers will be speaking at the Church in the morning and the concert will begin at 2:00 PM. Rev. Hall noted this is not a Church event and he will be asking the Clergy for sponsorship tomorrow. Rev. Hall was going to ask the Committee to be sponsors; he added he was unsure if this was within the Committee's Mission or not. Mr. Bohannon commented if the request had been for financial backing it would have needed to be presented at the last meeting; he continued if the request is for just a show of support it could be handled with a motion on the floor. Rev. Hall clarified no financial support is being requested; he further noted he would just like to put on the posters/flyers/press release that the event is co-sponsored by the Committee. Mr. Bohannon recommended the Committee wait to take action until he discusses this with the City Attorney. Mr. Bohannon noted he would ask the question of the City Attorney whether or not the Committee takes any action for future reference. No objections were posed to Mr. Bohannon's recommendation.

7) Adjourn-

There being no further business Chair Hay adjourned the meeting at 5:56 PM.

Next meeting date: October 5, 2016

Respectfully submitted by,
Mary Lou Sheats-Hall, Minute Taker
September 8, 2016