

APPROVED
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
100 NORTH ANDREWS AVENUE
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2010 – 3:00 P.M.

Members	Attendance	Cumulative Attendance	
		Regular Meetings Present	Absent
E. Clay Shaw, Chair	A	2	1
Dr. Claire Crawford, Vice Chair	P	3	0
Peg Buchan	P	3	0
Sandra Casteel	P	3	0
Beauregard Cummings	A	1	2
Maureen Dinnen	A	0	1
Patricia Hale	P	2	1
Stephanie Jean	P	1	2
Ina Lee	P	3	0
Nuccia McCormick	P	1	0
Jo Ann Medalie	A	2	1
Donna Mergenhagen	P	3	0
Charlie Palmer	A	2	1
Wingate Payne	P	3	0
Mary Rizor	A	1	2
Lisa Scott-Founds	A	0	3
Lewis Tunnage	P	3	0
Dennis Ulmer	P	3	0
Birch Willey	P	2	1

As of this date, there are currently 19 members appointed to the Committee, which means 10 would constitute a quorum.

Staff

Shannon Vezina, Public Information Office
Maxine Singh, City Commission Liaison
Kathleen Gunn, Assistant to City Manager
Sue Molnar, Outdoor Event Coordinator, Parks and Recreation Department
J. Opperlee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Communications to City Commission

None.

Call to Order

- **Roll Call**

Vice Chair Crawford called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Roll was called and it was determined a quorum was present.

- **Approval of Minutes from August 25, 2010 Meeting**

Motion made by Mr. Willey, seconded by Ms. Lee, to approve the minutes of the August 25, 2010 minutes. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

New Business

- **Historian Update**

Vice Chair Crawford introduced Susan Gillis, historian for the Committee.

Ms. Gillis is a professional museum coordinator with the Boca Raton Historical Society. She served as curator with the Fort Lauderdale Historical Society and has been a research historian for several local projects. She has written six books on local history, including *Fort Lauderdale: the Venice of America*.

She stated that the Committee has applied for four official state markers commemorating the Wade-In, the first and second Forts, and the Annie Tommie Seminole Camp. Most of these are in process at Tallahassee. Ms. Gillis also researched and wrote requests for 10 City park markers, which will inform visitors to specific Fort Lauderdale parks about the individuals for whom each park is named.

There will be four traveling exhibits that will be available at several different venues and institutions. These are related to four subjects: the Forts Lauderdale, Gateway to the Everglades, Tropical Wonderland, and Venice of America. The exhibits are based on the City's nicknames during different eras over the past 100 years.

There will also be four traveling trunks, with themes including "Fort Lauderdale: A Brief History" and "Fort Lauderdale 100 Years Ago." Ms. Gillis has worked with local historian Patsy West on these exhibits.

Another important feature is the Speakers' Bureau, which has sent out requests for members of the community to give talks. Docents from Bonnet House, members of the Historical Society, and other individuals have volunteered to

participate. The two themes will be a comprehensive view of Fort Lauderdale's history, and a discussion of the City 100 years ago. The talks will include slideshows of historical photographs and PowerPoint presentations.

Ms. Gillis said she has updated a handout called "Fort Lauderdale: A Brief History," originally produced some years ago by the Historical Society. This provides a short history of the community. She has also worked with Ms. Hale on the activity book, and with Stranahan House on an interactive Centennial program for schools. She has conducted research on the City's African-American pioneers from old census records, and has done interviews with the *Sun-Sentinel* and the local PBS station. Channel 2 has also expressed an interest in the Centennial celebration. Clips from these interviews will be available on the City's Centennial site.

Ms. Casteel asked if the presentations will include segments on all the different populations that have lived in Fort Lauderdale. She explained that there is concern that the City's entire community be included. Ms. Gillis assured the Committee that the presentations will include the City's African-American and Seminole heritage.

Vice Chair Crawford advised that Ms. Payne is assisting Ms. Gillis with her work for the Committee. Ms. Payne said there is a "historian request form" available online, which will be made available throughout the City and through the Historical Society as well. She explained that once her work with the Committee has been completed, Ms. Gillis will be able to accept requests from the community to address civic organizations.

- **Commission Update**

Vice Chair Crawford reported that the Committee's plan had been presented to and approved by the City Commission at the October 5 meeting. She recalled that the plan had been presented for approval "so we would have a direction" for some of the larger projects.

The City Commission had offered some changes to the overall plan, which had included the Trailblazers' performances, Speakers' Bureau, activity book, and photo montage, which would collectively cost roughly \$300,000. These projects had been approved separately from the proposals that would involve "larger numbers," such as the Gator Bridge, Sistrunk monument, and time capsule. The City Commission had suggested that if there is more money available after the "core projects" have been funded, the Committee should focus on the Sistrunk monument and the 17th Street Bridge lighting project. Ms. Gunn noted that a "lower-cost version" of the time capsule project, which would be approximately \$1000, had also been discussed.

Vice Chair Crawford continued that the City Commission had wanted to review the fundraising strategy; they were approved to use the strategy recommended at the September 23 meeting, with a small change to the funding levels. The Commission also agreed to the "birthday party" and to "the ordinance to help with the [photo] montage."

Mr. Ulmer asked if the City Commission had agreed to the proposed line item for the Parks and Recreation Department. Ms. Gunn said this was not sanctioned, and reminded the Committee that \$80,000 remains in their budget, and the priority for these funds is "securing the *Sun-Sentinel* advertising." She added that this item was "in the backup" presented to the Commission but was not specifically discussed.

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

- **Sanctioned Events**

Ms. Buchan distributed a handout showing a list of events, noting that the events listed in red have been sanctioned while those listed in black have not been sanctioned.

Mr. Ulmer recalled that the City Commission had addressed the sanctioning of events, and asked if the Commission is provided with information about these events when they are brought for approval. Ms. Molnar said they were.

Ms. Payne asked for more information on the Centennial History Fair. Ms. Gunn explained this is an annual event held by the School Board, and will feature a Centennial theme this year.

Ms. Gunn asked if Ms. Molnar had a list of recurring events, stating that the Committee could contact the various events' coordinators and send them the Centennial registry. Ms. Molnar said she did not have this in list form, but said she is including these forms with the outdoor event applications. Ms. Buchan said she recalled the Centennial registry applications were originally intended for "mini-events," and she had referred many of these events to Ms. Molnar at Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Lee said there was interest in the Beach Business Improvement District, which is comprised of the major beach businesses fronting A1A, in working with the Beach CRA to expand the holiday light program, Light Up the Beach, in that area. The CRA hopes to feature "a big '100'" on A1A and Las Olas Boulevard. This signage would remain up until turtle season. While some light poles in the area would feature a snowflake design, others would be lighted blue and would stay on after the holidays.

The lighting ceremony will take place on November 23 at A1A and Las Olas Boulevard, and other events are being planned around this. City Staff has designed the "100." The plan will go before the City Commission on October 19. Ms. Lee said she had spoken to Ms. Scott-Founds, who is involved with the Boat Parade, and Ms. Scott-Founds has "no problem" with the lighting ceremony being the "kickoff" event for the Centennial. Ms. Lee concluded that this would be a way to celebrate the Centennial without spending money on the project.

She added that once turtle season begins, they could look into using the lighting in "other places in the City," although this has not yet been explored. She felt this provided "a huge opportunity" to have the lighted "100" sign "front and center" for both the 2010 and 2011 holiday seasons.

Ms. Buchan noted that the Committee had originally planned for the Fazzino poster unveiling as the opening celebration of the Centennial, and the Winterfest Boat Parade as the opening event. She suggested that Light Up the Beach replace the poster unveiling as the opening celebration and the Boat Parade remain the opening event. Ms. Lee said she was agreeable to this.

Ms. Buchan observed that the list of sanctioned events will "start to populate quickly," and asked if she could email the Committee members biweekly to let them review the events that are being added. She said she would like to include these events more often than once a month in order to retain "community momentum." She recalled that the Committee had decided some time ago to "bring all the events to this table" to be approved as sanctioned events.

Vice Chair Crawford said she felt emailing the list of events was a good idea if it could be accomplished without violating the Sunshine Law. She said it would be best to consult the City Attorney's Office before proceeding.

Ms. Jean recalled that when the methodology for sanctioning was established, the intent was simply to keep the entire Committee "in the know" as opposed to the Event Planning group alone. She added that the idea behind sanctioned events was to "get participation... [from] people out in the community who are doing events." The intent was to "Centennialize" events already being planned.

Vice Chair Crawford felt the best process would be to vote on the suggested events. She advised that thus far, all the proposed events had been good ones, but noted that there was the possibility of events that are "rather distasteful or harmful to members of the community." Ms. Buchan said the application checklist "tells them exactly what they need to be," which is "something... inclusive of our entire community [and] family-friendly."

Ms. Jean said if one of the proposed events is inappropriate, she felt Ms. Buchan would flag it before bringing it before the Committee, or that an inappropriate

event could be “stripped” of its sanctioned status. Ms. Buchan felt the Committee would not be well served by “overthinking” the sanctioning of events.

Vice Chair Crawford said she felt sanctioning events was “too much responsibility for one person” and reminded the Committee that they are advising the City Commission. Ms. Mergenhagen said the process would be for Ms. Buchan to review the proposed events and “verify any points of clarification that were needed,” and to share her recommendations with Ms. Vezina, after which time the Committee could respond to these recommendations. Any “dubious,” “incomplete,” or “conflicting” events would be brought before the full Committee for discussion at a regular meeting. Ms. Buchan agreed, stating that members could “pull anything you wanted” from the list she provided for further discussion.

Mr. Ulmer recalled that the intent of developing the process was based on the fact-finding groups’ inability to “approve anything” outside the full Committee. Ms. Gunn agreed, noting that this was why the Committee had recently met to approve its fundraising plan.

Mr. Willey said if formal authorization by the Committee is required before an event is officially Centennialized, they should discuss the event(s) before the entire group. He felt they should take care, as they are acting as a City advisory body, although he agreed the process could occur more quickly.

Ms. Gunn explained that sanctioning events may not fall into the same category as the fundraising strategy, and agreed they should not “hold people up” who were interested in Centennializing their events. She suggested that conditional approval could be given in advance of a full Committee meeting, and agreed that there is “some value in the Committee approving [each event].” She suggested that Staff could send a list of the events the Committee has approved to the City Commission.

Ms. Payne proposed that the events to be sanctioned could be circulated as Ms. Buchan had suggested, and in the absence of any issues, the Committee could formally review the list. She felt the Committee was comprised of a “cross-section of the community” that would be aware of any events or individuals who might create a problem. She concluded that she felt confident in Ms. Buchan’s judgment. Once the events have been voted upon, the list will be sent to the City Commission.

Ms. Gunn confirmed that this proposed process would be submitted to the City Attorney’s Office.

Ms. Payne stated that there should be “a much better website and a better calendar” for the City’s Centennial, as she did not believe the site currently offers enough information or is “interesting or exciting.” Ms. Vezina said the website

would be presented to the Committee at the next meeting. Ms. Gunn pointed out that “there have been several competing priorities” and the website had not been the highest priority. She asserted that it will “now become a serious priority.”

Motion made by Ms. Buchan, seconded by Ms. Mergenhagen, to sanction those events listed on this list in black, noting that the ones listed on this list in red had been previously sanctioned. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. Willey said he believed “at some point,” the City had agreed that all City-sponsored events were automatically sanctioned as Centennial events. Mr. Ulmer said this had been discussed at a previous meeting, and noted that the application is for “smaller events that don’t have to go through Parks and Rec.” The larger events applying through Parks and Recreation would be asked if they wished to be identified as Centennial events.

Ms. Mergenhagen gave the Committee a copy of a report she had presented to the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations, which was intended to encourage individual neighborhood participation. She reported that the Harbordale community will feature historical education as part of an event to open a park; Victoria Park hopes to Centennialize Jazz in the Park with oral histories and a self-guided walking tour; and Sailboat Bend will plant a garden of native plants in their community.

She added that there have been “a number of issues” to arise, including some confusion over sanctioning. Ms. Mergenhagen clarified that the events sanctioned can be held at any time throughout the Centennial year. The installation celebration for the wade-in marker has been transferred to the Parks and Recreation Department, and that Department has created an agenda for the event and is inviting speakers to attend.

She noted that Commissioner Rogers had offered some ideas as well, such as including information on how to donate to the Centennial as part of the water bill announcements. He had also asked if it was possible to earmark donations for specific events, such as neighborhood celebrations. It was also suggested that the website include a donation site so individuals can donate using their credit cards.

The most critical issue, she continued, is that there is “an enormous pent-up demand” for Ms. Gillis by the neighborhood associations. Ms. Mergenhagen explained that the Committee’s concern is with how Ms. Gillis’s time will be prioritized; there has been some mention of her being “physically at the Historical Society” two days per week. She expressed concern that if there is large attendance on these days, “it won’t be productive either for her or for them.” Some neighborhoods had asked if they could use Ms. Gillis’s services independently if they paid her. Ms. Mergenhagen stated the Committee’s

contract with Ms. Gillis expires when 1000 hours have passed, after which time they would have no objection to anyone hiring her independently.

Ms. Payne asserted that Ms. Gillis would not be able to address “walk-ins” at this time. Vice Chair Crawford agreed, and noted that historical research is “extremely time-consuming.”

Ms. Mergenhagen concluded that her recommendations are for Ms. Gillis and the Committee’s intern hold “Saturday training sessions” at the Historical Society. These could include how to do research or how to handle documents. She noted that Ms. Gillis had agreed to this.

Ms. Casteel departed the meeting at 4:19 p.m.

Ms. Mergenhagen also recalled the Committee had requested permission to attend each of the City Commission’s pre-agenda District meetings and present a summary of the Committee’s work. She asked for volunteers to attend the pre-agenda meetings of Commissioners whose meetings are not already being attended by a member.

She continued that another recommendation is to determine a process by which to request “traveling exhibits,” such as the photo montage project, for specific neighborhoods and their events. She also noted that while the Council of Civic Associations represents a large number of neighborhoods, it does not represent all neighborhoods in the City, and asked that the Chair write a letter, perhaps co-authored with the Mayor, to summarize what the Committee is doing and invite all neighborhoods to participate.

Mr. Ulmer recommended advising people that not only members of a community organization are asked to participate, but people who are not members, and that churches and other organizations can participate as well as neighborhood associations.

Ms. Lee pointed out that the actual City birthday party does not appear on the list of events, and emphasized that this is the “big bash” for the Centennial. She requested an update on this event, as well as an update on fundraising, at upcoming meetings.

She also acknowledged Chair Shaw and Vice Chair Crawford for their presentation to the City Commission, which she said was “really well received.”

Ms. Lee departed the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

Ms. Payne said she and Mr. Willey had approached several people for the Speakers’ Bureau, primarily docents from historical museums. They hope to hold

training sessions by the end of October. There have already been some requests for speakers. Ms. Vezina provided copies of these request forms.

Ms. Payne said the speakers would focus “mostly on history,” but will be given “bullet points” on the Centennial in particular. They may bring materials from the museums or societies they represent and may refer to them briefly during their presentations. Ms. Vezina added that there have been requests from the public for individuals to “talk generally about the Centennial” on behalf of the Committee.

Ms. Mergenhagen proposed an early-morning meeting for the Committee to “put our tools... together,” such as the forms and information already available, and come up with “an outline of what makes sense to address these groups.” Ms. Gunn agreed this could result in talking points for members who are interested in volunteering.

Other Matters of Interest

- **Communications to the City Commission**

None.

- **Confirm Date of Next Meeting**

Vice Chair Crawford confirmed that the next meeting would be held on November 3 at 3:00 p.m. The Executive fact-finding group will meet later in the month to put materials together for potential speakers. Ms. Vezina noted that any other members wishing to attend would need to be appointed to that fact-finding group in order to avoid conflict with the Sunshine Law. The Vice-Chair appointed Dennis Ulmer and Birch Willey to the Executive fact-finding group.

Ms. McCormick said she would like to work with the Event Planning, Fundraising, and Celebrate Neighborhoods fact-finding groups.

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

[Minutes prepared by K. McGuire, Prototype, Inc.]