

MEETING NOTES

NAME OF GROUP: NEBRASKA CAPITOL ENVIRONS COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, February 22, 2018, 8:00 a.m., Conference Room 214, Lincoln, Nebraska.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mary Campbell, Karen Nalow, Ann Post, Jeff Searcy and John Sinclair; (Gene Crump and Kile Johnson absent).

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ed Zimmer and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Lynn Johnson and J.J. Yost of Parks & Recreation; and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Nebraska Capitol Environs Commission Meeting

The meeting started at 8:20 due to inclement weather and road conditions.

Chair Jeff Searcy called the meeting to order and acknowledged the posting of the Open Meetings Act in the room.

Searcy then called for a motion approving the minutes of the regular meeting held October 26, 2017 and the joint meeting held November 7, 2017. Motion for approval made by Sinclair, seconded by Campbell and carried 4-0: Campbell, Nalow, Searcy and Sinclair voting 'yes'; Post arriving soon after this vote; Crump and Johnson absent.

Ed Zimmer stated that Kile Johnson is the newest member of the Commission. He was unable to attend today. He is an attorney in Lincoln; his office is in the Capitol Environs on Lincoln Mall. He has been very active in Parks & Recreation projects.

REVIEW OF TEXTS FOR PLAQUES, SPIRIT OF NEBRASKA PATHWAY, CENTENNIAL MALL

PUBLIC HEARING: February 22, 2018

Members present: Campbell, Nalow, Post, Searcy and Sinclair; Crump and Johnson absent.

Zimmer stated that this item is for review of text for three large 18"x36" bronze plaques. The first two were proposed by the Nebraska Latino American Commission. They recognize members of the Hispanic community, Dr. Mauricio "Marty" Ramirez and Severiano "Sam" Franco. The third is the newest member of the Nebraska Hall of Fame, Thomas Rogers Kimball. Lynn Johnson, Bob Ripley and Matt Hansen reviewed the proposed language for the Kimball

plaque. Ed mentioned that the Environs Commission is the public board which reviews Centennial Mall plaques.

Searcy noted that Marty Ramirez served on the Sesquicentennial Commission. He inquired for the benefit of newer commission members how the icon elements are chosen. Zimmer stated there are five icons used on the plaques, based on designs within the Capitol. They are bison, scales of justice, thunderbird, corn, and plough & wheat. Any of the icons can be used on a given plaque but the intention is to use the bison on plaques related to environmental themes, the thunderbird associated with social and cultural heritage, scales of justice for plaques related to government, public service and the legal system, and corn and plough & wheat relating to agricultural and commerce. Johnson noted that Parks Dept. tries to place the plaques so that the icons are somewhat varied, although the different blocks along the mall have overall themes as well.

ACTION:

Motion for approval made by Campbell, seconded by Nalow and carried 5-0: Campbell, Nalow, Post, Searcy and Sinclair voting 'yes'; Crump and Johnson absent.

ANNUAL REPORT - 2017

PUBLIC HEARING:

February 22, 2018

Members present: Campbell, Nalow, Post, Searcy and Sinclair; Crump and Johnson absent.

Zimmer stated the report is available for review. It was presented at the joint meeting in November 2017.

ACTION:

Motion for approval made by Post, seconded by Nalow and carried 5-0: Campbell, Nalow, Post, Searcy and Sinclair voting 'yes'; Crump and Johnson absent.

LB807 WITH AM1863:

Zimmer stated this doesn't directly affect the Environs at the moment. It is a Legislative proposal to exercise authority that Congress established, authorizing any State to request to replace one or both of their representative statues in the U. S. Capitol. Placing "state statues" in the U. S. Capitol dates back to 1864. J. Sterling Morton and William Jennings Bryan are portrayed in Nebraska's two statues, chosen by the Nebraska legislature in the 1930. A straw poll in 1931 identified Morton and Bryan and the Legislature named a committee to implement that. Rudolph Evans was the sculptor of both figures. He was best known for Thomas Jefferson in the Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

LB807 started as a bill to bring the Morton statue back to Nebraska and replace it with a Willa Cather portrait. By amendment, a statue of Standing Bear was proposed in place of the Bryan statue. We have a version of Rudolph Evans' Bryan statue that stands in front of Fairview. If Cather is approved, the Nebraska Hall of Fame would take care of having it done. Standing Bear would be handled by a committee (including Zimmer). There is a donor who is willing to fund the Standing Bear bronze going to Washington and Bryan coming back. He is unsure of where the second statue of Bryan would be located. Perhaps it could be located in front of the Federal building. Bryan was a Congressman and Secretary of State. He hasn't talked to the Denney Building yet. That location would make this a commission matter.

Searcy wondered if there is any sense of legislative support. Zimmer does not know. A Morton statue at Arbor Hall in Nebraska City would be appropriate.

Zimmer noted there is still some discussion whether any modifications or additions should be done around the Standing Bear bronze on Centennial Mall. Commissioners expressed caution about altering that space.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 a.m.