

Great Barrington W.E.B. Du Bois Legacy Committee - Special Festival Planning Meeting
Wednesday, January 19, 2022

Zoom Webinar Meeting

DRAFT Minutes

6:00pm - Open Meeting; All votes are roll call

Committee Members Attending: Gwendolyn VanSant, Emily Williams, Randy Weinstein, Thasia Giles, Tim Likarish, Sara Mugridge, Barbara Dean

I. Call to order by Mr. Weinstein at 6:05. Ms. VanSant led meeting as requested by the Chair

II. Review/Approve Minutes

Motion to approve Draft Minutes from 1/14/22 meeting. Mr. Likarish amended the missing information about Legacy Award proposal, and Ms. Mugridge corrected as requested. Motion to approve amended minutes passed unanimously.

Motion to change agenda to begin meeting with overview of Festival Program. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Overview & Discussion of 2022 Du Bois Festival Program

Ms. VanSant shared her notes with the committee, reviewed the program and updated on engaging local clergy, noting timely messaging about voting rights. Ms. VanSant noted that Rev Letman has volunteered to be Mahaiwe contact.

Ms. VanSant updated that Ms. Mary Nell Morgan agreed to the proposal to include edited performance from previous festival, and will speak with Ms. Houston. Ms. Reed will contribute musical singing performance.

Ms. Mugridge asked for clarification about the format of contributions from youth. Ms. VanSant referred to her outreach to Du Bois Middle School.

Dr. Williams provided an update on panelists, Dr. Combs, Dr. Rahmin, Dr. Pierre, and raised a question about pre-recording and tentative dates for the recording.

Ms. VanSant introduced award recipient, and Ms. Mugridge reviewed the discussion of Dr. Meade's life and work as an extremely appropriate fit for the award.

Ms. VanSant confirmed that those visiting the Berkshires, including Du Bois family will be able to screen festival video in closed Mahaiwe viewing.

Community partners will host programming under the festival umbrella. Ms. VanSant discussed the memorial for Dr. Yolande Du Bois Williams Irvin, including a reading of *Knock Me a Kiss* co-produced by BRIDGE & Shake & Co. Followed by panel discussion of themes (class,

gender, Harlem Renaissance). There will be no fee, but tickets will be required and COVID protocol will be in place. Saturday's service led by Bishop Dixon of Houston NAACP. Many people will be coming to Berkshires for this event. Unveiling of tombstone and plaque and remarks from Mr. Weinstein from the perspective of Du Bois Center will follow.

Ms. VanSant updated that NAACP is voting on hosting a bus tour of Great Barrington to UMass Du Bois Center with guests in town for the festival. This would take place on Friday, while Mr. Peck is visiting the middle school.

Ms. Giles updated that Edie Saka, on faculty at Wesleyan, from Ghana will speak about Ghanaian culture and his work, and lead a dance workshop. TBD in-person or virtual. Jacob's Pillow had tentatively planned for Saturday 2/19 as part of Pittsfield's 10x10 Festival. Ms. Giles asked fellow members about the timing conflict with services on Saturday. Ms. VanSant relayed a request from Mr. Peck to explore a different time for the workshop. Ms. Giles explained that there could be some flexibility in timing, possibly even moving to Sunday. Artist is in Ghana and Ms. Giles plans to speak with him on Friday, and can see about making that shift.

Ms. VanSant shifted discussion to logistics still to be determined. Mahaiwe has proposed dates for recording at the Mahaiwe.

Ms. Mugridge asked about an interactive piece with the panel. Ms. VanSant noted that the recording of the panel discussion could be moderated and would be another event. Moderated discussion during webinar would generate discussion in lead up to Festival week.

Discussion of timing of said webinar ensued. During the week of Feb 8th, are evenings best? What would accommodate folks best? Dr. Williams proposed offering panelists dates of 1/31 and 2/2 - Ms. VanSant pointed out that 2/2 is the NAACP meeting, and Dr. Williams suggested the 3rd.

Ms. Dean asked if questions could be submitted in advance, to which all agreed.

Ms. VanSant pointed out that the committee needs at least 2 more members to back up video editing support. Ms. Wright and Rev Letman have personal matters, so the additional support will help us keep to the timeline.

Ms. Mugridge reminded Mr. Weinstein that Homer Meade's wife should be made aware of the opportunity to use Mahaiwe facilities to record remarks as well, when he speaks with her.

Ms. Giles asked for clarification about what is needed from committee members for tech support and editing. Ms. VanSant explained how Zoom recordings can be useful in streamlining steps, based on past experience. Ms. Giles said she would also be happy to support and be backup to Rev Letman.

Ms. VanSant suggested looking at the budget to see if there might be a cushion for additional video editing fees, should they be needed.

Discussion of timing for premiers continued, resulting in general agreement on evening times. 5:30-7:00.

Regarding the panel discussion, the question was raised if we will be running through town webinar format? Ms. Mugridge noted the difference between open meetings and the event, suggesting that this does not fit the open meeting laws in intent or letter, and we will need in-person live support not available from town during the agreed upon hours. Ms. VanSant also mentioned limits on attendance with webinar settings. Mr. Weinstein will talk to Selectboard office; Ms. VanSant will also be on the phone call to establish that private/sponsored zoom hosting is ok. Dr. Williams asked to have link information early next week.

IV. Legacy Festival Budget Discussion

Mr. Likarish shared the proposed budget for the 2022 festival. He noted changes to budget for music, additional speaker, and rental. Mr. Likarish pointed to \$750 allotted for video editing, and named expenses totalling \$11,206. The only additional income since the last update is a commitment of \$1000 from Simon's Rock. LCC grant will be announced on Feb 1. We had discussed funding from local churches, and this may still be additional available funding, but not as yet.

Ms. VanSant suggested the rental budget line could be moved to editing. Mr. Likarish also discussed items no longer appropriate in COVID, and Ms. VanSant suggested amending shifted needs (i.e. gifts for speakers instead of travel fees).

Committee members discussed stipends and amended the budget accordingly to reflect speaker and musician names. Accommodation and travel were fees stricken from the budget line. The Mahaiwe is sponsoring the Festival with use of space, which will be acknowledged, so only documenting/editing and promotion are listed as expenses. Additional funding added for flexibility around editing was added. Ms. Dean asked to make a donation to the Mahaiwe, and asked if Jeff Peck and family will need accommodations as in past years. Ms. VanSant updated that Mr. Peck will be hosted by community members and has not asked for additional support at this time. In lieu of celebration dinner expenses, gift boxes (\$75+shipping) were added for each of 4 speakers. Question about singers also receiving gifts, and the committee discussed smaller gifts for other participants, so expense was set at \$500.

Mr. Likarish noted the importance of the town sponsoring the website. Mr. Weinstein will look up Legacy Award plaque costs (for recipient and to place in town hall). Mr. Likarish added a line to meet Mass Cultural Council accessibility guidelines. In addition to ASL, Ms. VanSant suggested Spanish translation would be appropriate in our community. Ms. VanSant noted that we do not have design costs listed, and an estimated cost was added.

Ms. Mugridge motioned to approve the proposed budget of \$4,623.

Discussion: Ms. Dean asked if the income portion was finalized, and if the town was contributing funding. Ms. VanSant reviewed previous discussion that funding was not available at this point from the town for Legacy Festival/Committee. Mr. Likarish confirmed that we should be within budget.

Motion passed unanimously.

V. Finance Update from Treasurer

Mr. Likarish summarized the report which was previously sent to members to review. Regarding local outreach, a question was posed to members about the possibility of approaching churches. Mr. Weinstein did not recall the status or question. Ms. VanSant noted that there is work to be done, outreach to make this year's festival happen. Mr. Likarish updated on grants and requirements (ex. Incorporating logos/acknowledgements). Press release should acknowledge receipt of the award. Ms. VanSant also requested collaborators and colleges participating be named in acknowledgements in the press. Ms. Mugridge agreed to include in press release going to town PR.

Regarding grant requirements for collecting participation data (zip codes, email addresses). Ms. VanSant noted that with the decision to be virtual, that will be difficult, but views and analytics may be available (ex. Regions of viewers). Festival will not be a ticketed experience, so that will be reflected in what data is available. Ms. VanSant noted that Zoom registration can be set to ask for location data.

Mr. Likarish met with Mr. Rembold and Sue from town about guidelines. Ms. VanSant agreed that the Treasurer can keep the Committee within those parameters.

There was a discussion of a financial subgroup to hold these pieces after the Festival.

Mr. Likarish updated that there has not been a response from the town about the request for additional funding. Ms. VanSant offered thanks from the committee for work putting this together.

Additional Announcements

Ms. VanSant reminded members to submit OML forms, per Mr. Weinstein's email reminder from town administrators. Ms. Dean asked for a member update, and an update on open committee positions. Mr. Weinstein updated that Ms. DeVoti's resignation was finalized and the town website has been updated as of today. Ms. VanSant reviewed that it is posted on the website. Mr. Likarish asked about support for the SelectBoard meeting on Monday. Mr. Weinstein emailed about the agenda, but has not heard back. Ms. VanSant asked if we need to make an official submission. Who will be present? Please communicate via email so members can be recognized in webinar format.

Ms. Giles asked if it will be permissible to email all with an update on JP event, and agreed to provide when available.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Weinstein. Motion approved unanimously and meeting was adjourned at 7:53