

Martin Luther King, Jr. Living History and Public Policy Center Board of Trustees

Dominion Riverside Campus
120 Tredegar Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

MINUTES

Thursday, April 20, 2006

Corrected September 14, 2006

ADOPTED as amended on September 14, 2006

CALL TO ORDER

The retreat was called to order by the chairwoman, Ms. Eva T. Hardy, at Dominion Riverside Campus, Richmond, Virginia.

Board Members Present:

Ms. Eva T. Hardy, *Chairwoman*
Senator Henry L. Marsh, III, *Vice Chairman*
Dr. William Byrne
Dr. Michael Clemons
Delegate Rosalyn Dance
Dr. Benjamin Dixon
Dr. Susan Gooden
Reverend Andrew Shannon
Dr. Elsie Weatherington
Dr. Daniel Wubah

Staff Present:

Mrs. Brenda H. Edwards, *Division of Legislation Services*
Ms. Autumn D. Diehr, *Virginia Commonwealth University*

Fundraiser Present:

Mrs. Dianne Martin, *University of Virginia*

Guests:

Mrs. Jada Banks, *Retreat Facilitator*
Mr. Larry Roberts, Counsel to the Governor, *Governor's Office*
Ms. Christina Draper
Dr. Robert D. Holsworth, *Virginia Commonwealth University*
Mrs. Valerie Williams, *Legislative Assistant to Senator Henry L. Marsh, III*

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Eva T. Hardy, chairwoman of the Board, welcomed Board members to the first Martin Luther King, Jr. Living History and Public Policy Center Retreat. She also welcomed special guest Larry Roberts, Counsel to the Governor, and acknowledged his passion for the Center's work.

Historical Perspective and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy

Dr. Robert D. Holsworth, Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences, Virginia Commonwealth University, commented on the importance of civil rights to Virginia's past and how it is equally important to its future. He stated, while Virginia has moved forward in dealing with issues of race, we still continue to see tremendous policy challenges in dealing with lingering aspects of discrimination and issues relating to social class (which relates to Dr. King's focus). Addressing the kinds of issues that we have seen relative to the impact of policy is absolutely vital to the future of Virginia and even America as a whole. Various forms of economic discrimination do not allow certain individuals to shine in the 21st Century, which will have a tremendous impact on us moving forward. He concluded his presentation stating that it is important to keep the legacy alive and move forward. We need to model that spirit of the Civil Rights Movement. As we move forward, we should recognize that we are not simply acknowledging a hero but embodying a spirit that can be used to address various issues that we face today.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Living History and Public Policy Center History and Mission

Senator Henry L. Marsh, III, Vice Chairman of the Board, discussed the history and mission of the Center. Senator Marsh-stated that he first encountered Dr. King at a speech he attended in Fort Knox where Dr. King addressed meeting hate with love. Although Dr. King's message challenged people's thinking, the audience loved him. Dr. King was not well received during his visits to Virginia. People were frightened of him because he was so ahead of his time. Dr. King's legacy is something that we need to pass on to future generations. With the creation of the King Commission by the General Assembly and the establishment of the Center, the work to fulfill Dr. King's dream has already begun. The Center's purpose is to educate people about Dr. King's. The Center has an excellent opportunity to educate young people about Dr. King's role in history. Our task will not be easy but we can tell the remarkable stories about Martin Luther King. One challenge, in particular, that we need to address is the idea of political correctness. We need to hold individuals who advance "political correctness" to their word. Senator Marsh commended the institutions of higher education that are participants in the Center for agreeing to develop common goals and to put their individual needs on the back burner. Money will need to be raised to further our mission of opening people's eyes and disseminating knowledge throughout Virginia and the world. We need to change the climate and make it happen in order that Dr. King's dream may be fulfilled.

Fundraising Report

Ms. Dianne Martin, Associate Director of the Sorensen Institute at the University of Virginia and the Board's fundraiser for the Center, has worked since October 2005, on fundraising for the Board. Currently, the Board has received a \$100,000 grant from Dominion and a \$2,500 grant from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. There are several pending grants and a list of potential donors that have been contacted through letters or visits. Ms. Martin welcomes suggestions and help from members of the Board who may have contacts at potential donor organizations.

Strategic Planning for Martin Luther King, Jr. Living History and Public Policy Center

Under the direction of the Retreat facilitator, Mrs. Jada Banks, the Board discussed (i) the mission of the Board, (ii) the strengths and limitations of the board, (iii) opportunities for the Board, (iv) potential threats to the Board, and (v) goals of the Board.

Mission of the Board. The Board's mission is threefold. It is responsible for educating the public about the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Members of the Board representing the participating institutions of higher education are responsible for collaborating, communicating, and sharing resources. These institutions will need to pool their resources and work together to increase knowledge and incorporate Dr. King's legacy into their curriculum. The Board is responsible for raising funds to its statutory mandate.

Strengths and limitations of the Board. The Board has several strengths, among them the collaboration of participating universities, the leadership of their presidents, their technological support, and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) as the administrative agency serves as strengths. The support of the Governor and legislative leadership during this critical time is essential. Fundraising support and the intelligence and commitment of Board members were also viewed as strengths. Board members addressed several limitations, including the lack of an Executive Director, funding, and coordination with grassroots organizations. Also, the lack of branding is a limitation. Board members expressed concern regarding the difficulty in differentiating the Center from other MLK initiatives and projects. Other limitations included the social climate and the media portrayal of Dr. King solely as a civil rights leader.

Opportunities for the Board. The Board discussed several opportunities. It acknowledged that the work of Dr. King is not finished. Working with grassroots organizations around the states, cable and media programming, heroes and legends, former presidents, celebrities, and athletes, the Board can continue Dr. King's dream and educate others about his legacy. The Board can also access primary resources at participating universities and other entities around the state. Given the ongoing demographic shift and current political and social debate concerning equality, the Board has a perfect opportunity to further its mission because it is "politically correct."

Potential threats. The Board needs to be cautious of trying to do too much in a short period of time. Ms. Jada Banks, Retreat facilitator, noted that the Board had fantastic ideas but doing too much can often create problems. The Board also needs to be aware of the realities of the political structure that can influence the Center. For instance, losing support from the political arena, potential backlash, political correctness, and the “turning back of the clock.”

The Board also set several goals for the next three years in the areas of Program and Budget, Organizational, Communication and Publicity, and Fundraising.

Program and Budget. Within the next three years, the Board would like to have a budget of \$1.5 million dollars. Its plan includes aligning programs with the SOL's, obtaining access to primary resources, and serving as a repository for the dissemination of data and information. The Board will also establish doctoral fellowships, hold one conference or symposium in the fall of 2007, work with community colleges and other existing organizations, create a center website, and implement a living history program.

Organization. The Board will review the job description of and hire an Executive Director within three to six months. The Board will also review additional staff and computer support needs. The Board agreed to identify and appoint the following committees: Program and Budget, Communication and Publicity, Fundraising. Board participation will need to be increased. Board members are responsible for helping to raise funds for the Center. A three-year planning document will be created.

Communication and Publicity. The Board will develop a brand, logo, brochure, website, and other supporting media materials. A database will also be created and maintained by staff.

Fundraising. The Board will become more involved with fundraising initiatives. A quarterly financial plan will be created. The Board will also consider using endowments, special events, projects, revenue-producing products and services to generate more funds for the Center.

Action Plan and Summary

Of the goals enumerated above, the Board agreed to focus on and give priority to the following goals:

1. Review the job description of and hire an Executive Director within three to six months.
2. Identify and appoint Board Committees within one month.
3. Determine additional advisory support committees and patrons.
4. Increase Board participation and involve members in raising \$1.5 million.
5. Assess staff and computer support needs.
6. Create a center website and develop a brand and logo.
7. Develop a quarterly financial plan.
8. Hold one conference (symposium) in the fall of 2007.
9. Establish doctoral fellowships (within one to two years).
10. Develop a brochure and other supporting media materials (speech, video, pod cast, etc.)
11. Create a three-year planning document.
12. Provide access to primary resources.

Role of Board Members

Mrs. Brenda H. Edwards, staff to the Board and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission, provided an overview of the responsibilities of Board members of a nonstock corporation. She stated that Board members of nonstock corporations have legal and fiduciary responsibilities, and must commit their time, skill, and resources for the effectiveness of the Board. Board members also have a duty to become familiar with the genesis and mission of the organization it governs. Board members must be grounded in applicable state, local, and federal, and case law pertaining to nonstick corporations, including, but not limited to, applicable state and federal tax, freedom of information, labor, and conflict of interest laws and regulations. A more complete list of the responsibilities of Board members of nonstick corporations has been appended.

Dates for Future Meetings

The Board set the following meeting dates:

- Thursday, June 15th 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Thursday, September 14th, 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Thursday, December 14th 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Logistics for these meetings will be provided at a later date.

Directions to Staff

The staff was directed to distribute materials to those Board members who were absent. The staff was also asked to contact absent members to determine the committees on which they wish to serve.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Attachments

Committee Request Form
Responsibilities of Board Members
Transition Staff Responsibility Chart
Chapter 165 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly (SB 107 (2006))
Article 8 of Title 2.2 (§ 2.2-2725 et seq.), Code of Virginia
Fundraising Report