

METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC)

MINUTES

March 15, 2021

The Metropolitan Historical Commission held an electronic meeting on March 15, 2021 with Commission Chair Clay Bailey presiding.

Commissioners Present: Dr. Clay Bailey, Chair; Davis Acker, Dr. Jhennifer Amundson, Menié Bell, Pamela Bobo, John Bridges, Christopher Cotton, Jim Hoobler, Lynn Maddox, Dr. William McKee, E. Thomas Wood, and Linda Wynn, **were present.**

Dr. Don Cusic, Chakita Patterson, Gerry Searcy **were absent.**

Staff Members Present: Tim Walker, Jessica Reeves, Susie Pallas, and Scarlett Miles were present.

Guests Present: Metro Attorney Alex Dickerson, ITS Kevin Lyons

Chair Dr. Clay Bailey called the meeting to order at approximately 12:01 p.m. after verifying that a quorum was present.

Alex Dickerson informed the Commission about changes made to Executive Order No. 16, which went into effect on October 1st. The meeting must be livestreamed, a recording must be made available to the public and anyone observing the meeting must be able to tell who is speaking. This can be achieved by the commissioners using video, announcing themselves as they begin speaking or by being recognized by Chair Bailey by name before they speak.

Commissioner McKee made a motion that the proposed agenda constitutes essential business and that meeting electronically is necessary to maintain the health, safety and well-being of citizens due to the pandemic. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Bridges. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Dr. Clay Bailey

Chair Bailey presented the February minutes for approval. Commissioner Bridges made a motion to approve the minutes, Commissioner Wynn provided a second, and the February minutes were approved by roll call vote,

PRESERVATION AWARDS – Dr. William McKee and Scarlett Miles

Commissioner McKee began by reminding everyone that the list of nominees presented by the committee is larger this year due to the ceremony being canceled in 2020.

Commissioner Maddox read the criteria for each award prior to Commissioner McKee stating the name of the nominee.

*The **Achievement Award** is given to an individual in recognition of his/her extraordinary leadership in preserving Nashville's history – either through research and writing history or through advocacy and raising public awareness of history and preservation.*

1) Ann Eaden (posthumously)

From the nomination: Ann served on the Metro Historical Commission as a Commissioner [1975-2009] and as the Chair [1989-1993]. [She also served as a commissioner with Metro Historic Zoning Commission, 1984-2009, which she also chaired] She co-founded the Metro Historical Commission Foundation in 2011 and served as its Chair. She was instrumental in creating and supporting various projects of the Foundation including the annual fundraising event, the Old House Fair, the MHC Preservation Awards Reception, and most recently the Nashville Sites walking tour app. She was very involved in the community serving as a board member with the Nashville Wine Auction, the Arts & Business Council, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, the American Lung Association, and many others. She was a graduate of Leadership Nashville and flourished for many years in the automotive world with Beaman Automotive, retiring as the Vice President of Customer Relations.

Ann was a graduate of MTSU where she was elected Miss MTSU and later was honored to receive the Outstanding Alumni Award.

Working with Martha White Flour, she developed recipes and wrote cookbooks and appeared with Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs in live commercials. She also worked with the Kroger Company testing and publishing recipes for Kroger products. Working with the State of TN as Assistant Commissioner of Commerce and Insurance, she shared consumer advice on the weekly broadcast of the Ralph Emery Show.

2) Dr. Jane Gilmer Landers

From the nomination: Jane Gilmer Landers is an historian of Colonial Latin America and the Atlantic World specializing in the history of Africans and their descendants in those worlds. She is the Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor of History at Vanderbilt University and has been documenting slavery for more than two decades. She directs the ESSSS Digital Archive at Vanderbilt which preserves endangered ecclesiastical and secular documents related to slavery in the Americas.

Jane Landers' scholarship led to the preservation of Nashville's historic Fort Negley which is fundamental to helping the world understand and fully acknowledge the injustices of slavery which persists to this day. This nomination is to recognize her important work at Fort Negley.

Commissioner Wynn made a motion to approve the nominees for Achievement Awards as presented. Commissioner McKee asked if anyone had other nominees to present. Hearing none, a roll call vote was done, and these two nominees were approved.

*The **Commissioners' Award** recognizes a group, program, or project that enhances Nashville's history and historic resources. It is designed to honor projects that do not fit within the traditional preservation award categories.*

1) Allen Forkum/Nashville Retrospect

From the nomination: Founded by Allen Forkum and launched in 2009, *The Nashville Retrospect* was a monthly newspaper devoted to Nashville nostalgia and history. AutoGraphic Publishing Company published *The Nashville Retrospect*; Mr. Forkum served as editor and publisher. Featuring reprints of long-forgotten news, articles by local historians, remembrances by older Nashvillians, and a calendar of history-related events, the broadsheet newspaper ran until December 2020.

2) Joe Chambers/Musicians Hall of Fame

From the nomination: Joe created a Musicians Hall of Fame in Nashville that honors musicians in the U.S. and world—primarily studio musicians who back the artists on their recordings. Joe has established his Hall of Fame in the Municipal Auditorium after his original site was shut down by the city. He has worked tirelessly to establish and maintain a site for tourists who can learn about those behind the artist's recordings and preserved a number of instruments in his museum. The Musicians Hall of Fame is a Nashville as well as National treasure—and it was founded and exists because of Joe Chambers.

Commissioner McKee made a motion to approve the nominees for Commissioners' Award as presented. A roll call vote was done, and these two nominees were approved.

Commissioner Bell made a motion to add the Nashville Conference on African American History and Culture to the list of Commissioners' Award nominees to honor its 40th anniversary. A roll call vote was done, with Commissioner Wynn abstaining, and this nomination was added.

*The **Fletch Coke Award** honors Mrs. Coke's extraordinary efforts to preserve the history and historic landmarks of Nashville and Davidson County. Recipients are selected for their tenacity, curious spirit, and excellence in historical research, writing, and promotion of Nashville's local history and historic places.*

1) Bob Mather (posthumously)

From MHC newsletter/obituary: Bob was a fixture in the Nashville City Cemetery Association, where he served on the Board of Directors. As an avid gardener and community volunteer, he was a current member of the Davidson County Master Gardeners where he previously served as President. Bob worked in the music industry for many years and retired from EMI Music Publishing as Vice President of Administration.

2) Michael Gray

From the nomination: Michael works for the Country Music Hall of Fame and organized the exhibit "Night Train to Nashville: Nashville Rhythm and Blues" and has been active in recognizing and supporting the Nashville R&B community. Recently, Michael hosted a Sunday afternoon performance and interview with Jimmy Church. He has supported Lorenzo Washington in his effort to preserve the musical history of Jefferson Street. Preserving the

R&B past of Nashville has been a passion of Michael's and he is a treasure chest of Nashville R&B history.

Commissioner Wynn made a motion to accept these nominees, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Leadership in History Award

This award is presented on occasion to someone who makes a tremendous contribution to the historical community. The 2021 nominee is:

Robert V. Allen (Bob) (posthumously)

- Author
- Historian
- Co-founder, Editor and Publisher, Author's Corner
- Founder, Bellevue History & Genealogy Group
- Commissioner, Metro Nashville Historical Commission
- Founder, Creative Memoirs and Storytelling Group
- Member, FiftyForward J. L. Turner Center Advocacy Council
- Board Member, Bellevue Edible Learning Lab (BELL Garden)
- 25-year Member, Exchange Club of Bellevue
- Founder, Friends of Grassmere Wildlife Park
- Founder, MicroNova Science Education Foundation
- Vanderbilt University School of Engineering 1966 graduate; Electrical Engineering

Commissioners Cotton and Bell made a motion to approve the nomination as presented, and it was approved by roll call vote. Commissioner Maddox asked Chair Bailey to clarify that the committee's nominations for the Commissioners' Awards were for the projects/groups-- *The Nashville Retrospect* and Musicians Hall of Fame. Chair Bailey and Commissioner McKee recognized the excellent work of the Nominations and the Events/Special Projects committees on this slate of nominees.

HISTORICAL MARKERS – *Jessica Reeves*

Jessica presented the John Robert Lewis marker, which was brought by CM Zulfat Suara and paid for with MHC funds. Jessica commented on the challenge of distilling his numerous contributions down to fit on a two-sided marker. The marker location at 6th Avenue and Commerce was selected by CM Zulfat Suara's committee to ensure high foot traffic and visibility, and the marker committee agreed. Commissioner Bridges made a motion to approve the marker text and Commissioner Wynn provided the second. A roll call vote was taken, and the marker was approved as presented. Chair Bailey recognized the excellent work of the marker committee to get this wording "just right."

UPDATE - Dr. Clay Bailey

Commissioner Maddox expressed interest in hearing a verbal Director's Report from Director Walker, in addition to a written one. She made a motion to add a verbal Director's Report to future meeting agendas and Commissioner Cotton seconded. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed. Commissioner Bell asked for clarification for the need of a verbal report due to the essential business requirements of virtual meetings. Discussion continued with comments from commissioners about feeling disconnected and missing the opportunity to ask questions about the report. Alex Dickerson stated that the MHC meetings have been limited to essential business based on his advice. Director Walker will send a written report each month and will be happy to give a verbal one at future meetings and continue to be available to answer questions. Commissioner Acker stated that he would appreciate still receiving the written report, with a short verbal report and question period at the meeting.

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Wynn moved to adjourn, and Commissioner Bridges seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, April 12, 2021.

Susie Dallas