

## 2016 Indiana Bicentennial Commission Orientation Meeting

Thursday January 12, 2012

10:00 a.m.

- Present:
  - Lt. Governor Becky Skillman
  - Congressman Lee Hamilton
  - Ellen Rosenthal
  - Jim Madison
  - Mickey Maurer
  - Mary McConnell
  - Elizabeth Osborn (proxy for Chief Justice Randall Shepard)
  - Judge Sarah Evans Barker
  - Tony George
  - P.E. MacAllister
  - Howard Cohen (phone)
  - Jim McCormick (phone)
  - Senator Jim Merritt
- Welcome, Review of Charge and Introductions
  - Lt. Governor Skillman started the meeting at 10:05 a.m. and welcomed everyone and thanked them for their willingness to serve on the Commission. She also discussed the charge of the Commission, as given by the Governor, to plan and execute events surrounding Indiana's Bicentennial celebration.
  - Congressman Lee Hamilton then echoed Skillman's thanks and wanted to encourage everyone to share openly their ideas moving forward and reminded the Commission that everyone has a role to play in Indiana's history.
- Project Updates
  - Skillman took some time to discuss the Governor's announcement at the State of the State regarding developing a Bicentennial Nature Trust.
  - Monies from three agencies: IDEM, DNR & Tourism totaling \$20 million.
  - DNR will serve as a filter for applications from different organizations across the state. Commission will select projects.
- Open Dialogue
  - Skillman then opened the meeting for dialogue on different ideas moving forward. Beforehand, she did reference different reading material on the history of Indiana, as well as articles regarding Tennessee's Bicentennial in 1986. Recommended reading material will be sent to Commission members.
  - Mickey Maurer asked Skillman to discuss more about the centennial celebration in 1916. Skillman stated that during the centennial celebration, the state park system was created. Many, including Jim Madison and Mary McConnell agreed this would be a

logical tie in to the bicentennial and the Nature Trust. Maurer also stressed the importance of having a staff member designated to researching items such as other states bicentennials as well as Indiana's centennial celebration. He also encouraged the involvement of kids in the process.

- Madison talked at length about the importance of Indiana's Constitution. The Constitution should be featured more prominently for the celebration. He also pointed out that the commission should look at states such as Ohio and Kentucky to examine their Bicentennial celebrations. He suggested that Ohio's celebration was lacking due to full-time staffing of the commission. He also noted that some of our flaws as a state could be addressed during this celebration in an adult manner.
  - Judge Barker talked a bit about the Courts involvement in past celebrations. Elizabeth Osborn talked about the Lincoln Bicentennial and how they had a speaker's bureau sponsored by the Courts. She suggested that the Courts may be interested in a similar program for this celebration. Barker also talked about the importance of being inclusive of all sectors/organizations in Indiana and also suggested that the group develop benchmark standards in which to determine success of the Commission. She suggested having a musical component of the celebration, possibly involving symphonies from across the state.
  - McConnell approached the subject of different funding streams and suggested it may be a good idea to look to community foundations for dollars.
  - P.E. MacAllister echoed the importance of having all counties buy in to this celebration. MacAllister also mentioned it may be a good idea to develop a "memento" to commemorate the occasion.
  - Hamilton brought up the idea of kicking off the bicentennial with a big extravaganza early on in 2016. This would provide a focal point for the celebration. He also discussed having a state wide essay contest. Allowing each high school to pick an essay winner, then having a state wide competition.
  - Hamilton discussed the need to involve many organizations in this process, such as trade groups, professional organizations, social studies teachers, former governors, athletes and universities. Hamilton encouraged the group to think about what Indiana should be proud of and how we could feature such ideas. He also suggested that the group take time to read through some articles and findings on Indiana history and be thinking of "key Hoosiers" who can be involved in the celebration.
  - Skillman closed the meeting by letting the group know that she will work to identify, along with Hamilton, staffers for the Commission moving forward and will have a list of proposed subcommittees as well as a proposed meeting schedule and agenda for the next meeting.
- The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m. to go meet with Governor Daniels.