

Hall of Fame Commission Meeting

February 23, 2021

3:10 – 4:00 p.m. CST

Chairman Hull began the meeting at 3:12 p.m. by stating that a notice to the press had been given, and that the Open Meetings Act had been posted.

Chairman Hull then asked for a Roll Call.

Roll Call

Present: Rod Bates, Sara Crook, Tim Heller, Ron Hull, Trevor Jones, Aaron Wyatt

Not Present: Ron Naugle

Assistant to Commission: Anne Dorsheimer

Chairman Hull asked for a motion to approve the Minutes from October 6, 2019.

Motion to approve Minutes from October 6, 2019.

Motioned by Rod Bates, Seconded by Tim Heller

Roll Call:

Yes: Rod Bates, Sara Crook, Tim Heller, Ron Hull, Trevor Jones, Aaron Wyatt

No: 0

Not Present: Ron Naugle

Motion to approve Minutes passed.

Chairman Hull proceeded to the first Agenda item for Trevor Jones to bring members up to date and to look ahead for the year for the Commission.

Trevor began by mentioning members should have received a list of names for the nominations for the Hall of Fame from Anne. Four have been received so far:

- David Kaufmann
- Grover Cleveland Alexander
- Howard Hansen
- Reverend Hiram Hisanori Kano

Trevor reminded commissioners that the process stays open until the end of this calendar year and that Anne sent members a link Drive to the nomination materials. He stated that in this round we are requiring everyone to submit their nominations electronically.

Trevor asked the commission to discuss how to best publicize that nominations are open until the end of the year? Do we want to think about doing another press release to push for nominations? Are there other ideas besides press releases that the nominations are open?

Rod Bates asked Trevor where we are on announcements. Trevor responded that we have posted on History Nebraska's social media feeds and also sent it to media outlets.

Tim Heller proposed that we do a press conference, as opposed to a press release, where you walk through the statues and talk about the process. Trevor stated that History Nebraska is happy to facilitate press releases, but Commission members would need to take the lead on hosting the press conference.

Chairman Hull expressed support for a press conference. For years, the Commission has thought about bringing more attention to schools and the public about the Hall of Fame.

Tim Heller added that walking through the capitol building and statues, and explaining the process would be a nice for television.

Chairman Hull suggested we have a press conference in the Capitol and talk about the last people we've inducted. Tim Heller stated we'd mention those that are a little more well known. Chairman Hull asked Trevor Jones, how do we implement this?

Tim Heller suggested sending a press release with the location and time. Trevor Jones explained that we need more help, because we have limited resources to commit to the various projects, so if this is a project else someone else wants to spearhead, we will support it, but it may not be feasible for our marketing team. Tim suggested to set a date and a time, and stated further that since we are pushing for funding, it is always good to have that extra attention in the media.

Rod Bates mentioned there are people in the media he could talk to in order to push that story.

Sara Crook suggested Bob Ripley at the Capitol is a good contact. Sara explained that we can discuss the last inductee, Willa Cather, and what we are doing in Washington D.C. in the same press conference. She suggested the summer, and to not to wait until fall, because people are going to make a nomination and need time to do that research. She recommended sometime this summer when all members feel comfortable getting together in person.

Chairman Hull agreed to a press conference in early summer in June.

Tim Heller asked Trevor to confirm that the marketing team has sent out a press release before, and then asked if it would be simpler to do the press conference in June, and another press release at the end of September? Trevor asked for a confirmation that a press release goes out now, a press conference will be conducted in June, and another press release issued in September. Tim Heller confirmed this.

Tim Heller asked the Commission to consider that he will be out of town from June 15th to March 3rd. Chairman Hull mentioned to do the press conference before then.

Rod Bates asked to explore the possibility of getting a television station in to do a story. Trevor responded, yes. Rod suggested NET and KOLN-KGIN. Another option is to go to the Nebraska Broadcasters Association.

Tim Heller asked if this would this be a subject that is appropriate for Pure Nebraska? He mentioned this organization goes out and celebrates events like this across the state.

Rod Bates mentioned he'd speak to an individual to connect with these organizations to generate interest. Tim Heller also mentioned to have contact with the TV stations in Omaha. He also asked, can we get the Governor involved?

Rod Bates stated that the Governor is on our Commission. Chairman Hull mentioned that he can be helpful in the press conference. Tim Heller noted that it is just a walk down the hall for him. Rod Bates will explore this.

Chairman Hull asked Trevor Jones how often does the Commission meet and is it at a certain frequency?

Trevor Jones answered that there is nothing in the state statute regarding that, only that the Commission should carry out its business.

Sara Crook mentioned that next year we have to hold three hearings in legislative districts, and the rest is subjective depending on how often members meet. Tim Heller asked how far ahead do we need to start planning on those, as far as locations and dates? Trevor responded that we have not traditionally planned those hearings until the nomination process closes.

Chairman Hull asked where we are in the sequence of five years? Trevor responded that we are in the second year. The first year is when we put the nominations up. In the second year, we take nominations from January 2021 until December 2021. We have until the end of this year to accept nominations. During the third year (2022), we hold hearings in Congressional Districts and a meeting in March, to start testimony.

Trevor stated that the statute requires hearings in each Congressional District, but it does not say when or how. He noted that we need to review nominations as a Commission at the first meeting in 2022 and determine if each nomination meets the application criteria and is complete. In the past, hearings were held in Norfolk and in David City in 2017 for District 1, the Mormon Trails Center and Historic Winter Quarters in District 2, and then in District 3, the Commission held the hearing at Phelps County Historical Society in Holdrege. Nothing in the statute states where they have to be, just that they have to be in each district. Chairman Hull also remembers holding a hearing in North Platte.

Tim Heller mentioned that Ashley might appreciate some publicity if we used space at the Willa Cather Center.

Trevor summarized that the hearings are in July 2022 and that selection occurs in August 2022. The Commission will begin the process of selecting the artist. Chairman Hull asked about the completion of the bust and if we finish in 2023? Trevor stated that the bust should be finished in 2024. Then in January 2025, the Commission starts a new cycle again.

Chairman Hull moved to the next Agenda item regarding LB 42 with an explanation from Tim Heller.

Tim Heller began by stating that Senator Dorn has reintroduced funding for the Hall of Fame and that there is a hearing coming up on Friday at 1:30 p.m. He suggested that a couple of members should be there and that the others should submit comments online. Tim Heller, Chairman Hull, and Trevor Jones will testify. Tim encouraged everyone to submit comments online to the Nebraska Legislature or to write letters. In response to Sara Crook's question, Tim responded that this is not designed for the wealthy, that every Nebraskan would have access to it, it is based on merit, and it would not be a burden on any individual or ancestor to bear this.

Sara Crook mentioned that it becomes the property of the State of Nebraska, so if it is to become their property, the state should pay for it. She asked how much we submitted it for and Tim answered that Senator Dorn submitted it for \$10,000 per year. Rod Bates mentioned there was money in the original program and we are just restoring it, so it's not new. Sara Crook mentioned that she doesn't recall that the legislation had money assigned. Tim noted that it wasn't budgeted, but there was a provision in it to be budgeted at a certain time.

Trevor said it goes into the Hall of Fame Trust Fund, which is already established and gets invested by the state investment council, and that would actually earn a return on this, and this would be growing the fund over time, which would help deal with cost increases.

Sara Crook noted we have two cycles before we make the next bust, and then installment in 2024.

Chairman Hull asked if there is anything else to bring before the commission.

Motion to adjourn

Motioned by Tim Heller, Seconded by Sara Crook

Roll Call:

Yes: Rod Bates, Sara Crook, Tim Heller, Ron Hull, Trevor Jones, Aaron Wyatt

No: 0

Not Present: Ron Naugle

Motion to adjourn passed.

Meeting adjourned at 3:49 p.m.