

**Willa Cather National Statuary Hall Selection Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday, February 23, 2021**

**1:30 – 3:00 p.m. CST**

**ZOOM**

At 1:46 p.m., Chairman Ron Hull called the meeting to order, stating that a notice to the press had been given, and that the Open Meetings Act had been printed.

Chairman Hull asked for a Roll Call vote.

Roll Call:

Present: Rod Bates, Ron Hull, Aaron Wyatt

Tim Heller joined the meeting at 1:52 p.m.

Sara Crook joined the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Trevor Jones joined the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Guests Present: Ruth Haley Keene, Ashley Olson

Not Present: Ron Naugle

Assistant to the Committee: Anne Dorsheimer

Chairman Hull pointed members to their packets and thanked Anne for the detailed minutes. Chairman Hull indicated we needed to approve the minutes for January 12, 2021 and asked for a motion.

Motion to approve minutes for January 12, 2021.

Motioned by Aaron Wyatt, Seconded by Rod Bates.

Roll Call:

Yes: Rod Bates, Ron Hull, Aaron Wyatt

No: 0

Not Present: Sara Crook, Ron Naugle, Tim Heller, Trevor Jones

Motion to approve Minutes passes.

Chairman Hull mentioned he has tried to reach Ron Naugle, who is a member of the Willa Cather National Statuary Hall Selection Committee until he is replaced. Individuals are able to apply with the Governor's Office, and two people have submitted their applications with credentials to replace Ron Naugle.

Chairman Hull stated that Ron Naugle lives at Eastmont Towers, and his cell phone is not taking messages and no one answers the apartment. Finally, today, Chairman Hull spoke with a nurse, who stated that Ron Naugle is not presently living in his apartment and neither is his wife, Gretchen. Chairman Hull expressed hope that both are well.

Chairman Hull cited the responsibilities we have in forming committees. What is the frequency of these meetings? Should we meet once a month for the next few months? Chairman Hull started with Aaron Wyatt.

Aaron stated that once a target date is established, then we can increase the frequency of meetings. Rod Bates noted that Zoom is effective and we can have these meetings every two weeks, or more frequently.

Tim Heller entered the meeting at 1:52 p.m.

Chairman Hull welcomed Tim Heller to the meeting, and proceeded to ask Ashley Olson for her opinion.

Ashley stated that it depends on the decision of the Committee. She suggested monthly meetings may be needed for the Committee to make decisions jointly as a group. Ruth Haley-Keene agreed to once a month for the Committee. Tim indicated to meet as often as needed.

Chairman Hull's goal is that by August, every decision should be made and we would be ready. He confirmed that he liked the idea in terms of the Committee meeting once a month. There will be two meetings a month, at least one for subcommittees, and one for the Committee.

Attached to the materials is a sample program for the dedication committee, and Ron indicated he wanted the Committee to decide on the program. Nancy Pelosi's office handles most of the details. We do choose two people with the Governor and others, Senate, and Congress, to unveil the statute. The Committee will make recommendations to choose two people.

Chairman Hull asked to talk about the program committee for the dedication, which is the unveiling of the statue. Who presents the colors? Who does the invitations? Who is invited from our state delegation? Do we have a speaker or music? He reminded the Committee that we have exactly one hour. Who will make national leadership remarks to include republicans and democrats? Who does the benediction? These are items that the subcommittee is responsible for.

The other committee is the reception committee. The invitation list is very important. Sara Crook suggested there should be a subcommittee for the invitation list for the reception and also for the dedication ceremony. Chairman Hull mentioned that at the Standing Bear Ceremony, there were 200 people in the audience that proceeded to the reception. Aaron agreed that this is correct, and we only need one committee to handle invitations. With that, Chairman Hull, asked for volunteers to serve on the program committee:

Tim Heller and Ron Hull volunteered.

Rod Bates asked if most of this isn't run by Nancy Pelosi? Chairman Hull stated that yes, she approves, but we still have that responsibility.

Ruth Haley-Keene mentioned that the Committee should give ideas regarding who will administer, and who the benediction person is, and that this group should make all the suggestions. Ruth will give ideas, but will still have the Committee make planning decisions for the dedication ceremony. Ashley Olson will be happy to serve on the subcommittee as well.

**The Program Committee consists of: Tim Heller, Ron Hull, Ashley Olson.**

Sara Crook entered the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Chairman Hull welcomed Sara Crook. Aaron Wyatt and Ron Hull both attended the Standing Bear ceremonies, and Chairman Hull stated that we only need one committee for the invitation list,

because virtually the same 200 people at the unveiling with Nancy Pelosi moved to the reception area after the ceremony. With regard to the reception, Chairman Hull remarked that the reception involves anything we want to do and we can make every decision about that.

Ashley Olson suggested Laura Bush be invited to speak at the dedication ceremony, and Ruth indicated that we need to get on the ball and get that rolling! There were suggestions regarding singing, or speaking, and Nebraska actors, but the subcommittee will give recommendations to the Committee. The subcommittee will decide the shape of it and come back to the Committee and vote on it.

Chairman Hull asked Sara if she approved of the subcommittee structure and she said, yes.

**The Dedication Program Committee consists of Tim Heller, Ron Hull, Ashley Olson**

Chairman Hull asked regarding the Invitation List Subcommittee: Who wants to serve on this?

Aaron Wyatt volunteered for this subcommittee.

Ruth Haley-Keene inquired regarding whether or not members can serve on multiple committees. Chairman Hull responded that he intends this to be democratic and for members to have input, but that he will need to keep things moving along.

Aaron requested that he be the point person and central location for the invitation list. In response to Rod Bates' question on how much responsibility we have for invitations, Chairman Hull reiterated that Nancy Pelosi's office decides who is coming, and then we get the rest. According to the Standing Bear Ceremony, they had 50 people. Ruth Haley-Keene also suggested to have the Willa Cather Foundation give input regarding the list. Chairman Hull agreed.

Ruth reiterated with Chairman Hull's agreement that the model of subcommittees works to offer recommendations to the Committee. Tim Heller agreed.

Aaron Wyatt reinforced that he would administer the invitation list. Chairman Hull and the rest of the Committee agreed. Ashley indicated efficiencies would be gained and that we would avoid confusion between the reception and dedication and the night before event. Ashley Olson's office is happy to offer help as well.

**Invitation List Committee: Rod Bates, Ruth Haley-Keene, Aaron Wyatt, Ashley Olson**

Chairman Hull asked for volunteers for the Reception Program Subcommittee: Tim Heller and Sara Crook volunteered.

**The Reception Program Committee is: Sara Crook, Tim Heller, Ashley Olson**

Chairman Hull requested that each subcommittee be prepared to report to the Committee a month from now. Chairman Hull asked Anne Dorsheimer if she has the names for each subcommittee and she confirmed, yes.

Chairman Hull recommended discussing the Maquette policy. Chairman Hull stated that we need Trevor Jones for this discussion. The Commission decided that this was not in our purview to be involved in the sale of Maquettes, but it is in the interest of the Willa Cather Foundation to do so.

Ashley's notes on the matter are reflected with Trevor Jones' words. Chairman Hull asked Ashley if she had any questions?

Ashley noted that Chairman Hull's description fits her recollection of the past discussion. She stated further that Trevor mentioned that it needs to be formally reflected in minutes. She noted that the Committee owns the rights to the statue and the image, so Trevor will need to issue a formal confirmation, so that the Willa Cather Foundation can take this on. Ashley stated that Trevor mentioned there needs to be a Committee vote to authorize him to give the Foundation the rights to produce Maquettes with Littleton Alston.

Questions arose whether or not the Willa Cather National Statuary Hall Selection Committee or the Hall of Fame Commission has the rights to authorize and whether this Committee can make the motion. It is believed by Aaron Wyatt and Ruth Haley-Keene that the Commission has the rights, not the Committee. Sara Crook believes that the Committee has these rights and Chairman Hull mentioned that we need Trevor's counsel.

Chairman Hull moved forward to reception plans the night before, which would be conducted by the Willa Cather Foundation. He indicated that it is an entirely different group, inviting Willa Cather donors from a wide range of states and D.C. He added that the Committee will help facilitate that, as well.

Ruth mentioned that on the invitation list, we'll have a list of 50 people that have to be provided to the dedication and reception. Chairman Hull and Aaron Wyatt agreed, and Aaron also stated that there can be a constant shuffling of commitments.

Aaron remarked that last time, there were a few Senators in attendance, but if we assume each Unicameral Senator plus one, that is almost 100 people on an invitation list. Aaron emphasized the need on how to respond and communicate that invitation, and that we will need a quick response. Individuals may only have two weeks to plan for flights. Chairman Hull recognized the complication and remarked on last minute items and the need to deal diplomatically with requests.

Sara asked if she missed discussion on when this all may happen?

Chairman Hull answered, no, not since Katie Brossy last spoke to the Committee. He stated that we have wonderful advisors with Katie Brossy and her mother, Judi Gaiashkibos, and he would like to bring her in on the next round. He stated that we have a new administration and Nancy Pelosi is still Speaker of the House. We will try to find out an approximate date, but probably Spring 2022.

Aaron mentioned that during post ceremony reception last year, State Senator Brewer recognized Katie Brossy and thanked her, and he thought to consider what kind of token of appreciation the Committee can do to recognize all the pro-bono work she is doing for us.

Chairman Hull reiterated that the Committee can make the dedication program anything we want it to be. He then listed Speakers on the program. He mentioned the Committee would have Littleton Alston speak as the Sculptor.

Chairman Hull inquired if we invite Sen. Brewer back and the Senators in the Nebraska Legislature responsible for Willa Cather and Standing Bear? He stated that we have to think about that, but this can be of our own making. He noted that at the bottom, it states program partners, not sponsors. He

also noted that we have to remember the subcommittee for planning the reception with the University of Nebraska, which has guaranteed up to \$30,000. Chancellor Ron Greene will have a position on that, and the Committee will have to think that through.

Ruth Haley-Keene stated that if we consider Laura Bush, we should get on it right away. She thought that looking at the program of the Dedication, and with the exception of musical and speaker, each of these things take up a lot of space and eat up 45-50 minutes of the hour, which is not necessarily an appropriate place for Laura Bush. The reception program is a little more flexible and has a little more time, and she may fit into this program more. She suggested that we should take this off the table or go further.

Chairman Hull agreed that we can't invite Laura Bush to come and do a four-minute presentation, because that is not enough or long enough to be worth it for her. Ruth concluded that we can put her on the invitation list, because she is a substantial contributor. The subcommittee will reflect on these possibilities.

**Motion to give the Willa Cather Foundation the rights to the sculpture's design to the Willa Cather Foundation to make Maquettes.**

Motioned by Sara Crook, Seconded by Tim Heller.

Roll Call:

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

No: 0

Not Present: Ron Naugle, Trevor Jones

Motion to approve Motion passes.

**Motion to Adjourn.**

Motioned by Tim Heller, seconded by Sara Crook.

Roll Call:

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

No: 0

Not Present: Trevor Jones, Ron Naugle

Motion to Adjourn passes.

2:34 p.m. Adjourn