



Willa Cather National Statuary Hall Selection Committee  
History Nebraska, Capitol View Room and by Zoom  
1500 R St, Lincoln, NE 68508  
May 24, 2023 - 12:00 PM

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## **MINUTES**

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Sara Crook at 12:00 PM

### **Notice to the Press**

The meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star on May 23,, 2023

### **Nebraska Open Meetings Act**

The meeting was in compliance

### **Roll Call**

PRESENT - Rod Bates, Sara Crook, Jill Dolberg, Timothy Heller, Jim McKee

ABSENT - Aaron Wyatt

GUESTS PRESENT - Littleton Alston, Ruth Haley Keene, Ashley Olson, Mike Zeleny

### **Review of Minutes from the May 4, 2023 Meeting**

#### Motion to approve May 4, 2023 minutes

Motion by: Jim McKee

Second: Jill Dolberg

Yes: Rod Bates, Sara Crook, Jill Dolberg, Timothy Heller, Jim McKee

**Motion adopted**

### **Review of Minutes from the May 17, 2023 Meeting**

#### Motion to approve May 17, 2023 minutes

Motion by: Jim McKee

Second: Jill Dolberg

Yes: Rod Bates, Sara Crook, Jill Dolberg, Timothy Heller, Jim McKee

**Motion adopted**

## Subcommittee for the Dedication Ceremony

- Ashley Olson confirmed that John Cather Ickis who is the Grand Nephew of Willa Cather will be attending and is delighted to help pull the cord for unveiling the statue.
- Tim Heller confirmed that Bishop Michael Curry will be offering the Invocation.
- Sara Crook confirmed that Lora Black will read a Willa Cather passage.
- Sara Crook reported that Senator Fischer and Congressman Smith will be speaking at the dedication.

### Motion to pay for Lora Black's travel expenses out of the Willa Cather funds

Motion by: Jill Dolberg

Second: Jim McKee

Yes: Rod Bates, Sara Crook, Timothy Heller, Ron Hull, Jim McKee

#### **Motion adopted**

- Ashley Olson confirmed the Omaha Conservatory of Music String Quartet.
- Katie Brossy offered the following music updates from the Speaker of the House
  - The Prelude and Postlude should be performed by an instrument-only group.
    - The Prelude and Postlude will be performed by the Omaha Conservatory of Music String Quartet.
      - Katie will check on time allowed for each and if there are limits as to what music can be played.
  - The National Anthem performance will be selected by the Speaker of the House.
- Seating will begin at 10:15 with the dedication starting promptly at 11:00.

## Statue Update

- Katie Brossy confirmed that everything is on track to move the Cather statue into the US Capitol on Friday. The existing Morton statue will be moved out on Friday evening.
- Littleton Alston reported that the Morton statue will be transported back to the storage unit in Maryland. The same crate will be used to transport the Morton statue back to Nebraska when it is time to do so.

## Subcommittee for the Receptions

- Katie Brossy reported that the reception will be held in the Rules Committee Room, Room 301 in the Russell Senate Office Building.
- Ashley Olson was contacted and was told that a waiver may be required for the String Quartet to perform at the reception.
  - Katie Brossy will check on this and report back.
- Congressman Flood has requested to speak at both receptions on Tuesday and Wednesday reception.
- Congressman Bacon has requested to speak at the reception the night before the dedication.
- Senator Ricketts has not responded to requests one way or the other. If we receive a last minute request we will make that work.
- Katie Brossy reported that Senator Fischer's office is checking on her availability.
- Jill Dolberg reported that Rixstine does not have a completed date regarding the wooden boxes for the medallions but has promised to have them in time.
- How many medallions should we take with us to Washington and how many do we leave behind?
- The medallions will be brought as luggage.
  - Katie Brossy will check to see how we can get these into the Senate Russell Building.
- The medallions will be distributed as guests arrive at the reception. A sign-up sheet will be provided for requests for extra medallions.
- Lezlee Williams and Ruth Haley Keene will greet guests at the front table and distribute programs and medallions.
- Senator Fischer's office has agreed to allow us to borrow their Willa Cather maquette for both receptions.
  - Katie Brossy will contact Senator Fischer's office to see if they are willing to transport the maquette to the Tuesday evening reception and the Wednesday reception.
- Ashley Olson reported that the updated draft has been sent to the printer. As soon as a proof is received it will be circulated.
- Sara Crook reported that she has received everyone's remarks for the Tuesday reception.
- Katie Brossy offered that according to protocol the delegates should speak at the beginning of the receptions in case they have other events to attend.
  - It was decided that Chancellor Green will be the first speaker at the Wednesday event since the University of Nebraska is sponsoring this reception.

### **Subcommittee for the Invitation List**

- Katie Brossy reported that official email invitations have been sent and it's required to RSVP by email as soon as possible.
- Aaron Wyatt has provided that the second list has been sent to the Speaker's Office.
- Aaron Wyatt reported that to date he has 172 confirmed as attending and have been sent to the Speaker's Office.
  - Aaron has also received eight RSVPs for the Lincoln event.
- Katie has sent the Speaker's Office additional names for Senator's Fischer's office and her law firm. She will provide these names to Aaron Wyatt and Jennifer from the Willa Cather Foundation.
- Confirmed state elected officials attending: Governor Pillen, Senator Burke Haar, Senator Wishart, Senator Sanders and Secretary of State Evnen

### **Public Relations Update**

- Ashley Olson reported that the press release is going out at 1:00 today, May 24.

### **Travel Reimbursement Information**

- Jill Dolberg reported that the travel expenses for the Commission members and Lora Black will be reimbursed. This includes airfare, accommodations, incidental expenses and a per diem rate for meals.

### **Meeting Adjourned at 1:03 pm**

Submitted by:  
Jill Dolberg, Secretary  
History Nebraska

**Approved by Willa Cather National Statuary Hall Selection Committee  
June 22, 2023**