

Ohio Commission for the U.S. Semiquincentennial
Approved Meeting minutes – Quarterly meeting
National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center
Wilberforce, Ohio
June 16, 2023

Commission members present:

- Michael B. Coleman (co-chair) IceMiller
- Doug Preisse (co-chair), Van Meter-Ashbrook
- State Sen. Hearcel Craig
- Kathryn Dean-Dielman, Lorain County Historical Society-board president
- Kelly Falcone Hall, Western Reserve Historical Society-executive director
- John Fleming, Ph.D., museum professional
- State Representative Adam Holmes
- Vincent Keeran, Ohio Senate Clerk
- Sharon Kennedy, Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice
- Megan Kvamme, Muskingum County entrepreneur
- State Representative Joe Miller
- Charley Moses, Ohio History Connection-board president
- Kim Murnieks, Office of Budget and Management-director
- Sharetta Smith, mayor of Lima
- Hon. Ted Strickland, former Governor/former member of Congress
- Samantha Turner, Youngstown City Council
- Ginger Warner, Ohio Arts Council-board chair
- Megan Wood, (secretary, ex-officio), Ohio History Connection-executive director

Absent: Christy Davis, Ohio Local History Alliance-immediate past president, Museum of Art-curator of exhibitions; Steve Hambley, Medina County Commissioner; Thomas Hankins, Sons of the American Revolution/Committee to Rebuild Fort Laurens; Nancy Hollister, former Governor/Lt. Governor; Melinda Huntley, Ohio Travel Association-executive director; State Sen. George Lang; Adam Levine, Toledo Museum of Art-director; Glenn Miller, County Commissioners' Assn. of Ohio board president; Paul Oyaski, fmr mayor of Euclid/fmr Cuyahoga County Development Department director; Elizabeth Pierce, Cincinnati Museum Center- executive director; Mackensie Wittmer, National Aviation Heritage Area-executive director

Staff: Todd Kleismit, executive director
Jodie Engle, managing director
Chris Hurtubise, communications director
C. Patrick Denier, assistant attorney general
Taylor Tomu, community engagement specialist

Guests: Charles Bluestone, Bluestone Law Group; Donna Collins, Executive Director, Ohio Arts Council; Steve George, Chief Advisor to the CEO, Ohio History Connection; Alyssa Guthrie, Executive Assistant to Chief Justice Sharon Kennedy; Chris Miller, Director of Education, National Underground Railroad Freedom Center; Susan Leininger, State Regent, Ohio Society- Daughters of the American Revolution; Frances McGee-Cromartie, Ohio Society-Daughters of the American Revolution; Chris Nehring, State Vice Regent, Ohio Society-Daughters of the American Revolution; Dave Nolin, Author; Jeff Ward, Ohio History Connection; Dr. Chuck Wash, National Afro-American Museum & Cultural Center.

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CALL TO ORDER: Commission Co-Chair Michael B. Coleman called the Commission meeting to order at 10:39 am.

Co-Chair Coleman called attention to the site of the meeting, and asked America 250-Ohio Commission member and Founding Director of the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center (NAAMCC) John Fleming to say a few words.

Co-Chair Doug Puisse welcomed the commissioners, guests and staff to the meeting. He then invited Executive Director Dr. Chuck Wash to say a few words of welcome and share information about current and upcoming exhibits at the NAAMCC.

Commission Secretary Megan Wood took the roll: There were (17) commissioners, (1) ex-officio commissioners, AM 250-OH Commission staff, (1) Attorney General's Office staff, (12) guests were present, (11) commissioners were absent. Secretary Wood confirmed the presence of a quorum. Co-chair Coleman asked if there were any corrections or discussions of the minutes from the March 9, 2023 Commission meeting that were distributed. There were none.

MOTION: Samantha Turner made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 9, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Senator Hearcel Craig. The motion passed.

Executive Director's Report

Todd Kleismit gave his executive director's report. Highlights included:

- Personnel Update
 - Taylor Tomu, community engagement representative.
- Since we last met
 - AM 250-OH Commission social media channels have been launched.
 - AM 250-OH Commission Headquarters have moved from the Rhodes Tower to the Huntington Center Building.
 - Results of the in-kind contributions from the Outdoor Advertising Association of Ohio are 72 million impressions around the state and \$500,000 in advertising value.
 - AM 250-OH Commission staff have participated in numerous outreach opportunities including:
 - Ohio Tourism Day – engaged 300+ people.
 - Speaking engagements including the Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Society of Archivists and Ohio Museums Association.
 - Youngstown event gathered stakeholders from three counties.
- Director Kleismit testified several times for the AM 250-OH Commission budget to both the Ohio Senate and House Committees.
- Director Kleismit has focused on relationship-building and has developed key strategic partnerships across the state.
- Colonial Williamsburg Meeting
 - Director Kleismit attended an informal gathering of America 250 state representatives and reported the following takeaways:
 - Virginia and Pennsylvania are leading the way.
 - Ohio seems to be ahead of other states and is serving as a model for other commissions.
 - This was a great opportunity for relationship-building with other state commissions and staff now have stronger ties to Northwest Ordinance states.
 - AM 250-Ohio staff continue to stay engaged at the national level through regular meetings with America 250 and the America Association for State & Local History.
- Finance Updates
 - Director Kleismit reviewed the FY23 Budget to Actual Report. Expenditures have increased but a

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healthy balance of the \$500,000 allocated from the FY23 GRF remains. (See report)

- Support Structure
 - The Am 250-OH committees will be reactivated later this year now that an amendment to the Commission’s statute has been passed that allows the committees to meet virtually.
- Awareness
 - AM250-OH will be hiring a PR firm to assist with building awareness. The goal is to have the selection process completed by August. This will support the Commission’s charge to drive awareness, encourage tourism and gain exposure for participation.
- Communications
 - A stakeholder’s tool is in process and will be previewed in September. Regular stakeholder communications through a monthly eNewsletter will begin soon.
- AM 250-OH Barn
 - On June 15, 2023, the first America 250 barn painting was completed and several media outlets covered the story. Scott Hagan, who painted the Ohio Bicentennial barns, is the artist behind this America 250 barn. Approximately 40 people, including community leaders and local CVB representatives, attended to mark the occasion. Discussion ensued about future plans for AM 250-OH barns.
- Upcoming Priorities
 - Director Kleismit reported on the staff’s plans to establish an Under-Told Stories Committee to ensure diverse stories are represented and incorporated in the work of the Commission.
 - There will be an emphasis on generating non-state resources and support to supplement the Commission’s work.
 - Plans are underway to create an AM 250-OH grants program available to local entities across the state that will be complementary to existing grant programs.

Strategic Framework Discussion

Jodie Engle presented the outcomes of the AM 250-OH strategic framing session held in April 2023. The session was facilitated by Toni Bell of Phoenix Consulting Company and involved several Commissioners, stakeholders and guests.

- The goal of the session was to gain a fuller understanding of AM 250-OH’s opportunities, develop a plan for prioritizing opportunities given staff size and resources and outlining next steps. The three priorities that emerged from the session are:
 - Achieve 88-county engagement
 - Transparent communication with stakeholders
 - Financial support to Ohio’s communities
- Staff plan to hold future strategic framework sessions on various topics.

Sneak peek of New Website

Chris Hurtubise thanked Ohio History Connection for hosting a page about AM 250-OH while the Commission’s website is under development. Ms. Hurtubise shared the following updates:

- A web developer was hired to design the new website, and Ms. Hurtubise presented an overview of the homepage to date, with spots for news stories, blog posts, partnerships and other pages to come.
- Storytelling is an emphasis of the Commission and will be prominently featured on the website, including a section for people to share their story and how it connects to Ohio’s story.
- Ms. Hurtubise invited the Commissioners to review the website as it’s in progress and provide feedback.

State Budget Update

Co-Chair Preisse shared a brief update on the FY24 budgeting process, which is wrapping up within the next couple of weeks.

- As it currently stands, the AM 250-OH budget allocation has been reduced from Governor DeWine’s

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recommendation to \$3-5M by the Ohio House and reduced to \$2-3M by the Ohio Senate since the release of the Governor’s budget. Although it appears the budget will be smaller than initially planned, the Commission still has considerable funding and significant work can get done.

- Co-Chair Puisse publicly thanked Senator Craig and Representative Holmes for their essential support in the state legislature.

Adoption of FY24 Preliminary Commission Budget Resolution 2023-05

Director Kleismit presented an overview of a preliminary FY24 AM 250-OH budget that staff developed based on the \$2M GRF budget the General Assembly is likely to pass for FY24.

- Co-Chair Puisse reported an amendment has been attached to the FY24 AM 250-OH budget allowing two or more Commission members (less than quorum) to meet and/or meet online without activating public meeting rules. As the Ohio Revised Code language currently stands, the meeting of two or more Commission members constitutes a public meeting and meetings are required to occur in-person.
- Director Kleismit reported that in FY24, AM 250-OH expects to add more staff members, build capacity for operations, engage in work requiring contractor services and roll out a grants program later in 2023.
- Director Kleismit reported the preliminary FY24 budget proposes a 2.5% administrative overhead cost (\$50,000) allocated to Ohio History Connection to cover the significant time, expertise and services the Finance, HR and other departments continuously provide the AM 250-OH Commission.
- Discussion ensued about the FY24 preliminary budget.
 - Co-Chair Puisse recommended that since the Commission needs authorization for spending in July and August, the Budget Resolution could be amended to state that expenditures are authorized “with approval of Co-Chairs.”

MOTION: Chief Justice Sharon Kennedy made a motion to amend Resolution 2023-05, strike “consultation” and insert “subject to approval of the Co-chairs.” Seconded by Samantha Turner. The motion passed.

MOTION: Chief Justice Kennedy made a motion to approve the Resolution 2023-05 – Amended. Seconded Kathy Dean-Dielman. The motion passed.

MOTION: Chief Justice Kennedy made a motion to amend Resolution 2023-06 to state, “hereby authorizes the Executive Director subject to the approval of the co-chair...” Seconded by Megan Wood. The motion passed.

MOTION: Vince Keeran made a motion to approve the Resolution 2023-06 – Amended. Seconded by Representative Miller. The motion passed.

New Business

Director Kleismit introduced the Under-Told Stories Committee and the co-chairs of the new committee, Chris Miller of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and Kathy Dean-Dielman.

MOTION: Co-Chair Puisse made a motion to approve the Under-Told Stories Committee Resolution 2023-07. Seconded by Kelly Falcone Hall. Motion Passed.

The next Commission meeting will take place on Thursday, Sep 14 and will be hosted by Kelly Falcone Hall and the Western Reserve Historical Society. Director Kleismit shared there is also an opportunity to join the America 250 Pennsylvania Commission for an evening event in Erie, PA on Sep 14. More details to come.

MOTION: State Sen. Hearcel Craig moved to adjourn. State Representative Joe Miller seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 12:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jodie Engle on behalf of Commission Secretary, Megan Wood.