

MINUTES Meeting January 31, 2024

LINCOLN LEGACY COMMITTEE
Scheduled for Busey Bank Conference Room moved by Library to Room C
CHAMPAIGN PUBLIC LIBRARY
200 WEST GREEN STREET
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

4:30 P.M. WEDNESDAY January 31, 2024

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Barb Oehlschlaeger-Garvey (hereafter referred to as Barb OG) at 4:40 p.m. Ray Cunningham began recording the meeting. It should be noted that the location of the meeting was changed by the Champaign Public Library from the Busey Bank Conference Room to Robeson Room C, without notice, hence the meeting began a bit late as members relocated.

2. Roll Call-Barb OG called roll. Present were: Barb OG, Barbara Wysocki, Ray Cunningham, Kay Grabow, Eric Thorsland Absent: Adele Suslick, Pat Cain.

NB: It was reported that Kamryn Suttinger, the Director of the Museum and Education Department for the Champaign County Forest Preserve District was invited to this meeting but was unable to attend and said she would attend future meetings.

3. Approval of Agenda/Addendum/Addenda

Eric Thorsland moved approval of the agenda; Barbara Wysocki seconded. Through voice vote, the minutes were unanimously accepted.

4. Approval of Minutes

Eric Thorsland moved approval of the minutes from November 29, 2023. Ray Cunningham seconded. Barb O-G made one correction, the date on the minutes had not been changed from September to November. That change is noted here. No other corrections were noted. Through voice vote, the minutes were unanimously accepted.

5. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

6. Old Business

a. General Updates (school tours) There have been no school tours in the interim since the November 29, 2023, meeting. Barbara Wysocki projected there may be some in the Spring.

b. Update on the Courthouse 2026 project

Barb Wysocki reported that she had, since our last meeting met briefly with the County Board Executive as well as the mayor of Champaign and that both of them are interested in participating in the Courthouse 2026 project in some way, but that they are both very much involved in the daily work of their constituents and don't have any immediate ideas or assistance to add. Barbara said, "they don't mechanically think that far ahead." She was assured that they had read the information sent to them. She felt sure that smaller events the LLC undertook might give the cities and county some assurance that we would follow through with this project. Barbara is hopeful that we can do something surrounding the Lincoln statuary around the area (2027); she is hopeful that the CCMN can help with that.

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Barb O-G asked if Wysocki had heard anything from any of the outlying communities about her mailing, and she reported she had not. She did report that she had attended the CCMN meeting and that they also had not received any response to the 2026 initiative information.

c. AL National Heritage Network update

Barb Garvey reported that the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area was actively involved in two initiatives at the moment. The first is an Underground Railroad exhibit sponsored by the ALNHA. Pat Cain has applied for the exhibit to be at the Urbana Free Library in 2025. Pat is working with staff throughout the library on their own UGRR research, presenting concurrent book talks and children's programs. Barb OG encouraged Pat to stay in touch with the LLC as the time grew near for the exhibit as it may be that we could assist with finding a large enough venue should the UFL not suffice.

The second initiative is a series of signs with a grant from Union Pacific Corporation to increase the diversity of people representing on Looking for Lincoln signs. The Diversity Committee of ALNHA has chosen five topics: Albert Cashier, Augustus Tolton, Black Laws in Illinois, the Trail of Tears, and the Illinois School for the Deaf/Blind. These will be placed this year, and more signs are expected in the future.

d. Continued discussion of Lost Speech projects

Barb said Steve Beckett wants to give a serious speech about Lincoln's reaction to the Kansas Nebraska act but doesn't really have an idea of how he would like to do that. Since it falls at the same time as the Half Century Club dinner, he is hoping that this can be coordinated with his speech. Wysocki reported that Steve Beckett really wants the dinner to be at the Royer Hotel. The Royer Hotel is not, however, finished yet, and we aren't certain that will happen. Barb O-G suggested that he speak at the Urbana Free Library then the dinner could be across the street. Beckett did not respond to that. Barb OG suggested that he could speak at the Royer hotel before the dinner. Thorsland suggested that he could speak in Lincoln Square outside the Royer Hotel. Wysocki said that the Half Century Club doesn't meet to plan the dinner until mid-summer. We agreed to work on reserving the UFL Auditorium and assure that a space exists in case this lecture takes place.

Wysocki suggested an alternate plan regardless of the Beckett speech. We should, on the day of the anniversary of the speech, October 24, arrange for a wreath to be laid at the Cunningham plaque in the courthouse, and have a brief ceremony which might include quotes from the speech. A dramatic reading with five different people (people from different walks of life) reading might be effective, said Wysocki. We may want to extend the invitation to the presiding Judge to hang/lay the wreath. Several members said this ceremony may give us an opportunity to promote Beckett's speech depending on timing. Wysocki said that such an event will require us to coordinate with the sheriff and courthouse staff, so planning is of the essence.

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Barb OG suggested changing out or adding to the exhibit in the courthouse. Wysocki said she doesn't want to disturb the Cunningham exhibit, Barb OG suggested that we may be able to have a banner exhibit. Barb OG suggested we check whether the Cunningham panels could be permanently installed near the county map, and if not, we can produce some panels.

Eric Thorsland suggested that in the remodeling of the building across the street there may be some opportunity for refreshing that space and allowing for interpretation, but that no one really knows what is happening at the moment.

e. Suggested new members? No suggestions were made regarding new members. Barb OG checked with Ray about whether he has contacted Barbara Suggs Mason or Angela Rivers. He said no. Barb Wysocki suggested Krista Gray from the Illinois History and Collection at the UI Library might be contacted for membership. Barb OG said she would follow up with Krista as they have met before.

7. New Business

- a. Dues to CCMN, other bills. Barb OG reported to Eric Thorsland that the CCMN dues were
- b. Nomination/election of a secretary for the group-No one was interested, Ray will continue to record the meetings for Barb OG
- c. Other – Barb Wysocki mentioned that she was touched by Pat Cain's Inside Out article in the News Gazette. Barb OG said she was optimistic about Pat's new position at the Archives and was hopeful of continued support there.

8. This year's meeting schedule-mark your calendars.

January 31, 2024-Busey Bank Meeting Room, CPL
 March 27, 2024--CPL Friends Meeting Room, CPL
 May 29,2024--Busey Bank Meeting Room, CPL
 July 31, 2024--Busey Bank Meeting Room, CPL
 September 25, 2024--Busey Bank Meeting Room, CPL
 November 27, 2024-Busey Bank Meeting Room, CPL

9. Adjournment-Ray Cunningham moved to adjourn; Barb OG seconded.