



America 250 | CT Commission
Community & Organizational Engagement Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 14, 2024
Via Zoom

Attendees:

Present

Dr. Amrys Williams (CLHO, Chair)
Dr. Andy Horowitz (Connecticut State Historian)
Merle McGee (Everyday Democracy)
Douglas Lord (CT Library Association)

Absent

Liz Shapiro (COA)

Staff

Cyndi Tolosa (CT Humanities)
Jason Mancini (CTH)
Mike Kemezis (CTH)

The meeting began at 11:06 a.m.

1. Updates were shared by members about committee work
 - a. Cyndi Tolosa covered the 3/15 conference which has ~200 in person registrants and more online
 - b. Ms. Tolosa also shared that commission information concerning sponsorships is on the way
 - c. Ms. Tolosa also informed the committee that it will be tasked with doing periodic work for a publicity effort on 250-related content to include radio, CPTV and other avenues
 - i. Drs. Horowitz & Williams both had ideas for such content including contemporary people responding to documents from 1770
 - ii. The committee will need to provide some examples to Ms. Tolosa
 - d. Ms. McGee shared about a program done by the national Democracy Now with young people
 - e. Dr. Williams shared the agenda for Saturday the 16th's schedule, a very time-consuming effort
2. Program strategy screen. The group then discussed developing a strategy screen, including its definition: a tool to evaluate programs used as a rubric / list of criteria / standards against which strategic options can be tested. Dr. Williams and Mr. Lord will develop a version for committee use in time for the next meeting.
3. Ms. Tolosa spoke briefly about the Commission's spreadsheet that contains contact information and emails for potential stakeholders and partners, mentioning that this will be a continual work-in-progress.

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4. Mr. Mancini shared about very encouraging conversations with key stakeholders: the CT Museum of Culture and History, the UCONN constituents (e.g., the William Benton Museum of Art, the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, etc.) who will be participating more closely in America 250 efforts as time goes on.
5. There was also discussion of options and plans for the committee and the commission as a whole if funding from the 2024 legislative session does not materialize. While CTH has begun some planning and conversation on this topic, members agreed that joint programming with agencies that plan to do something anyway (e.g., CCSU) and avoiding duplication of efforts was of high priority. Discussion of Dr. Horowitz' '250 in a box' program, a free/inexpensive version replicable across communities, was discussed and Ms. Tolosa mentioned that AALH is putting together a version of this, though specific to history organizations. The group agreed to see what this AALH resource looks like for use as a template for various others kinds of organizations. Dr. Horowitz also mentioned developing a model of a traveling consultant or commission-trained field workers who would assist local groups keyed to local content. The group felt that pragmatic approaches with CTH as the convener / organizer / influencer were preferable. Lastly, Ms. Tolosa mentioned that the commission has plans in place if funding is indeed secured.
6. On the topic of local groups and local content, both Dr. Williams and Mr. Kemezis mentioned that local and statewide archivists are keen to participate and be included. Both will be present at the 4/2 meeting of the State & Historical Records Advisory Board.
7. Mr. Lord agreed to stay on as the inquiry fielder.

The meeting ended at 12:37 p.m.

Next Meeting

Thursday, April 11, 2024, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.