

**NOTES OF THE LOUISIANA CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM ADVISORY BOARD
NEW ORLEANS JAZZ MUSEUM AT THE OLD U.S. MINT
400 ESPLANADE AVENUE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2025
1:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Madlyn Bagneris, Sidney Barthelemy, Karl Connor, Priscilla Edwards, Thelma French, Blake Jones, Ernest Jones, Paula Peer, Harry Rosenthal, Ed Ward, Brenda Williams, Loyce Wright.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Roland Belsome, Tyler Bruno, Wanda Davis, Senator Royce Duplessis, Reginald Owens, Emmanuel Smith, Dr. Terrence Vinson.

LSM STAFF PRESENT: Rebecca Mackie, Cody Scallions, Nicole Coleman, Damond Francois.

ALSO PRESENT: None

A quorum was present.

1. **Call to Order** – Ernest Jones called the meeting to order 1:19pm.
2. **Adoption of the Agenda** – Ernest Jones motioned to adopt the agenda. Karl Connor seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.
3. **Public Comments** – There were no attendees from the public.
4. **Adoption of minutes and notes from previous meetings** – Madlyn Bagneris motioned to adopt the minutes. Karl Connor seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.
5. **Chairman's Report** – Vice Chair Ernest Jones stated the by-laws call for elections in November, with newly elected chairpersons assuming office at the December meeting. The Nominating Committee shall continue to receive nominations unless there is an objection and will report to the board the nominee(s) to be considered at the next meeting. Additionally, the Board was asked to review the Board roster and provide missing contact information. This will help ensure accurate communication and proper record-keeping moving forward.
6. **Director's Report** – Becky Mackie informed the board that Nicole Coleman has joined her team as her new assistant and will be coordinating board activities. Becky shared a brief background on Nicole, noting that she previously worked as a part-time employee at the New Orleans Jazz Museum for four years and holds a master's degree in museum studies. Becky expressed that she is delighted to have Nicole as part of her staff and looks forward to her contributions to the board's work.

Becky Mackie also introduced Cody Scallions to the committee as the new Deputy Assistant Secretary. Cody brings valuable experience to the role, having served as Director of the Capitol Park Museum and overseeing operations at the regional museums.

In reference to the Board member information included with the meeting materials, it was noted that staff are working to update the records. One issue identified is the lack of information pertaining to when appointments to the Board were made and if the member represents one of the organizations listed in the statute.

As you may recall from the statute and bylaws, the original board was established based on nominees submitted by various organizations. When those seats became vacant, the respective organizations had the option to provide new nominees. If responses were not received within 15 days from those organizations, the advisory board was authorized to appoint at-large members instead.

Currently, there are several individuals on the roster whose source of appointment is unclear—we cannot determine whether they were appointed by an organization or as at-large members. We're now working to update the roster sheet to reflect the original sources of each appointment as accurately as possible.

Any insight or documentation you can provide to help fill in these gaps would be greatly appreciated.

Ernest Jones noted that, although several organizations were contacted for nominee suggestions, only one—Efforts of Grace—submitted a name. However, their nominee only attended one meeting and did not return. As a result, the board exercised its authority to make at-large appointments in the absence of organizational nominees. Becky Mackie suggested that board members without an identified source be considered appointed as an at-large member. Once those seats become vacant, the board can decide whether to reach out to the respective organizations for new nominations.

Becky Mackie asked everyone to review the roster and provide any missing information to Nicole. Brenda Williams mentioned that all the relevant information should also be available on the Louisiana Commission Board website. Becky Mackie informed the board that, according to Julia George-Moore, disclosure of personal finances is not required since board members are not responsible for spending state funds.

Upcoming grant opportunities were discussed to support the development of educational programming.

The museum recorded nearly 4,000 visitors for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. This figure reflects a slight decline in attendance, primarily due to the museum's temporary closure for renovations. In response, efforts are underway to strengthen marketing initiatives and increase visitor numbers in the upcoming year.

Capital Outlay Funding Update

Capital outlay funding was appropriated for the Civil Rights Museum project, including the following allocations:

- \$49,000 (Priority 1) for planning activities
- \$5 million (Priority 2) for immediate contracting and project initiation
- \$20 million (Priority 5) designated for broader construction and development efforts

To preserve the funds allocated through House Bill 2, a line of credit request has been executed. This request, which is a required formality to access the appropriate funds, has been submitted to the Attorney General. The execution of the request ensures the preservation of funding specifically designated for the planning and construction phases of the Civil Rights Museum.

7. **Bylaws/Committee/Members/Officers** – Karl Conor inquired whether it would be possible to nominate and elect a chairperson prior to November, given that a quorum is present at the current

meeting, to ensure continuity and maintain momentum in board business. **Karl Conor motioned to suspend the by-law requirement for a November election, and to entertain nominations to fill the vacancy of the Chair position. He amended his motion to include the election of all officers. Paula Peer seconded the motion; the motion is carried and one opposition by Loyce Wright.**

With approval to move forward prior to November, the following nominations were made:

- **Board Chairman:** Sidney Barthelemy was nominated and accepted the nomination.
- **Board Vice Chair:** Ernest Jones was nominated and accepted the nomination.
- **Board Secretary:** Wanda Davis was nominated in her absence to serve as Board Secretary.
- **Board Treasurer:** Paula Peer was nominated and accepted the nomination.

Ernest Jones called for approval of the slate of nominees and a vote on their appointments to each respective position, Karl Conor seconded, and the slate was unanimously approved and appointed. The Secretary position is pending the nominee's acceptance.

All officers will serve two-year terms. The chair will consider appointing the Executive Committee before or at the October 14th meeting.

8. **Old Business** –Blake Jones requested that the meeting notes from August 20 be updated to reflect his attendance. He was incorrectly listed as absent.
9. **New Business** – Brenda Williams informed the board that the Alexandria Airport will officially open on September 19th, with the event honoring Charles Page and Louis Ortego. A mural will be unveiled recognizing their contributions to aviation history. The opening ceremony will offer an opportunity for community engagement and a celebration of local heritage.

Priscilla Edwards suggested creating pamphlets for visitors, providing a tangible summary of the exhibit that they can keep or share with others. This would enhance visitor engagement and help promote the museum's offerings.

Jeff Anding is currently working on brochures for all the museums, which may align with this effort.

The committee is planning an anniversary reopening celebration to mark the occasion and introduce the new exhibit. Several dates were discussed.

Before finalizing the date, Becky Mackie advised the committee to check the Convention Center's schedule to avoid conflicts..

The planning committee for the anniversary reopening celebration will consist of the following members:

- Karl Conor
- Sidney Barthelemy
- Brenda Williams

This committee will be responsible for coordinating event plans and logistics for the celebration. They will report to the Executive Committee for approval of all plans and decisions. Additionally, they will communicate with the full board via email to provide updates and share details related to the anniversary celebration.

10. Adjourn – Thelma French motioned to adjourn. Madlyn Bagneris Seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Minutes Accepted

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Wanda A. Davis", is written over a horizontal line.

Wanda Davis, Secretary