THE LOUISIANA CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM ADVISORY BOARD
NEW ORLEANS JAZZ MUSEUM
400 ESPLANADE AVE. NEW ORLEANS, LA. 70116
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026
1:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sidney Barthelemy, Karl Connor, Wanda Davis, Priscilla Edwards, Blake Jones, Madlyn Bagneris, Paula Peer, Senator Royce Duplessis, Brenda Williams.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ernest Jones, Roland Belsome, Harry Rosenthal, Ed Ward, Tyler Bruno, Thelma French, Reginald Owens, Loyce Wright, Emmanual Smith, Dr. Terrance Vinson.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Wendy Lodrig.

LSM STAFF PRESENT: Rebecca Mackie, Blaze D'Amico, Chris Cook, Jeff Anding, Nicole Coleman.

ALSO PRESENT:

A quorum of the Executive Committee members was present.

1. **Call to Order** – Sidney Barthelemy called the meeting to order at 1:22 p.m.

2. **Adoption of the Agenda** – **Karl Connor motioned to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Paula Peer, and it was unanimously approved.**

3. **Public Comments –** There were no comments from the public.

4. **Adoption of minutes – Karl Connor motioned to adopt the meeting notes from December 9,2025. The motion was seconded by Paula Peer, and it was unanimously approved.**

5. **Chairman's Report –** Sidney Barthelemy reported that Chris Cook and the education team have been working with the Jefferson Parish School art program on student displays for the Louisiana Civil Rights Museum, and that Karl Connor and Jeff Anding are working on a Fourth of July/Essence Festival week program.

   Chris Cook updated the committee that the Jefferson Parish Schools student art exhibit, *Creativity of Color*, is on display throughout February at the Louisiana Civil Rights Museum. This is the second year of the program, with 36 schools participating. Attendance increased from last year, and the January 29 opening reception drew 448 attendees. The exhibit will remain on display through March 3. The art teachers who organized the show also promoted it on WWL's morning show.

   Karl Connor reported that he and Jeff Anding are working to confirm a date and organize a panel for Fourth of July/ESSENCE Festival week. They are in discussions with several authors, including Ben Crump, Owen Pataki, and Walter Isaacson, but are awaiting confirmation of availability and final details.

   Senator Royce Duplessis briefed the committee on HB2 budget. He explained that the museum prefers the Market Street power plant, owned by Brian Gibbs, as its primary site. Challenges with state funding for the site were discussed. The advisory board plans to meet with the Lieutenant Governor to gain support for advancing more of the project's funding from priority five to priority one for spending in 2026-2027. Support from the legislative delegation and administration is critical. The potential economic value of the project for the region and the state was noted. The project could be pursued as a third-party private nonprofit initiative rather than a state project. It

was noted that additional details would need to be considered and that, if the project remains a state project, the facility must be state-owned.

Karl Connor asked whether any museums in the system are revenue positive. Becky Mackie explained that it is difficult to determine due to overhead costs not being evenly distributed across all museums. She noted that the New Orleans Jazz Museum and the Capitol Park Museum likely break even, while the Cabildo and The Presbytère carry a large portion of the system's overhead. She added that the museum system operates on approximately $10 million annually, supplemented by funding from the Irby Trust and support organizations, with a the majority of fuds coming from state general operating support.

6. **Director's Report** – Becky Mackie reported that the museum is seeking a sponsor to offer free admission to the Civil Rights Museum during Essence Festival. The French Quarter Museum Association is planning "Heritage Night" on July 2, offering free admission to participating museums ahead of the festival.

   Mackie also discussed potential temporary and permanent museum site locations, noting the current convention center lease is in year three of a five year term. Possible permanent locations could be explored. Capital outlay funding has been requested, however, the project cannot advance without a confirmed location.

   Karl Connor addressed concerns regarding potential museum locations. Senator Royce Duplessis agreed with these points and noted the many competing views on museum location. He described the convention center as a practical starting location and suggested exploring whether exceptions could be made to use non–state-owned property or the state acquiring the portion of Gibb's development where the museum would be located. Duplessis emphasized that operating as an NGO could provide more flexibility, where state seed funding is leveraged to raise additional private funds and suggested a comparison chart of alternatives could help identify a location.

   Sidney Barthelemy suggested creating a chart of location alternatives to identify one with majority support and advocacy. He emphasized leveraging legislative influence, including the lieutenant governor, to unify efforts, noting that the city remains one of the few major U.S. cities without a dedicated Civil Rights Museum.

   The board currently has 18 members, with bylaws allowing up to 23; however, quorum is based on 23 members, creating challenges. Members are selected based on skills rather than geography, but travel and lodging costs impact participation. Research is underway to clarify quorum requirements and consider possible bylaw revisions.

7. **Bylaws/Committee/Members/Officers –** No report was given, as Ernest Jones was unable to attend.

8. **Content Committee Report -** Madlyn Bagneris reported ongoing discussions with partners in Los Angeles regarding a potential film festival featuring the Manny Clayton film collection. The collection includes historic footage, such as early films of Louis Armstrong, and could be used for a multi-venue festival across the city. The project has been in development for over a year, with plans to use it as a fundraiser and membership opportunity. Coordination with UCLA is still in progress, as approval is needed to access the film collection. Further planning, including timelines and venue selection, will continue once authorization is secured.

9. **Friends of the Louisiana Civil Rights Museum Report-** Karl Connor reported that the film for the PAGE exhibit is approximately 95% complete and expected to be ready within the next week,

pending final review and state approval. Additional interview footage has been collected for a longer-term film project.

Plans are also underway to schedule a Friends group membership meeting, potentially at the museum, to encourage engagement. Additionally, one remaining docent training session is pending, with trained docents expected to begin supporting upcoming school visits**.**

10. **Old Business** – There was no old business.

11. **New Business** – Karl Connor noted that Dr. Vincent was expected to present on a potential exhibit and programming opportunity in North Louisiana, but details were not available. The committee will follow up to obtain specifics before the next meeting.

12. **Adjourn** –**The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.**

Minutes Accepted

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Wanda Davis, Secretary