

COMMITTEE NOTES

**Ad Hoc Committee Meeting on Black Archives of Mid-America, Inc.
Kansas City Public Library
Board of Trustees
July 19, 2013**

The Ad Hoc Committee on Black Archives of Mid-America, Inc. of the Board of Trustees of the Kansas City Public Library, pursuant to official notification, met Friday, July 19, 2013 at 3:30 p.m. at the Black Archives of Mid-America, Inc., 1722 E. 17th Terrace, Kansas City, Missouri.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Olivia Dorsey (Chair)
Leon Dixon
Billie Howard Barnes
Jonathan Kemper (ex officio)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rose Marie Bell

STAFF PRESENT:

Crosby Kemper III, Chief Executive
Lucinda Adams, Librarian
Cheptoo Kositany-Buckner, Deputy Director
Heather Pedersen, Administrative Officer
Michael Sweeney, Black Archives Collection Librarian

OTHERS PRESENT:

Sharon Sanders Brooks, Black Archives Board
Member
Doretha Williams, Executive Director of The Black
Archives of Mid-America, Inc.

Dorsey called the meeting to order at 3:43 p.m.

Williams reported that the Black Archives Board voted in new officers and continues to work on building the Board, which currently has five open seats. She introduced Sweeney, the new Black Archives Collection Librarian, and reported that several interns have been working on various projects with the Archives.

Kositany-Buckner reported that the MOU with Allan Gray for the Alvin Ailey collection has been formalized, giving the Archives long term access to the collection. An event has been planned for August 19th at 3:00 p.m. to celebrate the transfer of the collection to the Archives and highlight the collection to the community. Regular meetings have been held with Allan Gray and a working team is being assembled that will include Sylvia Waters, who was Artistic Director of the Ailey II dance company in New York, as an advisor in the development of the exhibit. The focus of the exhibit will be on the importance of Kansas City to Alvin Ailey. A full display is scheduled to be completed within the next six months. The permanent exhibit will take longer to develop and will require additional fundraising.

Williams reported that many temporary exhibits have taken place at the Archives over the last year and half, in addition to the “My Eyes No Longer Blind” exhibit on the main floor. The temporary exhibits have been designed to coincide with programming at the Archives. In August the Archives will have an exhibit to commemorate the March on Washington and the Emancipation Proclamation.

C. Kemper reported that the Library is working towards coordinating related events and exhibits to coincide with Black Archives events and exhibits. Plans are also being made to include the Black Archives and the 18th and Vine district in tours for teen groups.

Sanders Brooks reported that the Archives is reaching out to individuals from the Kansas City area who participated in the March on Washington and asking them to submit their stories.

Discussing collection development Williams reported on the status of several collections: the Dr. Julia Hill collection has been completed; most of the Heart of America Golf Club material has been gathered together and Archives Board and staff are currently sorting through the documents and artifacts; and progress is being made on the Black Hospitals collection. She reported that Sweeney has taken over organizing all of the collections at the Archives and working on “finding aids” to make the collections accessible to researchers.

Williams is working on insurance for the Archives collection, with advice from staff at KU’s Spencer Library since they are also going through the process of insuring their collections. An MOU is also underway with KU’s Graduate School to secure interns who will use the Archives as their worksite for their research projects. The MOU will be a template for similar programs with other schools in the area such as the University of Central Missouri and UMKC.

The Archives is working on acquiring ownership provenance for collections. A letter will be sent in the next few weeks inviting people to fill out the paperwork to complete the legal provenance for collections they have donated. This process has already been completed with some collections, such as the Buffalo Soldiers Collection.

Howard Barnes left 4:03 p.m.

Williams reported that the Archives is working to develop future collections including: black Greek organizations, Freedom Inc., NAACP, and African American leadership in the Kansas City area.

Williams reported that the Archives has had a steady stream of researchers since it reopened. Kositany-Buckner reported that work on digital materials and indexing continues and that the number and frequency of requests from researchers is expected to increase as the process continues.

J. Kemper arrived at 4:08 p.m.

Discussing fundraising Williams reported that the Sprint Foundation awarded the Archives a \$25,000 grant to work with schools to bring classes to the Archives, have students of all ages work with collections, and have speakers come in and do seminars with the students. The Sprint Foundation expressed interest in building on this initial program in future years. The Archives is also working on a project with the Arts Council of Metropolitan Kansas City and the Downtown Council funded through the NEA by providing space for the community conversations about reopening the Boone Theater.

Kositany-Buckner reported that the City included approximately \$25,000 in the current budget for Black Archives operational expenses and that the support will increase to about \$100,000 next year. Operational expenses for the Black Archives are approximately \$300,000 a year so fundraising will need to take place to fund the Executive Director's salary, programming, and materials needed to maintain the collections. C. Kemper reported that talks continue with several potential private funders regarding support for the Alvin Ailey exhibit, paying the salary for a development director, and support for educational programming.

Kositany-Buckner reported on several other fundraising initiatives: a Friends of the Black Archives group; an annual fundraising event; and an event around the 40th Anniversary of the Black Archives, which is next year.

The Committee discussed the fundraising process for the Black Archives and the need for regular communication between the Library and the Archives to ensure clarity regarding responsibility and follow up on gifts and grants.

Discussing upcoming events Williams reported that the Archives has been working for the last year to plan the 40th anniversary event. The focus is on raising public awareness about the importance of the Archives as cultural and research institution and on fundraising. Kositany-Buckner noted that a community advisory committee is being assembled to provide input on the event as it is developed.

The meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Dorsey, Chair
Ad Hoc Committee

Date