

North Carolina Historical Commission
Conference Call Minutes

May 5, 2021

The North Carolina Historical Commission (NCHC, Commission) met via Zoom conference call on Wednesday, May 5, 2021. The following commissioners were in attendance: David Ruffin, Chair; Dr. Mary Lynn Bryan; The Honorable Newell Clark, Dr. David C. Dennard; Samuel B. Dixon; Dr. Valerie A. Johnson; W. Noah Reynolds; and Barbara B. Snowden. Commissioner Susan Phillips joined at 2:50 PM. Absent were commissioners Dr. Malinda Maynor Lowery and Dr. Darin Waters.

Others in attendance included: Phil Feagan, General Counsel, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR); Parker Backstrom, Office of Archives and History (OAH) Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary for the NCHC; Dr. Jeffrey J. Crow, former deputy secretary of the OAH, who headed up search efforts for position of deputy secretary of the OAH; and Matt Zeher, video producer for the DNCR, who facilitated the transmission of the video conference call.

Call to Order and Chair Announcements

Chairman Ruffin welcomed everyone and commenced the meeting at 2:37 PM. Roll was called to ensure that enough commissioners were in attendance to qualify as a quorum. Mr. Ruffin introduced just-appointed Commissioner Clark, who was sworn in in the City of Lexington in late April, and who offered a few opening remarks. The chair also noted the reappointments of Drs. Dennard and Johnson for additional six-year terms on the Commission, and thanked in absentia Commissioner Morrison, whose term on the Commission concluded with the appointment of Mayor Clark.

Conflict of Interest Statement

Citing the meeting agenda, which was sent to the commissioners in advance of the meeting, the chair asked whether any might have a real or perceived conflict of interest concerning the business at hand. No such concerns were voiced, and the meeting proceeded.

Mr. Ruffin explained that the sole purpose of the conference call is for the Commission to confer with Dr. Crow, who reviewed and vetted the seventeen applicants for position of deputy secretary of the OAH. Given that this is DNCR personnel matter, considered confidential, Dr. Johnson made the following motion: "I move that we go into closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute section 143-318-11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of prospective public officers or employees." Dr. Dennard seconded the motion and with no discussion, a roll call vote was taken, upon which the motion carried unanimously.

At 2:45 PM the chair announced that the Commission would be going into closed session, reiterating that there would be no other business conducted at the conclusion of the closed session.

Closed Session

The NCHC entered into closed session to listen to a presentation by Dr. Jeffrey Crow regarding candidates for the position, and discussed the attributes of the various candidates. All those listed above as present at the meeting were in attendance, excluding Mr. Zeher.

Upon conclusion of the discussion, Ms. Phillips moved that the meeting return to open session. Dr. Johnson seconded the motion and upon a unanimous roll call vote, the meeting of the NCHC returned to open session at 4:39 PM.

Resumption of Open Session

Upon resumption of the open session, as proclaimed by the chair, Dr. Crow indicated that he would send Mr. Backstrom a list of the candidates the commissioners indicated during the closed session to whom they wished to extend interview invitations. Mr. Backstrom will send those invitations to the candidates and schedule interviews on the date chosen by the commissioners, May 18. Mr. Backstrom will also post to a password-protected website, accessible to the commissioners, some suggested interview questions drafted by Dr. Crow for the commissioners to consider.

Adjournment

With business concluded, Dr. Dennard moved adjournment. The motion was seconded by Ms. Snowden, and carried by unanimous roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah E. Koonts