

400 YEARS

OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY COMMISSION



STRATEGIC PLAN

August 18, 2019 – July 1, 2020

FORMATION OF THE FEDERAL COMMISSION

The 400 Years of African American History Commission Act

115th Congress: Public Law 115-102--January 8, 2018

Sponsor: H.R. 1242--Rep. Scott, Robert C. "Bobby" [D-VA-3] (Introduced 02/28/2017)

Committees: House--Oversight and Government Reform



COMMISSIONERS

- **Mr. Terry E. Brown:** Superintendent, Fort Monroe National Monument, National Park Service, Virginia

- **Mr. Lonnie Bunch III:** Founding Director, Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture; former President, Chicago Historical Society; Former Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs, National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C.

- **Mr. Ron Carson:** Founder, Appalachian African-American Cultural Center; CEO & President, Black Lung Centers, Pennington Gap, Virginia

- **Ms. Kenya M. Cox:** President, Kansas State Conference of NAACP Branches; Executive Director, Kansas African American Affairs Commission, Office of the Governor, Topeka, Kansas

- **Prophet N. "Anyanwu" Cox, M.Ed:** Minister and Founder, Reconciliation Ministry Without Walls; International Missions; Retired Nurse; Community Advocate and Activist, Wichita, Kansas

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- **Dr. Rex Ellis:** Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs, Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture; Former Vice President, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation; Board of Trustees, Fort Monroe Authority, Williamsburg, Virginia
- **Mr. Ted Ellis:** Artist and Cultural Historian; Art Ambassador, National Juneteenth Organization, Friendswood, Texas (formerly, New Orleans, Louisiana)
- **Mr. Glenn Freeman:** President, Omaha Chapter, Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, a patriotic civic organization; retired decorated Air Force Chief Master Sergeant, Omaha, Nebraska
- **Dr. Joseph Green, Jr.:** Pastor and Co-Founder Antioch Assembly; Founder/CEO, Josiah Generation Ministries; Founder, The 2019 Movement, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
- **Hannibal B. Johnson, Esq.:** Attorney, Author, College Professor, and Independent Consultant; Member, 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commission, Tulsa, Oklahoma
- **Mr. Kenneth Johnson:** CEO, Johnson, Inc., Richmond-based marketing and communications firm; Board of Trustees, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia
- **Mr. Bob Kendrick:** President, Negro Leagues Baseball Museum, Kansas City, Missouri
- **Mr. George Martin:** Managing Partner, McGuireWoods law firm, Richmond office; Member, 2019 Commemoration (VA) Steering Committee, Richmond, Virginia
- **Dr. Myron Pope:** Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Central Oklahoma; Adjunct Instructor, Department of African and African-American Studies, The University of Oklahoma; Advisory Board Member, Foundation for Oklahoma City Public Schools, Edmond, Oklahoma

Alternate Commissioner: Mr. Lewis Rogers, Jr., Superintendent, Petersburg National Battlefield, National Park Service, Petersburg, Virginia

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MISSION

The 400 Years of African-American History Commission (the “Commission”) will develop and facilitate activities throughout the United States to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of Africans in the English colonies at Point Comfort, Virginia, in 1619, recognizing and highlighting the resilience and contributions of African Americans from that seminal moment forward, while simultaneously acknowledging the painful impact of slavery, racial discrimination, and racism on our Nation.

In furtherance of its Mission, the Commission will:

1. Educate the public about the arrival of Africans in the United States and the African American experience;
2. Encourage civic, patriotic, historical, educational, artistic, religious, economic, and other organizations throughout the Nation to organize and participate in commemoration activities;
3. Provide technical assistance, as necessary and possible, to further its Mission;
4. Coordinate and facilitate scholarly research on, publication about, and interpretation of the arrival of Africans in the United States and the contributions of African Americans to the United States;
5. Ensure that the commemoration provides a legacy and long-term public benefit by assisting in the development of appropriate programs; and
6. Ensure, to the extent practicable, that commemoration observances are inclusive and appropriately recognize the experiences and heritage of all individuals present at the arrival of Africans in the United States.

VISION

Because of the efforts of the Commission, Americans of all ethnicities will be more aware of the immense sacrifices and prodigious contributions made by African Americans to our Nation over the course of the last 400 years.

CORE VALUES

- Gratitude
- Honesty
- Hope

STRATEGIC PLAN: 400 Years of African American History Commission

- Inclusion
- Integrity
- Truth

GOALS

1. Notify national and community stakeholders of the existence of the Commission, its make-up, and its mandate.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Send letter to sponsoring legislators and other members of Congress for assistance and additional funding;
- Send letters to the Congressional Black Caucus
- Contact the NAACP
- Contact the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights;
- Contact the National Urban League;
- Contact the National Newspaper Publishing Association (“NNPA”);
- Contact museums throughout the Nation;
- Contact African American fraternities and sororities;
- Contact all African American churches;
- Contact all HBCUs;
- Contact all African American organizations (*e.g.*, Links, Inc., and 100 Black Women);
- Contact national tourism organizations;
- Hire web designer;
- Recruit volunteers to maintain 2019 social media;
- Develop marketing and communications plan; and
- Develop talking points to ensure that the Commissioners have adequate support to tell the story.

TIMELINE: (First quarter of 2019)

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners

2. Develop a framework for ways in which civic, patriotic, historical, educational, artistic, religious, economic, research-based individuals and institutions may partner with the Commission to ensure a successful 2019 across the Nation and collaborate accordingly.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

STRATEGIC PLAN: 400 Years of African American History Commission

- Contact potential collaborators with information and/or invitations to engage.
- Generate memoranda of understanding (“MOUs”).

TIMELINE: (First quarter of 2019)

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners

3. Establish a clearinghouse for 2019 African American commemorative events.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Work with museums and other key organizations to calendar significant events.
- Create an online master calendar of events.
- Highlight ongoing African American history initiatives (*e.g.*, the work of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commission in anticipation of the 100th anniversary of that event in 2021).

TIMELINE: (First quarter of 2019)

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners

4. Secure adequate funds to support the Commission in achieving its goals

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES include but not limited to:

- Send letters to sponsoring legislators and other members of Congress for assistance and additional funding.
- Send letters to the Congressional Black Caucus to request support in acquiring additional funding.
- Contact national, regional, and local organizations for support, including:
 - i. NAACP, Hilary Shelton- Director of the Washington Bureau;
 - ii. Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights;
 - iii. National Urban League;
 - iv. National Newspaper Publishing Association (“NNPA”);
 - v. Museums throughout the United States;
 - vi. African-American Fraternity and Sororities (“NPHC”);
 - vii. African-American Churches;

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- viii. National Black professional associations
(<https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/african-american-networking-groups>);
- ix. HBCUs and other institutions of higher education;
- x. Social African American organizations, *e.g.*, Links, Inc., 100 Black Women, 100 Black Men, and Boule; and
- xi. National tourism organizations.

TIMELINE: (First quarter of 2019)

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners

- 5. Utilize social media and African American community information sharing networks to share information about Commission-sanctioned programs, events, and activities.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Hire a web designer.
- Recruit volunteers to maintain a robust social media presence.

TIMELINE: (Ongoing)

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners

- 6. Develop, disseminate, and provide technical assistance for requests for proposals (“RFPs”) in support of the Commission’s mission work.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Define relevant proposal criteria.
- Widely publish the criteria.
- Assist those who wish to submit proposals.

TIMELINE: (Second quarter of 2019)

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners

- 7. Issue grants in an amount not to exceed \$20,000 based on approved RFP guidelines.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

STRATEGIC PLAN: 400 Years of African American History Commission

- Secure grant-making funding.
- Develop grant-making criteria.
- Disseminate grant opportunities.
- Develop team to review grant proposals.
- Develop grant award timelines and procedures.

TIMELINE: (Second quarter of 2019 and ongoing)

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners

8. Develop signature projects for the Commission (*e.g.*, “Let’s Talk!”; The International Day of Drumming; 400th Art Contest: youth telling 400-year story through color).

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Develop and agree upon consensus signature projects.
- Promote signature projects.
- Develop a mechanism by which to evaluate signature projects (*e.g.*, number of persons served; level of publicity).

TIMELINE: (Second quarter of 2019 and ongoing)

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners

9. Submit a final written report with recommendations prior to the sun-setting of the Commission on or before July 1, 2020.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- Gather and record data and information during the life of the Commission.
- Select person(s) to draft the final report.
- Approve the final report by consensus of the Commissioners.

TIMELINE: Ongoing

PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE: All Commissioners

PROJECTED BUDGET

STRATEGIC PLAN: 400 Years of African American History Commission

The total project budget is \$6M (as per the Congressional Budget Office estimated implementing the bill creating the Commission).

Key budget items include:

- Operating expenses.....\$900,000
- Website and online presence.....\$10,000
- Marketing (*e.g.*, promotion and advertising).....\$2,450,000
- Commissioner outreach (*e.g.*, travel, lodging).....\$140,000
- Grant-making; scholarships.....\$2,500,000

Note: All figures are approximate.