

Illinois Holocaust & Genocide Commission
Public Meeting
February 22, 2021
7:00pm - 8:30pm

ATTENDANCE

Susan Abrams - Yes
Danny M. Cohen - Yes
Sarah Cushman - Yes
Sara Feigenholtz - Yes
Nora Flanagan - Yes
Peter Fritzsche - Yes
Jessica Gall - Yes
Jack Goodman - Yes
Doug Kiel - Yes
Greg Kocourek - Yes
Charlotte Masters – Yes
Marty McGlaughlin
Michael Niedzinski - Yes
Sammi Oberman - Yes
Ginger Ostro Erika Quinn - Yes
Darren Reisberg - Yes
Keisha Rembert - Yes
Bob Roth - Yes
Jennifer Scott - Yes
Lina Sergie Attar – Yes
George Sisk - Yes
Kelley Szany - Yes
Kheang Un – Yes
Jill Weinberg - Yes

Danny and Kelley welcomed members to the commission and thanked them for agreeing to serve on the commission. Danny also welcomed members of the public to the meeting.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Attorney George Sisk provided an overview of the Open Meetings Act. He noted that Governor Pritzker had signed legislation allowing for virtual meetings in light of the COVID pandemic. He instructed the group to be sure to state their name when making a motion and when seconding so that the information can be recorded for the public. He said that meetings must be recorded, and votes must be made by roll call. He added that the ex-officio members are not allowed to vote on commission motions and seven members constitutes a quorum. If a simple majority of a quorum of members meet, speak on the phone or exchange emails, in this case four, that would be considered a public meeting and would be subject to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act. He cautioned members to keep this in mind when discussing. George noted there are three required trainings. Two of those are administered by IDNR are ethics and sexual harassment training. DNR IT is working on

creating a OneNet account for each of the commission members so they may take their trainings online. The other training on the Open Meetings Act is administered by the Attorney General's Office. Commission members will receive instructions on how to access and complete that training. He finished by asking members not to use the reply all or add other members to emails with DNR staff or other commission members as that would constitute an open meeting and shared his email with the group. George.Sisk@illinois.gov.

Danny thanked George for the overview and noted that he would send emails with bcc and encouraged others to do the same. He clarified that any working groups of four or more people would need to adhere to the Open Meetings Act requirements of public notice, agenda and record keeping. The group then introduced themselves, discussed their hopes for the group and shared their ideas about how they might contribute to the group and what brought them to the commission.

Kelley noted the passage of the Illinois Holocaust Education Act passed in 1990 and was amended in 2005 to include other historical and current genocides. She summarized some of the existing resources and curriculum on the holocaust and noted that the Commission's role will be to share those resources. Danny added that the Commission will leverage shared networks and resources to give students and teachers access to all the great resources that already exist and share best practices. He noted that the focus will go beyond schools to the general public. He said he hoped the group would keep genocide at the forefront of its work as well as the holocaust.

Danny said the three areas that the commission would address are memorialization, education and communications. The group then engaged in a brainstorming activity to look at possible projects and activities to support those three focus areas.

Kelley thanked the members for their work and noted that the need to define genocide was a key theme. She said a spreadsheet would be shared with the group to add their contacts and organizations that might be partners in the work of the Commission. Danny said the Commission would be a working body but that he and Kelley are respectful of people's time. If anyone needs to step back for a period, please communicate that to the group. He noted a survey would be sent out to Commission members to evaluate areas of interest and place individuals into working groups around those topics. He added that the Commission would determine its work over the coming months and asked members to think about identifying the gaps in resources. Kelley thanked the group again for joining the commission and for their important input.

Danny asked if there were any members of the public present and if they had any questions. There were none.

Kelley moved to adjourn, Danny seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.