

**MINUTES**  
STATE CAPITOL COMMISSION  
May 4, 2016

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**1. Introductions / Roll Call**

Chairman Larry Martin called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. State Architect Peter Heimbach called the roll and a quorum was established with the following members in attendance:

- Commissioner Larry Martin
- Secretary of State Tre Hargett
- Whitney Goetz on behalf of Treasurer David Lillard
- Richard Wilson on behalf of Comptroller Justin Wilson
- Commissioner Bob Martineau
- Commissioner Bob Oglesby
- Representative Curtis Johnson
- Howard Gentry
- Tammy White
  
- Senator Jack Johnson (absent)
- King Rogers (absent)
- Dr. Reavis Mitchell (absent)

**2. Approval of Minutes from the November 10, 2015 Meeting**

A motion to approve the Minutes was made, seconded and carried.

**3. New Business**

**A. Request for approval of the following projects**

*i. Bicentennial Mall Event – Butch Spyridon / Cassie Rapert*

Commissioner Martineau stated that the Department of Environment & Conservation is always looking at ways to increase revenues and visitors at all the State parks. He said that they had been approached by the Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau requesting use of the Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park for a major Nashville event. In looking at the event and general aesthetics of the Park, the request involved the removal of eight trees in an area where some of the trees are overgrown or dying and impeding the path across the park. He stated that these are not historic trees and their removal would allow the area to open up and provide more access to the park. Commissioner Martineau added that the event sponsor is committed to replacing trees after the event in appropriate places to maintain the vistas. Commissioner Oglesby said he knew the Mall was designed with certain symbolisms and asked if the design of the trees represented something. He assumed there was a reason why the trees were placed the way they were. Peter Heimbach responded that, to the best of his knowledge, there was nothing magical to the number of trees (32) other than the path that goes east to west is a significant cross axis to the park as it aligns on the pathway of history with the Civil War and Tennessee's 200 year history. In discussing the potential removal of the trees, it was felt important to maintain an axis across the park. He said the original request was to remove 16 trees, which would have left the design of the trees in a square, de-emphasizing the cross axis. In addition, he spoke with Kem Hinton, architect for the Mall, who felt it would diminish the

emphasis of the axis and might be something to be remedied in the future. Commissioner Martineau asked, and Mr. Heimbach confirmed, that the axis will still be there, leaving the path intact. Secretary Hargett asked if anyone in the audience would like to speak to the request, but no one did. The Commission approved the request to remove the eight trees as presented.

*ii. Extension of the Police Memorial Wall – Fraternal Order of Police*

Peter Heimbach presented the request to allow an extension of the Police Memorial Wall on the east side and stated that the current space is expected to run out in 2-5 years. Commissioner Oglesby asked if there are other memorial walls that list names. Mr. Heimbach responded “yes”, but that none were continuing memorials. He mentioned that the proposed Gulf Wars memorial had the potential to be one, but that other memorials in the planter beds, such as the Warrant Officers Memorial, would last over 100 years. The Commission approved the request as presented.

**B. Request for approval of the following events**

*i. Weekly Prayer Group – Jack and Lenore Brown*

Thad Watkins presented the request for approval of a prayer group to be held weekly in the Capitol. Commissioner Martineau asked if the event was open to the public or just for a set group of folks. Jack Brown responded that it’s usually a group of 6-15 people who come to pray for the legislature. Commissioner Oglesby thanked him and said they appreciate all the help they can get. He asked if there are any requests that recur in perpetuity. Secretary Hargett made a motion to approve the request to allow the weekly prayer group in the Capitol. Whitney Goetz asked, since it was after hours, would there be additional costs for security incurred and who would cover those costs. Mr. Watkins responded that the requesting group is required to cover the cost. He said the fact that it is a recurring event every week makes it unusual and might set a precedent for other groups wanting similar time. Commissioner Martin asked Mr. Brown what draws him to a prayer group in the Capitol. Mr. Brown said that it has significance, and is a high place in government, and that the old Supreme Court Chamber is similar to a church. Secretary Hargett stated that others have been frequent visitors and prayed, but mentioned the busy time during session might be difficult to schedule. Mr. Brown responded that they were very flexible.

Commissioner Martin stated that he has enormous respect for the Browns and certainly understands the merits of the request, but he struggled with the request for every Tuesday and didn’t see that as appropriate for the Capitol Commission to approve. He said that the Capitol is structured as a working government building and there seemed to be more suitable locations available for prayer. He didn’t think that this was consistent with the way the Capitol Commission has previously managed and maintained the functions of the Capitol and could not support approval of the request for those reasons.

Mr. Brown asked if they might amend their request to a monthly or quarterly basis. Commissioner Martin responded that it would still cause him concern as it would require Capitol Commission approval for each of those events, and he thought it appropriate to approve once a year. Commissioner Martineau concurred with Commissioner Martin. Commissioner Oglesby was concerned about the precedent of reserving a room for frequent recurring non-governmental events. Commissioner Martin urged Mr. Brown to visit the facility on an informal basis so that it does become problematic.

Howard Gentry made an amended motion that they have a scheduled time and room for twice a year, and continue meeting informally the other times. The amendment was made and seconded, as follows: one request may be submitted each six months for a total of two requests in a year period. Each event will require that a written request be submitted to the Capitol Commission and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Although the requests will be

looked at favorably, the Capitol Commission reserves the right to not bind future commissions to their decision. Further, the prayer group would be responsible for any security and facility personnel overtime costs that may be incurred during after-hours events. Mr. Brown thanked the commission for their thoughtful consideration.

*ii. Teacher Appreciation Dinner – Wyatt Rampy*

Thad Watkins presented the request stating that this was a heavy-use, heavy-impact, non-government event with no apparent connection to State government. Commissioner Martin asked if there is anything like this today, and Mr. Watkins replied “no”, saying that all the other heavy-impact events had some State government connection.

Commissioner Martineau expressed his appreciation and support of teachers and others, but felt they should be honored at another venue. He said that events approved by the Capitol Commission are tied to State government; otherwise, they are going to be in the event venue business. Commissioner Martineau made a motion to disapprove the request, which was taken to a roll call vote: Commissioner Martin (yes); Secretary Hargett (no); Comptroller Wilson (no); Commissioner Oglesby (yes); Commissioner Martineau (yes); Treasurer Lillard (yes); Howard Gentry (yes); Representative Johnson (yes); Tammy White (yes).

*iii. Nashville Predators – spray a stencil of “SMASHVILLE” on the back lawn of the State Capitol – David Kells*

Thad Watkins presented the request stating that the request would be sought if the Predators get to Game 6. No action was taken due to lack of a motion.

*iv. Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature (TISL)*

Thad Watkins presented the request stating that TISL was asking for dates for the next four years. Commissioner Martineau asked if there have been any issues in the past couple of years. David Carpenter was recognized and stated that large groups certainly stress the building. He mentioned Peter Heimbach’s involvement has helped tremendously as he sits down with the groups and informs them of the historic integrity and importance of the building. He stated that increasing the amount of supervision for some groups has also helped. Commissioner Martineau asked if they wanted to approve four years out. Mr. Carpenter responded that there are a lot of things coming up with the facilities including the Motlow Tunnel being closed down from June 1-December 1 as well as projects involving the cupola, driveway and interior that could impact those dates. Jeff Wilson, TISL, was recognized and stated that their official request was for only 2016. The Commission approved the request for meeting dates in 2016.

**C. Legislative Updates**

*i. Public Chapter 601 - Tennessee Heritage Protection Act of 2016*

Thad Watkins reviewed the changes to the legislation.

*ii. SB 1342/HB 1365 - Legislative Branch and Judicial Branch Control of Certain State Facilities*

Thad Watkins stated that as a result of this legislation, the War Memorial Building and Legislative Plaza and its garage are under the authority of the legislature and the legislature is now responsible for making arrangements for the maintenance of the building, provisions of security, cleaning, and setting of policies. The judiciary has the same authority over the Supreme Court and John Sevier Building. Commissioner Oglesby asked if the legislature has

brought forth any policies. Mr. Watkins responded that he didn't know of any, but that the Cordell Hull Building will fall under this Authority once it is occupied by the legislature.

#### **4. Old Business**

##### **A. Update on Capital Projects on Contiguous Grounds**

###### *i. Capitol Master Plan*

Heather Cavitt provided an update on capital projects on contiguous grounds and on adjacent grounds of the State Capitol. She stated that the Monuments and Memorials Master Plan is complete. The landscape upgrades portion is on hold while discussions regarding required utility relocation continue.

###### *ii. Capitol Cupola Restoration*

Construction documents are complete and being reviewed by the State Fire Marshal. Construction scheduled to begin late Summer 2016 for completion by Fall 2017.

##### **B. Update on Capital Projects on Adjacent Grounds**

###### *i. New Tennessee State Museum*

Project is in Design Development Phase. Groundbreaking held on April 6, 2016. Scheduled to open Summer 2018.

###### *ii. New Library and Archives*

Planning activities completed through Design Development since the project was funded in 2005. No additional funding has been appropriated since that time.

###### *iii. Cordell Hull Renovation*

Demolition of Cordell Hull and Central Services is underway. Temporary shutdown of Motlow Tunnel is scheduled to begin June 1, 2016. The building is scheduled to be ready for occupancy in the Fall of 2017, prior to the Legislature returning to session in January 2018.

###### *iv. John Sevier Exterior Renovation*

Construction scheduled to occur in Spring 2017 through Spring 2018. Interior renovation has been funded and will follow.

##### **C. Update on Other Projects**

###### *i. David Crockett Bust*

Peter Heimbach stated that the work for the bust has been proceeding in accordance with the direction that the Capitol Commission gave to the Tennessee Arts Commission. He said they have hired a sculptor, Antonio Mendez of Knoxville, MD. He has done his initial research and started in on the actual bust sculpting with the anticipated installation being in the 4th quarter of 2016.

#### **5. Other Business**

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

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