

**TENNESSEE COMMISSION FOR THE UNITED STATES SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL  
Microsoft Teams Video Conference  
And In-Person  
Nashville, Tennessee**

**Minutes  
April 21, 2023**

The Tennessee Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial met this day at 9:00 AM CT for a meeting both in person and utilization of a Microsoft Teams forum. Notice being given seven (7) days prior on the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development website. The meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM CT by Chairperson Ashley Howell. Roll was called and a quorum was established, with the following members present:

MEMBERS PRESENT

[REDACTED]  
Jennifer Core  
[REDACTED]  
Dr. Warren Dockter  
Commissioner Mark Ezell  
[REDACTED]

Ashley Howell  
Patrick McIntyre  
Jamie Ritter  
[REDACTED]  
Dr. Carroll Van West

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Clark Boyd  
[REDACTED]  
Senator Rusty Crowe  
[REDACTED]  
Senator Todd Gardenhire  
Representative G.A. Hardaway

[REDACTED]  
Emily Robinson  
Dr. David Chaffin  
[REDACTED]

GUESTS PRESENT

Alicia Widrig, Department of Tourist Development, General Counsel, Acting Attorney for the Commission  
Andi Grindley, Department of Tourist Development, Outreach Projects Coordinator, Acting Secretary for the Commission  
Melanie Beauchamp, Department of Tourist Development, Assistant Commissioner Rural Tourism & Outreach  
Diana Bramble, Superintendent, National Park Service Southern Campaign Sites  
Jennifer Bauer, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park, Park Manager

**AGENDA**

**Welcome**, Howell

Welcome and call to order for a meeting of the Tennessee Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial.

**Housekeeping**, Grindley

- Roll Call. 7 members were present, 6 members were absent at the time of the roll call. A quorum was established.
- A statement of necessity will be filed with the Tennessee Secretary of State’s Office within two days per Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-44-108(a)(3). The Statement of Necessity was read into the record at the onset of the meeting, per statutory requirements for electronic meetings, and rendered as essential to continue the business of the Commission and adoption of the January minutes.
- Approved the January Minutes of the Commission without a reading, as the Minutes were provided to members in advance of the meeting. Motion by Ezell with second by Dockter. No further discussion, move to a roll call vote:

Representative Clark Boyd		Ashley Howell	Yes
Jennifer Core	Yes	Patrick McIntyre	Yes
Senator Rusty Crowe		Jamie Ritter	Yes
Dr. Warren Dockter	Yes	Emily Robinson	
Commissioner Mark Ezell	Yes	Dr. David Chaffin	
Senator Todd Gardenhire		Dr. Carroll Van West	Yes
Representative G.A. Hardaway			

Motion carries.

**Recap of VA 250 Event**, Dockter

1. Dockter: Three main takeaways from the event:
  - a. All states are struggling with messages around inclusivity. Tone: how celebratory vs how introspective or reflective it should be.
  - b. Virginia has stepped up in the wake of the issues facing the national organization
  - c. Many other commissions already have significant funding. Tennessee is at a significant deficit in terms of funding at this point.

Howell: Bauer, Grindley, Howell & Trent also attended this event. 34 states attended. Event was held on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of creation of Committees of Correspondence. Howell continuing to gather information from other states.

**Discussion of Goalsetting/Budget Request**, Howell

1. Discussion on a budget request.
  - a. Howell: How to take ideas to implementation. Send programming and budget thoughts to Howell and Grindley by Friday, May 12. They will compile for group discussion at next meeting. Will then get non-recurring proposal to TDTD by June 1.
  - b. Dockter: American Revolution Trail, possibly using Civil War Trail budget as a model.
  - c. Beauchamp: Programming costs associated with putting on events
  - d. West: Major state heritage agencies need to identify major project and determine cost – don’t forget your own agency’s budget as we work on this budget

- e. Ritter: Can see exhibits on documentation, primary source material, library collaboration with others, can use programming costs as a model to scale that out
- f. McIntyre: Have had discussions about site that align with that era Cragfont, etc. Generate events, traveling exhibits to places that aren't necessarily tied to Revolutionary period. Connect places to events and spread audience from there.
- g. Core: Signature events, document boxes for educational outreach, pop up temporary exhibits to each county, series of publications (10 books), special issues of TN Historical Quarterly,
- h. Dockter: Same with Journal of East TN History with a collection of essays
- i. Howell: Looking at exhibits, multi-year opportunities to rotate and change story over a period of time under the America250 umbrella, cross-agency discussions related to education initiatives as it relates to curriculum
- j. Beauchamp: Will find Civil War budget to use as a guide
- k. Ezell: Should compare these plans with Civil War and apply a reasonableness test, also considering other states budgets for both. Try to meet with legislators during the summer.
- l. Howell: Partnership is key. Think also about local organizations. How does funding trickle down to them?
- m. Beauchamp: That would be grants for local organizations
- n. West: Way it was done for 1976 program was any county that set up their own commission they got \$10,000 from state. During listening sessions, people want this to happen again.
- o. Ritter: Here we are 250 years later, what has TN's contribution been? What do the next 250 years look like? What ideas do we want to spark for the next generation of Tennesseans?
- p. Howell: Definitely part of the scope to have both a look back and a look forward. Messaging is this is not just a look at the American Revolution but a look at the country, democracy, individual contributions. How do we capture that and communicate it, also in marketing.
- q. Beauchamp: What does this do for Tennesseans vs. what does this do for tourists?
- r. Ritter: Asked about Homecoming event.
- s. West: Statewide Homecoming '86 had signature events and also had funding for books, exhibits, etc. at the local level, a grant program, a marker program. Counties could have their own event and get funding from the state. Events looked back and forward, some were long-term, some were one day.

**Old Business**, Howell

No old business.

**New Business**, Howell

1. McIntyre: We should try to meet in-person soon, as some are more engaged in-person rather than electronic meetings. Willing to host.  
Dockter: Also willing to host. Should make an effort to meet in various locations across the state.  
Ezell: Need to find influencers for the 4 legislators on the commission to get them to attend these meetings.  
West: Has good relationships with all of them. Need to cultivate them as champions for this cause.

Howell: Has been updating legislators on commission progress. They are expecting a budget request. Opportunity to meet at sites, participate in programs. Being in legislators' districts is important to them. Will meet May 15 at the TN State Museum.

**Public Comments**

No public comments.

**Closing Remarks**, Howell

Appreciate Bauer & Bramble joining and working with Commission. Commission is headed in the right direction. Appreciate good discussion.

Motion to adjourn by Ritter with second from West. No further discussion, move to a roll call vote:

Representative Clark Boyd		Ashley Howell	Yes
Jennifer Core	Yes	Patrick McIntyre	Yes
Senator Rusty Crowe		Jamie Ritter	Yes
Dr. Warren Dockter	Yes	Emily Robinson	
Commissioner Mark Ezell		Dr. David Chaffin	
Senator Todd Gardenhire		Dr. Carroll Van West	Yes
Representative G.A. Hardaway			

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 am.

Approved:

5/15/2023  
Date

  
Acting Secretary  
Department of Tourist Development