

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

**Minutes  
October 13, 2023**

The Tennessee Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial met this day at 10:00 AM CT for a meeting both in-person and utilizing a Microsoft Teams forum. Notice was given seven (7) days prior on the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development website. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM CT by Chairperson Ashley Howell. Roll was called but a quorum was not established, with the following members present:

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jennifer Core  
Dr. Warren Dockter  
Commissioner Mark Ezell  
Ashley Howell  
Jamie Ritter  
Dr. Carroll Van West

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Clark Boyd  
Dr. David Chaffin  
Senator Rusty Crowe  
Senator Todd Gardenhire  
Representative G.A. Hardaway  
Patrick McIntyre  
Emily Robinson

**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  
Mary Katelyn Price, Department of Tourist Development, Legislative Liaison  
Diana Bramble, National Park Service Southern Campaign Sites, Superintendent  
Jennifer Bauer, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park, Former Park Manager  
Nieya Wallace, Tennessee State Museum, Project Manager  
Christina Treglia, Department of Environment and Conservation, Director of Brand Promise  
Myers Brown, Belmont Mansion, Executive Director

## AGENDA

### Welcome, Howell

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

### Housekeeping, Grindley

- Roll Call. 6 members were present, 7 members were absent at the time of the roll call. A quorum was not 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 discuss upcoming events, public comment requirements and next steps for the Commission.
- Held approval of the August Minutes of the Commission to the next meeting with a quorum.

### Announcements, Howell

1. Howell: VA 250 Commission has set dates for 2024 Common Cause for All conference. Dates are Monday March 18 – Wednesday March 20, 2024 at Colonial Williamsburg. TN has been invited to organize a delegation to attend. Howell cannot attend due to conflict with Tennessee Association of Museums conference. West will attend.
2. Widrig: The General Assembly passed a new law effective July 1 that requires boards and commissions to reserve a time for public comment. TDTD has adopted a policy that will be effective October 16, so for the next 250<sup>th</sup> meeting. This does not change how the board operates but is a more streamlined process. Grindley will include policy in the minutes.

### Planning/Next Steps, Howell

1. Howell: As we are waiting on budget information, we have 5-6 months for planning. Many commissions are in the same spot, planning but unable to execute without funding. What activities does the commission need to focus on in the next couple of months? We are starting to receive more inquiries across the state about the activities of the commission, how others can be involved and what funding opportunities will be available. Could there be a summit for planning, as an extension of the listening sessions from 2021?  
West: Add planning summits to list of goals for 2024. Perhaps one in Nashville at State Museum or State Library & Archives, ETHS in Knoxville, Memphis and perhaps Sycamore Shoals State Park. These would be a good way to increase engagement.  
Ritter: Roll out anything we do for curriculum in phases, so have something ready for fall 2024 and maybe that is limited as it's the beginning of what we offer and it expands throughout 2025 and beyond. On grants, pull from existing programs and templates rather than reinvent the wheel.  
Core: House museums and smaller museums are looking for guidance/opportunities. Could there be a session at TAM that addresses some of their questions?  
Howell: Deadline for session submissions is next week. Planning to submit a proposal to have a session that is part activities of the commission and part roundtable discussion to generate ideas.

Beauchamp: Smaller areas/rural destinations have a story to tell but aren't sure what to do with it or how to put together an event, etc. The planning sessions would be an opportunity for guidance for them as well.

Howell: State Museum is creating its own internal cross departmental group to help with planning.

**Old Business**, Howell

No old business.

**New Business**, Howell

1. Ezell: We have officially petitioned the Lee Administration on two primary changes that would require legislative support. Working through details such as what needs a sponsor. The first item is to allow delegates when someone cannot attend so a quorum can be met. So far the administration supports this. The second is to move the commission under the guidance and leadership of the Tennessee State Museum rather than Tourism. We have tentative support of the administration. If we end up with administrative support, we may need sponsors for bills. May want to begin discussions with the 4 legislators on the commission to hold a spot for bill sponsorship in both House and Senate.
2. Howell: Have reached out to all 4 for meetings to update on the commission. Two meetings are set but have not yet happened.
3. Price: Reminder that this information is to be kept within the commission for now.
4. Howell: America 250 marker unveil at The Hermitage. Howell will attend on behalf of commission. New funding opportunity from the National Commission for small museums. Howell working with TAM to share.

**Public Comments**

No public comments.

**Closing Remarks**, Howell

1. Howell: Meetings are set for November and December and focus should still be planning. Meeting adjourned at 10:40 AM CT.

Approved:


2/28/2024

Date



Acting Secretary

Department of Tourist Development

<b>Approved by:</b> Mark Ezell, Commissioner	<b>Policy Number:</b> 2023-001
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Supersedes:</b> N/A
<b>Application:</b>	<b>Effective Date:</b> October 16, 2023
<b>Authority:</b> T.C.A. §8-44-1, Public Chapter 300, July 1, 2023.	<b>Rule:</b> N/A

A. Purpose.

The Department of Tourist Development shall provide those governing bodies administratively attached with information relative to controlling statute updates that impact Tennessee’s citizens ability to meaningfully participate in meetings.

B. Definitions.

1. *Governing body* is defined by Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-44-102(b)(1).
2. *Open Meetings Act* is defined by § 8-44-102 *et al.*
3. *Meeting* is defined by § 8-44-102(b)(2).

C. Process.

The Department encourages public participation in open meetings through multiple avenues. The Department welcomes public comments within those governing bodies administratively attached to develop constituent support and involvement. Due to the nature of the business of those governing bodies administratively attached, business being done in the most expedient manner possible, comments may be limited to a certain period. For example, a governing body may limit comments from the public if the length of the meeting would otherwise be increased by reason of repetition, when comments are not relevant to the items on the governing body’s agenda, or when a member of the public threatens, uses profane language, or attempts to obtain control over an in-person or virtual meeting.

D. Procedures.

1. In accordance with Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-44-103, the Open Meetings Act, governing bodies shall give adequate public notice of regular and specially set meetings. Instructions for attending or accessing the meeting will be included in the notice.
2. Governing bodies shall attempt to have multiple means to allow the public to meaningfully participate. If feasible, the public should be able to comment in-person, virtually, or by submitting comments beforehand by email to be included in the record by the governing body’s secretary during the meeting. This allowance shall not interfere with the governing body’s ability to limit or direct the format of the meeting for health or safety concerns.
3. Speakers must provide advance notice to the respective body per the instructions provided with the public notice prior to the meeting in order to be placed on the schedule to speak for their allotted five (5) minute time period. When a member of the public is present, virtually or in person, at a meeting but has not followed instructions that were required in order to participate in

the open meeting, if feasible, the governing body should allow the member of the public to participate in the meeting.

4. During a meeting, the governing body may take a motion to extend the speakers allotted time, as circumstances require.
5. The Department is committed to principles of equal access. When a member of the public needs assistance with attending or accessing any open meeting due to disability, such member of the public should contact the Department's ADA Coordinator at (615) 741-9065.