



50th Commemoration Advisory Committee Meeting Summary, April 4, 2019

In Attendance:

President Warren
Chic Canfora
Rod Flauhaus
Tom Grace
Chris Post

Ken Burhanna
Laura Davis
Brianna Foraker
Paul Haridakis
Stephanie Smith

Maddie Camp
Mindy Farmer
Amoaba Gooden
Jerry Lewis
Melody Tankersley

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30 p.m. by Project Manager Rod Flauhaus, who welcomed everyone and introduced new members: Maddie Camp (May 4 Task Force Chair), Brianna Foraker (May 4 Task Force Advisor), Nick Kollar (Student Trustee). Char Reed (Vice President and University Secretary) attended as a guest from the Office of the President.

President's Update

President Warren expressed appreciation to the group for their service and gave an update on several issues, including the Board of Trustees' March 6 approval of Resolution 2019-14, Ensuring the University's Ongoing Commitment and Responsibility for the Commemoration of and Education Regarding May 4, 1970. She described the events of that day as well as the pre-Board dinner the night before that was attended by a number of May 4 survivors and experts and focused on the importance of continuing to honor and commemorate the importance of our May 4 legacy.

She noted that the university soon will be transitioning from initial planning to implementation and will begin to shift the collective focus to executing upon all the planning that has taken place over the past year. Additional goals for the coming year will include more communications externally and internally, having the Advisory Committee meet more frequently before the end of the year, and increasing the engagement of stakeholders, particularly students, in events and ongoing education.

Other Planning Updates

On behalf of the May 4 Task Force, Maddie Camp and Brianna Foraker gave an update on planning for the 49th Commemoration in May 2019. The task force has chosen the theme of "May We Forever Stand, Long Live the Memory of Kent State and Jackson State." The group hopes to engage spiritual leaders as speakers who can comment upon recent acts of violence against members of religious organizations. President Warren indicated that the Office of the President will provide travel support to the 49th commemoration for family members and survivors as needed.

Director Mindy Farmer provided an update on activities of the May 4 Visitors Center, including its special exhibition on the life of William Schroeder, one of four Kent State students killed on May 4, 1970. The exhibit is scheduled to open before May 4, 2019.

Char Reed noted that significant progress has been made in university-wide planning to date, which was reflected in a summary shared with the advisory committee. Rod Flauhaus provided an overview of recent improvements in May 4 online resources, including the launching of a new 50th commemoration website and the organization of a central May 4 “hub” of the extensive May 4 resources that have been scattered across the Kent State website. Both improvements will make it easier for individuals to find information about May 4. There was extensive discussion about efforts underway in search engine optimization, of which the committee will be kept informed and will be asked to provide further input and assessment regarding the 50th commemoration website and navigation enhancements.

Committee members reviewed the programming summary, which provided a high-level overview of progress to date. Highlights include more than 60 programs developed with the Academic Leadership Group (ALG), several national conferences centered around a May 4-related theme, speakers series, educational experiences for first-year students, town/gown events, and many others. President Warren noted the committee will have the opportunity to review a more detailed overview at its next meeting. Members of the committee provided detailed input regarding 2019 summer reading selections for incoming students, which Dr. Tankersley will share with the university provost.

Discussion/Next Steps

It was agreed that the 50th Commemoration Advisory Committee would meet three additional times through the middle of May to review programming and to discuss action items for the summer and beyond. The meeting was adjourned at 7 p.m.