

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia



Commission on the DC Emancipation Day Meeting

Date: Thursday, January 26, 2023 - 6:35PM - 7:03PM

Platform: Web Ex –

<https://dcnet.webex.com/dcnet/j.php?MTID=m15b6f948ad43bcb9256d94579df092d4>

Facilitator/ Lead: Secretary of State Kimberly Bassett

In Attendance: Commissioner Mary Ivey, Commissioner Ayanna Hawkins, Commissioner Howard Marks, Commissioner Helga Baskett-Tippett, and Commissioner Frank Smith; Secretary of State Kimberly Bassett, Special Assistant/Public Information Officer Joshua Collins, Deputy Secretary Alma Candelaria, Editor Gina Henderson

Agenda:

1. Welcome/Call to Order

- Secretary Bassett opened the meeting by providing Office of the Secretary Staff introductions.
- Secretary Bassett shared that the Office of the Secretary was invited to testify on behalf of the Emancipation Commission for the Committee on Public Works and Operations under Councilmember Brianne Nadeau next Wednesday, February 1st at 9:30 AM.
- Commissioner Marks asked for clarity about the hearing date start time.
- Secretary Bassett stated that the hearing starts at 9:00 AM, but she would be speaking closer to 11:00 AM and invited the Commissioners to be present and available.
- Secretary Bassett thanked the Commissioners for their work and support over the last two years, during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Secretary Bassett officially called the Commission meeting to order at 6:39 PM

2. Determination of Quorum

- Commissioners Ivey, Hawkins, Marks, Baskett-Tippett, Smith attended.
- Staff Members Candelaria, Collins, and Henderson also attended for the Office of the Secretary.
- Secretary Bassett stated that we didn't have a quorum but that was allowed because there was no vote scheduled for the meeting.

3. 2022 Emancipation Day Events Recap

- Secretary Bassett stated that no official recap of 2022 Emancipation Activities would be discussed at the meeting because all the commissioners present participated. She also provided that this year we would not be doing as many events as last year.
 - Link to 2022 Emancipation Events: [DC Emancipation Day 2022](#)
- Secretary Bassett stated that the Office of Public Records, Dr. Lopez Matthews, has recommended that Emancipation Day events be planned throughout the month, instead of primarily during the celebratory week. This approach will allow for deeper exploration of topics, better outreach to our audiences and wider participation rates.

4. Potential Events for 2023 Emancipation Day Week

- Secretary Bassett stated that this year the Commission would be bringing back the Full Democracy Champions Breakfast. She mentioned that the venue was still being confirmed.
- Secretary Bassett asked the commissioners to think about potential speakers and topics. Secretary Bassett mentioned that Commissioner Marks helped previously with finding a Rabbi.
- Secretary Bassett asked Commissioner Marks if he would be willing to assist with using the Rabbi again.
- Secretary Bassett stated that the breakfast will take place on Friday, April 14th at 8:30 AM. She then provided that the date for the parade will be Saturday, April 15th, as well as the Cherry Blossom Festival occurring the same day.

5. Open Discussion/Questions and Concerns

- Secretary Bassett asked each Commission to reach out if they were willing to continue serving on the Commission given that all terms were expiring or expired. Renominations were being forwarded unless otherwise indicated.
- She also invited Commissioners to share names for other Commissions including the MLK and new Juneteenth Commission.
- Secretary Bassett reiterated that if the commissioners knew of topics to please

share them with the group. She also mentioned that we were looking for new commissioners and asked for the current members to send resumes to Joshua Collins or herself. She clarified that we're looking for new members for all Office of the Secretary Commissions, not just the Emancipation Commission.

- Commissioner Marks mentioned a concern that it will be difficult to have participation at the Emancipation Day Parade, with the Cherry Blossom Festival happening the same day.
- Secretary Bassett stated that since there will be an influx of people in the city, it's a great opportunity to educate them about DC History and Voting Rights.
- Secretary Bassett mentioned that the Emancipation Day parade will be earlier in the day, and that it doesn't usually conflict with the Cherry Blossom Festival. Secretary Bassett stated that the Office of the Secretary is not responsible for planning the parade, however as we plan events, she wants to ensure that the Cherry Blossom parade is over before the concert and evening festivities begin.
- Commissioner Hawkins asked whether the goal was for people to attend both events and eventually migrate up Constitution Ave. She asked whether the Emancipation Day parade occurred prior to the Cherry Blossom Festival parade, followed by the concert?
- Secretary Bassett stated that in the past, people have done both and is hopeful that the location of the Emancipation Day parade will encourage people to attend the Cherry Blossom festivities as well.
- Commissioner Marks asked Secretary to consider cross visibility, and cross publicity. He spoke about an opportunity to advertise Emancipation Day Parade/Activities within the Chery Blossom Festival promotions.
- Commissioner Hawkins asked about adding Commissioners to the Emancipation Day Commission in lieu of the Juneteenth Commission. She spoke to potential programming options to link or bridge the Juneteenth Holiday as well as the Emancipation Day celebrations.
- Commissioner Hawkins shared that she believes that there is an opportunity to link both and help DC residents make the connection and not just look at it as another day off.
- Commissioner Smith stated that he does think the turnaround between the two events can be challenging and thinks there should be a joint celebration.
- Secretary Bassett mentioned that she would speak with Dr. Lopez Matthews to see about potential programming options to bridge the two holidays.

- Commissioner Smith, who will serve on the Juneteenth Commission, offered to join the Secretary at the hearing and looked forward to one day hosting events of the Commission at his soon to be open museum—African American Civil War Memorial.
- Secretary Bassett restated meeting takeaways and shared that she will speak with Commissioner Smith separately to go through the legislation to get clarity on where the Juneteenth Commission will be housed.
- Secretary Bassett mentioned that her office will continue to include members of the MLK Commission so that both groups can support each other's events to ensure the both stay active and relevant.
- Secretary Bassett thanked the Commissioners for their input and closed the meeting at 7:03 PM

6. Next Meeting Date: February 09, 2023

7. Adjournment