

*City of Fort Lauderdale
Citizens' Board of Recognition
City Commission Conference Room
March 29, 2005
Minutes*

Board Members Present

Robert O. Cox
Robert Dressler, Chair
Genia Ellis
E. Clay Shaw, Jr. (via phone)
E. Birch Willey

Also Present

Angela Sabina, Staff Liaison
David Hébert, Public Information Director
Jean-Paul Renaud, Sun-Sentinel
Richard Mancuso, Citizen
Andrew Lewis, President of the Democratic Black Caucus
Kelvin Haynes, Vice President of the Democratic Black Caucus

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

Minutes

MOTION: Willey/Ellis. A motion was made to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2004 meeting. Passed unanimously.

Citizen Recognition Awards

At the City Commission Conference Meeting on March 15, 2005, Commissioner Hutchinson mentioned some letters the Commission received regarding the 2005 Honored Founder nomination. After discussion, the City Commission concluded by consensus that the matter should be referred back to the Citizens' Board of Recognition.

The Board discussed the 2005 Honored Founder nominee, L.C. Judd. Cox commented that times have changed as people do and he added that he was a close friend of L.C. Judd and never heard him express those sentiments. Dressler agreed that things were different back then but the award is being given now and he felt the letters sent to the Commission expressed sentiments that raised serious concern. Willey said he gave the issue a lot of consideration and would prefer to look at the positives and feels Judd's leadership should be recognized. Ellis asked that future nominations be required to submit background information and added that although she did not know Judd personally, she does know both people who wrote letters to the Commission and feels the Board must give those individuals' concerns due regard. Shaw mentioned that the world has changed for the better and that some of the most historic figures were also slave owners but he feels that if the Board resubmits Judd's name it would only be a disservice to the Judd family.

MOTION: Shaw/Ellis. A motion was made to remove L.C. Judd's name and select another nominee for the 2005 Honored Founder Award.

The Board discussed the motion on the floor. Cox said that Judd was undeniably a founder according to some of the Historical Society's articles included in the Board's package and he would not support such a motion. Shaw said that he feels the consequences of not withdrawing Judd's name are considerable. Dressler expressed that the letters refer to Judd's behavior, not his attitude or feelings, and although that may have been acceptable in past times, it is not acceptable now. Willey commented that he believes Judd did a great deal for the City of Fort Lauderdale and said he would not support the motion. Ellis mentioned that she attended the City Commission meeting and she felt that they would like the Board to reconsider.

The motion passed 3-2 with Cox and Willey dissenting.

The Board discussed selecting another nominee.

MOTION: Cox/Willey. A motion was made to eliminate Honored Founder from the 2005 awards ceremony.

The Board discussed the motion on the floor. Ellis believes that eliminating Honored Founder for 2005 would be a disservice to the other highly eligible nominees.

The motion failed 2-3 with Dressler, Ellis and Shaw dissenting.

MOTION: Ellis. A motion was made to offer the City Commission more than one nominee. The motion failed for lack of a second.

MOTION: Ellis/Dressler. A motion was made to select Marjorie Davis as 2005 Honored Founder.

The motion passed 4-0 with Cox abstaining.

The Board discussed the motion on the floor. Willey said he thinks it is still a lose-lose situation because he felt it would be a disservice to Davis, which is why he supported the earlier motion to withdraw the Honored Founder award for 2005, but added that he would support this nomination. Dressler mentioned that this is a difficult situation for the Board but he does not feel it dishonors Davis. Dressler also noted that Davis had been regularly nominated for an award for the past several years.

The Board agreed that all members acted in good faith and if the City Commission would like to add more criteria to the awards they should advise the Board to do so. Shaw commented that the positives of Judd's contributions to the City of Fort Lauderdale are real, despite the overshadowing of his personal sentiments which were commonly held in his day. Dressler agreed that the times have changed for the better and this is a learning

experience for the Board since he could not recall when they had ever had a split vote in the history of this Board.

MOTION: Willey/Ellis. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 a.m. Passed unanimously.

UNAPPROVED DRAFT