

Report of the Capitol Preservation Committee to the 2013 Kansas Legislature

CHAIRPERSON: Jennie Chinn, State Historical Society, Chairperson

SENATE PRESIDENT'S APPOINTEES: Joanne Budler, State Librarian; and John Pinegar

HOUSE SPEAKER'S APPOINTEES: Representative Elaine Bowers, Acting Secretary Lana Gordon

SENATE MINORITY LEADER'S APPOINTEE: Timothy R. Graham

GOVERNOR'S APPOINTEES: Peggy Palmer, Landon Fulmer

HOUSE MINORITY LEADER'S APPOINTEE: Representative Valdenia Winn

OTHER MEMBERS (EX OFFICIO): Barry Greis, Statehouse Architect; Peter Jasso, Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission

STUDY TOPICS

The Committee is charged to develop plans for the placement of a mural in the State Capitol commemorating the United States Supreme Court decision in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. After January 1, 2013, the Committee is responsible for approval for all proposals for renovation of all areas of the State Capitol, the Capitol Visitor Center, and the grounds surrounding the State Capitol. The Committee is required to submit an annual report of its activities and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature.

February 2012

Capitol Preservation Committee

ANNUAL REPORT

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Capitol Preservation Committee makes the following conclusions and recommendations:

- The Committee's four subcommittees, covering the topics of temporary displays, the Visitors Center, landscaping, and the *Brown v. Board* Mural should proceed with their assignments.
- The Committee plans to meet during the first five months of 2013 to hear from area art historians and experts for the purpose of educating the Committee on murals, their cost, historical importance, and other factors to be considered by the Committee when it evaluates artists' submissions.
- The Committee requests guidance from the Legislature as to the appropriate means by which future donors are recognized.
- The Committee is willing to work with legislators to resolve the ambiguity over the jurisdiction of the 1st Kansas (Colored) Voluntary Infantry Regiment mural. If necessary, the Capitol Preservation Committee would be willing to assume responsibility for this other mural.

Proposed Legislation: None.

BACKGROUND

The Capitol Preservation Committee was created by the Legislature in 2010. As provided by KSA 2012 Supp. 75-2269, the Committee has 12 members, with the Governor appointing three, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House each appointing two, and the Minority Leaders of the Senate and House each appointing one. The Committee's three *ex-officio* members are the Statehouse Architect, the Executive Director of the State Historical Society, and the Director of the Creative Arts Industries Commission. The Governor has the authority to appoint the chairperson from amongst the Committee's membership.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

The Capitol Preservation Committee met on October 24 and December 12, 2012.

At its meeting in October, the Committee learned that 36 artists from around the country, including 14 Kansas artists, submitted their qualifications for purposes of consideration for the *Brown v. Board* Mural. The Committee also learned that a new Walk of Honor, comprising plaques affixed to the sidewalk around the Capitol, had been initiated. Thus far, plaques have been installed for Vice President Charles Curtis, U.S. Senator Robert Dole, Amelia Earhart, and Nobel Prize-winning physicist Jack Kilby. The Walk of Honor will remind visitors to the Capitol of the important contributions made by Kansas residents to the nation and the world.

Three subcommittees were appointed to address guidelines for temporary displays, the Visitors Center, and the *Brown v. Board* mural.

At its meeting on December 12, at the request of the Governor, a landscape subcommittee was appointed. A design of the entire grounds will be completed with the proposed assistance of landscape architects Bartlett and West. The physical work on the grounds may not commence until August or September of 2013.

Subcommittee on Guidelines for Temporary Displays

The Subcommittee on Guidelines for Temporary Displays reviewed the guidelines adopted by six other states (Massachusetts, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah) which have renovated their capitol buildings. The Subcommittee proposed to use the policies for the Kansas Statehouse and Capitol Complex that were adopted in 2003 but never implemented as a foundation for the new guidelines. The following modifications would be made:

- Include an "Introduction," discussing why new guidelines are necessary;
- Bar displays or events that may cause damage to the building or impact safety and security; and
- Prohibit the use of the parking garage for displays.

The Subcommittee proposed dividing the Capitol into three primary usage areas:

- The Visitors Center, which would be under the jurisdiction of the Capitol Preservation Committee and operated by the Kansas Historical Society;
- The Capitol grounds and areas outside the building, which could continue to be under the jurisdiction of the Office of Facilities and Property Management; and
- The Capitol Building, proper, which would have split jurisdiction:

The Legislative Coordinating Council (LCC) would have jurisdiction over Floors 3, 4 and 5. Legislative Administrative Services would approve requests to use space on those floors;

The Office of Facilities and Property Management would have jurisdiction over, and approve requests to use space on Floors 1 and 2; and

- Regardless of the floor, setup costs would be paid by sponsoring organizations.

Displays would be allowed on Floors 1 and 2 only and exhibited for no longer than a week. Displays must relate to Kansas history or culture. The Subcommittee will recommend guidelines which will prohibit displays intended to solicit commercial activity.

The Guidelines Subcommittee recommended the adoption of the food usage guidelines recommended by the LCC.

Subcommittee on the Visitors Center Exhibits

The Subcommittee on the Visitors Center Exhibits said the goal for the new facility is to challenge the perception of Kansas history and the Kansas landscape held by visitors. Since the Capitol does not lend itself to comprehensive historical exhibits, the focus should be on iconic documents, artifacts, or art work.

A documentary film on the Capitol should be available in the Visitors Center, along with interactive features which engage the public. The Subcommittee hopes the Legislature will provide guidance as to the means by which donors are recognized.

The next step in the process is to determine whether special display cases will be necessary. The Kansas Historical Society will develop detailed cost estimates.

Subcommittee on *Brown v. Board* Mural

The Subcommittee on the *Brown v. Board* Mural established tentative deadlines for the mural project:

- By January 4, 2013, review applications submitted by artists;
- By January 11, 2013, finalize a list of artists who will be invited to submit a proposal;
- By February 1, 2013, send letters to those artists;
- Between February and May 2013, the Capitol Preservation Committee should hear from area art historians and art experts for the purpose of educating the Committee on murals, cost, factors of historical importance, and other factors to be considered by the Committee when it evaluates an artist's submission; and
- By October 2015, dedicate the mural.

The Committee also heard about the lack of progress on the mural commemorating the 1st Kansas (Colored) Voluntary Infantry Regiment. Currently the Committee has no authority over that mural, which was statutorily authorized prior to the *Brown v. Board* Mural.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on testimony and discussion, the Committee makes the following conclusions and recommendations:

- The four subcommittees should proceed with their assignments.
- The Committee should meet during the first five months of 2013 to hear from area art historians and experts for the purpose of educating the Committee on murals, their cost, historical importance, and other factors to be considered by the Committee when it evaluates artists' submissions.
- The Committee requests guidance from the Legislature as to the appropriate means by which future donors are recognized.
- The Committee is willing to work with legislators to resolve the ambiguity over the jurisdiction of the 1st Kansas (Colored) Voluntary Infantry Regiment mural. If necessary, the Capitol Preservation Committee would be willing to assume responsibility for this other mural.