

University of Florida Historic St. Augustine, Inc. (UFHSA)
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UFHSA Board of Directors Meeting
10:00 A.M., June 6, 2018
Governor's House, 48 King Street, St. Augustine, FL

Board Members Present: Chair Allen Lastinger, Kathy Deagan, Buff Gordon, Rick Gonzalez (by phone), Bill Proctor, William Robinson, Herschel Shepard, Tracy Upchurch and Doug Wiles

Board Members Absent: Michael Francis, Roy Hunt, Arva Parks

Staff Present: Ed Poppell, Linda Dixon, Lora Smith, and Billy Triay

Meeting called to order by Chair Lastinger at 10:02 a.m. Chair Lastinger told the board members and audience that this meeting is to discuss the Loring Monument only. The options Ed Poppell has developed are not recommendations to the board, they are only ideas. The board was reminded that they are encouraged to suggest options. The board is open to all options regarding the Loring Monument and burial site.

Chair Lastinger asked Mr. Thomas Jackson to speak. Thomas Jackson is the Chairman of the Confederate Memorial Contextualization Advisory Committee for the City of St. Augustine. Mr. Jackson noted the city did not want to move their monument, but contextualize it.

Board Member Wiles asked if Mr. Jackson could clarify when his committee will give their recommendations to the city. Mr. Jackson believes the recommendation will be given in early July.

Ed Poppell has spoken to a relative of Mr. Loring and the relative gave a personal prospective about the monument.

Chair Lastinger asked Mr. Poppell to present the options he has developed:

The options are:

- Name the park area west of the Governor's House where the monument is located.
- Implement "new" curriculum at the Colonial Quarter with attention to Slavery/Civil Rights history.
- Governor's House interpretive exhibit/displays/TV loop for Slavery/Civil Rights.
- Additional/improved interpretation for the Loring Monument with attention to the 1920's era monuments.
- Promote and conduct awareness events.
- Relocate the Loring Monument.
- Speaker/Symposiums by faculty of UF/Flagler/other Institutions.
- Install additional monuments with interpretation in the area (i.e. Francisco Menendez).
- Sponsor and promote awareness of these sensitive issues via debates, community discussions.

- Remove the Loring Monuments and burial site.
- Partner with LINCOLNVILLE Museum/Fort Mose for events and awareness.
- Oral history interviews.
- Remove the Loring Monument, but retain the burial site for Mr. Loring's remains.

Board Member Upchurch noted that a monument or sculpture could create a theme for the park as well.

Board Member Gordon noted that this is a memorial to a military man, but there were black men as well that were military. She suggested that an option would be to add their names to a monument.

Board Member Deagan stated that this is bringing awareness to the community. The options dealing with the actual monument are the ones we should talk about. She wanted to know if there are any restrictions on what the board can do.

Ed Poppell mentioned that there are a number of issues we would want to share with other entities as we move forward on certain options.

Board Member Robinson asked about the difference between relocating and removal options.

Ed Poppell responded.

Board Member Wiles asked if Ed has had a conversation with the city about these options. Ed Poppell noted that he has not shared any of the options with the city. He wanted the board to evaluate the options first.

Chair Lastinger opened the meeting to public comment.

1st Speaker: Hugh Washington: General Loring is a prominent St. Augustine citizen. Most of his service was with the US Army. To remove the monument would be a loss.

2nd Speaker: Thomas Jackson: Mr. Loring was a prominent military man, but so were others. Certain elements of the monument are a problem for some people. Wiles: we all recognize Loring's service, but it appears the confederate flag has a place of prominence on the monument. Do you think the placing of the confederate flag has a purpose to be placed where it is? Jackson: the flag can be intimidating. Some people don't realize it has an effect on people.

3rd Speaker: Dave Heimbold: has a 14th option. Leave the monument alone. Bringing up racial transgressions after 50 or 60 years. Instead of spending time and money just list it as a memorial-monument.

4th speaker: Bill McClure: Likes option #4. Add extra contextualization that teaches history.

5th speaker: Doug Russo: The confederacy was more in line with the founding fathers. #15: why isn't a black confederate soldier memorialized? The confederate flag is a Christian flag, based on St. Andrews. If you take that monument you are disgracing the founding fathers.

6th speaker: Peter Quinn: It stings when he hears some of the recommendations. If the monument is moved or changed that leaves a history of showing people being cowards.

7th speaker: Jimmy Edwards: Army veteran. It would be a dishonor to desecrate the site by removing it. General Loring's headstone and grave site should be respected.

8th speaker: Ed Slavin: Please vote no on 6, 10 and 13. Name the park for Stetson Kennedy, a UF student who interviewed slaves and infiltrated the KKK. Loring toured President Grant and his wife all over Egypt for a month after Grant left the Presidency.

9th speaker: Jill Paletti: Likes the idea of contextualization. She states that education is the key to healing.

10th speaker: Jim Lloyd: Don't take any action that diminishes the person. The honor of Loring's service deserves recognition. Loring responded to a call from his community to serve.

11th speaker: Seber Newsome: gave handout to board and read a letter from a Loring relative. Does not want the statue removed.

Public comment portion concluded.

Chair Lastinger asks for comments from the board.

Board Member Gonzalez: There is an opportunity to shed light on the subject.

Board Member Deagan: Asks for the history of Loring's burial.

Board Member Upchurch: His remains were relocated from New York to St. Augustine Evergreen Cemetery and then the monument was erected. The city deserves credit for the Foot Soldiers monument. The plaza is the heart of our city. Erect a new monument in the west park for this. We can tell a fuller story with a new monument. This is a conversation in 2018, not 1920. We have an opportunity to do something that will lead us forward in the conversation.

Board Member Deagan: We should ask why Loring was chosen to be memorialized on public land. Why not someone else. On public land it should represent all of us. What Tracy is suggesting is a compromise. Feels this is a military only monument.

Board Member Robinson: This is one of those teaching moments in a way. Everything we do is to protect history and help explain it. Maybe rename the park and create some balance. This is one element of our history, not our entire history. Create a balance and a context of the area.

Board Member Shepard: Isn't the real issue with the monument the confederacy aspect? There are other aspects of the confederacy that don't involve slavery. The issue today is for those of us that find slavery an aspect of the confederacy unpalatable. Anyone can look at the Loring monument and view it as a memorial to the confederate states of America, but it can also be viewed as a memorial. We can't control the fact that people see the confederate flag on it and see it as a representative to the confederacy. The board should not change the object. It is part of our history. Concerned that this is a

memorial to an important person to St. Augustine and that overshadows the fact that there is a confederate flag on it. You can add information, but don't change what is there.

Board Member Proctor: We should not judge history. We got off base when we started judging the people on the monuments. Leave the monument alone and let it be what it was intended to be.

Board Member Gordon: We have to contextualize something. I designed the MLK memorial in Gainesville, and thinks we should do something like this through the Lincolnton group. Don't blame the past, but look towards the future.

Board Member Wiles: There are a few things that have some real value. Working with the Lincolnton museum or someone appropriate in the city to help balance the story. It would be a good move forward to declare what the plaza is. Name the area so people know what it is.

Chair Lastinger states that he appreciates the thoughts and suggestions of the board.

Board Member Proctor asks if there is there anything in the law that suggests the monument was illegally put there.

Ed Poppell states that a Federal easement of sorts was given for the land and a dedication and celebration took place. Even a day parade was held when Gen. Loring's remains were moved from the Evergreen Cemetery to the current location.

Board Member Proctor states that regardless of what is happening elsewhere, are we going to go back and judge other people's actions? Recognize history for what it is and hope we don't make that same mistake again.

Board Member Upchurch notes that when Loring was buried at Evergreen he laid in state in the public market. It was big event. The fountain is a Flagler era. 1880's. The fountain was a Flagler creation.

Chair Lastinger recaps the board's feelings about the monument. There is a general feeling that the monument should not be altered in anyway, however there needs to be a physical balance in proximity of the monument. Suggested that we work with the Lincolnton museum to bring awareness to the community about the aspects of the civil war.

Board Member Upchurch suggests reaching out to the Lincolnton museum. The balance here is not so much another aspect of the civil war, but the existence of African Americans and other groups.

Board Member Shepherd states that the emphasis here is on education.

Chair Lastinger states that he doesn't want to prolong this discussion any longer than necessary. Chair Lastinger asks Ed to work through some of the issues in balancing the physical structure and come back to the group in November with what might be an appropriate name for the plaza. A lot of preparatory work needs to be done before we can ask for a motion on this. Chair Lastinger thanks the group for their ideas and comments. The meeting was adjourned at 11:39 a.m.