

MINUTES

STATE CAPITOL COMMISSION

NOVEMBER 3, 2010

1. **Introductions / Roll Call**

Chairman Dave Goetz called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. He noted that a quorum was present with the following in attendance:

Members Present

Dave Goetz, Commissioner of Finance & Administration
Justin Wilson, Comptroller of the Treasury
Tre Hargett, Secretary of State
Jim Fyke, Commissioner of Environment & Conservation
Gwendolyn Davis, Commissioner of General Services
Senator Jack Johnson
Joy Harris, designee for State Treasurer David Lillard
Norman Hill, TN Historical Commission

Members Absent

Judy Danner, private citizen
Bobby Lovett, private citizen
Janie Conyers, private citizen

Others Present

Alan Robertson, Acting State Architect
Georgia Martin, State Architect's Office
Thad Watkins, Department of General Services
Melinda Parton, Comptroller's Office
Jonathan Rummel, Secretary of State's Office
Cheryl Rudy, Department of General Services
Lois Riggins-Ezell, Tennessee State Museum
Patricia Rasbury, Tennessee State Museum
Jim Hoobler, Tennessee State Museum
Dr. Bert Chalfant, Tennessee Society, Sons of the Revolution
Nick DePalma, Real Property Administration
Matt Ingham, Real Property Administration

2. Discussion and Approval of Proposed Restoration of the Liberty Bell on the Grounds of the State Capitol

Alan Robertson stated it had come to his attention that the yoke of the Liberty Bell on the grounds of the Capitol had deteriorated and is in danger of failing. He said that this is an historic piece that needs to be preserved. Bert Chalfant, Tennessee Society, Sons of the Revolution, was recognized who spoke of the history of the Bell and its significance for many years to "Let Freedom Ring". He said that the Tennessee President of the Sons of the Revolution has offered to donate the wood of a fallen red oak tree using one piece to repair the yoke and one to be held in reserve. He said he has also made contact with an artisan who would be able to reproduce the yoke, and that all would be at no cost. Mr. Chalfant said that he had spoken with the Daughters of the Revolution who had expressed interest in helping to coordinate the effort, if not total compensation to the State, then at least a significant contribution. He added that they are looking at constructing some type of cover to help protect the Bell from the elements. Commissioner Goetz asked if the yoke has ever been replaced, and was told "no". Lois Riggins-Ezzell stated that the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission had commissioned the Bell, which has been ceremonially used since 1976. She said that the original intent of the project was to have the bells displayed such that they could be rung on patriotic occasions, and, currently, the majority of the bells remain on the grounds of their respective statehouses.

Commissioner Goetz suggested that the Commission accept the refurbishment of the Bell with the assistance of the Sons of the Revolution and any other organizations, and to explore whether there was some way to cover and protect it from the elements. Mr. Robertson said that a cover is important to maintain the integrity of the bell and that other states have provided covers for their bells. He stated that the Sons and Daughters of the Revolution could go as far as procuring the design, which he would then present to the Commission, or one of the consultants on contract with Real Property Administration could do a simple design solution for it and the organization could pick out a contractor. Norman Hill asked why the Bell was not inside a building and could it be relocated. Ms. Riggins-Ezzell stated that the State Museum staff would be happy to work with the State Architect's Office for a solution and bring it back to the Capitol Commission for their approval. She said the Bell was put there at the time, and there is no reason not to select the proper covering and proper placement. Jim Hoobler confirmed that the bell was constructed in 1953 for the war bond drive during the Korean War.

Thad Watkins suggested it would be appropriate if the Commission voted on a concept, working with the staffs of the State Museum and State Architect's Office to come back with a more specific proposal that includes cost. Commissioner Goetz suggested putting together a concept design so that it could be included in next year's budget process. Commissioner Fyke made a motion for staffs of the State Museum and State Architect's Office to come back with a more specific proposal that includes cost. The motion was properly seconded, and passed without objection.

3. Presentation of the Proposed Project for Mechanical/Electrical Upgrades at the Tennessee State Capitol

Mr. Robertson stated that the Capitol Commission had not been kept wholly up to date regarding the proposed Mechanical/Electrical Upgrade project at the State Capitol. He said that since this was a need, he didn't know if it required Capitol Commission approval. He introduced Nick DePalma, Project Manager with Real Property Administration, who gave a summary of the project. Mr. DePalma said that the project will address the need to replace the heating and cooling systems in the State Capitol, and will also include limited upgrades to electrical and plumbing systems. Once complete, this work will re-establish reliability in building operations, now in serious question, and will bring system in full compliance with building and fire codes. The mechanical equipment and ductwork is over 50 years old and procurement of parts for repair is becoming more and more difficult. Also, downtime associated with equipment failure is longer than that considered acceptable. He stated that Phase 1 work, involving replacement of mechanical systems in House and Senate Chambers was contracted in 2009. The work for Phase 2 is currently being designed and is scheduled to occur between the 2011 and 2012 General Sessions. It involves remaining mechanical and electrical work at the Capitol along with interior architectural reconfiguration of ground floor offices. He said the project cost is estimated at \$14.2 million, which includes work already done. The plan would be to move the occupants out of the Capitol after Session, around June 1, 2011, and allow the contractor to have control of the building until December 2011. He said the need for the project has been unquestioned, but the timing has been an issue. He added that space has been provided in the Tennessee Tower to accommodate the Governor's transitioning needs.

Mr. Watkins asked what kind of guidance could be given regarding utilization of the Capitol for activities and events. Mr. DePalma said they are discouraging use of the Capitol during this period, but haven't had any detailed conversations with the general contractor. He said if there is an important event that has to be accommodated, they will do what they can, but there could be liability issues. Commissioner Goetz suggested the need for a policy or specific location to hold events by giving notice that, during construction, they use that space. Mr. Watkins asked if the Commission was willing to approve a policy whereby approvals will be conditional on the Capitol mechanical project. Mr. Hill asked if the construction process will create a security issue. Mr. DePalma responded that the responsibility for security of the building is with the contractor with the State continuing to maintain their security systems. He added that it would be helpful to have some kind of exchange with other groups. Mr. Robertson recommended that once they get to that critical point with the contractor, they include Thad Watkins in those meetings. Mr. Watkins added that a timetable would be helpful since they are already getting requests for use of the Capitol. With that understanding, it was agreed that staff will proceed with a policy whereby approvals will be conditional on the Capitol mechanical project.

4. Other Business

The Minutes of the January 19, 2010 meeting were approved, as mailed. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.