

Kentucky Sestercentennial Commission Meeting Minutes – June 13, 2025

Commissioners Present: Ed Clark (Chair), John Fox (Friends of Boone Trace), Craig Potts (Kentucky Heritage Council), Marjorie Arnold (proxy for Education and Labor Cabinet Secretary Jamie Link), Rufus Friday, Scott Alvey (Kentucky Historical Society), Tressa Brown (Kentucky Heritage Council, virtual), Larry Disney (Fort Boonesborough Foundation, virtual).

Staff and guests: Ashley Spenneberg-Perkins (KHS), Molly Shaddix (KHS), Stuart Sanders (KHS), Sarah McIntosh (KHS), Mike Conway (guest), Sarah Schmidt (Kentucky Arts Council).

Chair Ed Clark called the meeting to order at the Thomas D. Clark Center for Kentucky History at 2:05 pm.

On a motion from Clark and seconded by Craig Potts, the March meeting minutes were approved.

Sarah Schmidt gave an update for the Kentucky Arts Council 250 grants.

Potts gave an update for the Kentucky Heritage Council 250 grants sharing that nine projects were awarded across the state.

Potts also gave an update on the St. James AME Church in Mayfield.

Stuart Sanders shared the announcement of the African American Heritage Trail at the Muhammad Ali Center on Monday and invited Commission members. The trail includes 58 sites across the state and can be accessed with Apple Maps and Google Maps.

Clark mentioned the commission is tasked with creating a large commemorative event for July 4, 2026, and that the commission was given \$400,000 to accomplish this task. To have a successful event of this size Clark stated we need more people and more funding. The creation of a subcommittee for July 4 planning was recommended.

Clark recommended that the funds allocated for July 4 should not be spent until the subcommittee was established. Scott Alvey stated the commission does have the ability to fundraise.

Clark opened the floor for discussion.

Alvey mentioned in conversations with Lindy Casebier that the commission needs to look back to the Kentucky bicentennial and involve those who were on the commission. Alvey also mentioned integrating the local Frankfort community into the subcommittee.

Potts mentioned involving communities such as Lexington and Louisville.

Alvey mentioned tying in with regional celebrations.

Discussion was held on how to make July 4, 2026, different from other July 4 commemorations.

A motion was entertained for the creation of a July 4 subcommittee by Rufus Friday. Potts seconded. Those interested in joining the subcommittee, either commission members or those outside of the commission, should email Ashley Spenneberg-Perkins.

Funding for Fiscal Year 2025-26 was discussed. Sanders said the budget was very similar to the previous year and included the following budget:

<i>Operating</i>	<i>\$365,000</i>
<i>General</i>	<i>\$80,000</i>
<i>Marketing/Promotion</i>	<i>\$150,000</i>
<i>Education Programs</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>
<i>Commission Events</i>	<i>\$75,000</i>
<i>Historical Markers</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>
<i>Grants</i>	<i>\$2,140,000</i>
<i>KHS Community Grants</i>	<i>\$250,000</i>
<i>Commission Grants</i>	<i>\$400,000</i>
<i>KY Arts Council Grants</i>	<i>\$200,000</i>
<i>Kentucky Heritage Council</i>	<i>\$500,000</i>
<i>KY African American Heritage Commission</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
<i>KY Native American Heritage Commission</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>
<i>KY Education Cabinet—KDE & KET</i>	<i>\$75,000</i>
<i>KY Department of Tourism</i>	<i>\$300,000</i>
<i>KY Department of Parks</i>	<i>\$75,000</i>
<i>Wayfinding signage</i>	<i>\$300,000</i>
<i>TOTAL FOR FY 2025-2026</i>	<i>\$2,505,000</i>

Marjorie Arnold asked if the \$400,000 for commission grants could be used for July 4 activities.

Sanders said yes.

John Fox asked to speak about his Boone Trace Signage Proposal and if the wayfinding signage budget item could contribute to his project.

Alvey said he did not know if the intention of the legislation for the budget allowed for granting those funds to individuals.

Clark asked Fox if he had other funding sources. Fox said no.

Clark asked how much Fox needed for his project. Fox reported approximately \$200,000.

Sanders asked how long it would take Fox to receive numbers and get signage in the ground. Fox said for his last trail project it took four years.

Friday asked if Fox would have any permitting issues with placing signage. Fox reported yes that each sign would need to be approved separately.

Friday also mentioned the maintenance and care of the signs and that alternative funding may be needed to be set aside for maintenance.

Potts mentioned that as legislatively approved money that may be an issue.

Clark asked Fox to submit a formal proposal for the project and a budget to review and be discussed in the next commission meeting.

Spenneberg-Perkins gave general updates including the Boone Trace Hike and updates from the National America250 Commission with projects such as America Waves, the Flag Day Military Parade, and America's Field Trip. Spenneberg-Perkins also updated the commission on the America250KY community grant program, A Common Cause to All in Williamsburg, VA, Two Lights for Tomorrow, the Roadshow Program, progress on the Kentucky State Fair, and the newly official America250KY communities.

Clark adjourned the meeting at 3:57 pm. Seconded by Potts.