

United States Mint  
Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee  
Meeting

Thursday, May 30, 2013

The Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee met via teleconference at 1:00 PM, Gary Marks, Chair, presiding.

## CCAC Members Present:

Gary Marks, Chair  
Michael Bugeja  
Robert Hoge  
Erik Jansen  
Michael Moran  
Michael Ross  
Donald Scarinci  
Jeanne Stevens-Sollman  
Thomas Uram  
Heidi Wastweet

## United States Mint Staff Present:

Steve Antonucci  
Francis Brickfield  
Don Everhart  
Joe Menna  
Bill Norton  
April Stafford  
Jordan Stilvers  
Megan Sullivan  
Greg Weinman

## Also Present:

Laura Anderson, Archivist, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute  
Priscilla Hancock Cooper, Vice President of Institutional Programs, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute  
Lisa McNair, Sister of Denise McNair  
Dr. Lawrence J. Pijoux, Jr., President and CEO, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute  
Ahmad Ward, Head of Education and Exhibitions, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

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## Proceedings

(1:02 PM)

## Roll Call

Chair Marks: In that case then, I will call the meeting of the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee for Thursday, May 30, 2013, to order.

First item is to go through a roll call, being that this is a phone meeting. And so, just indicate aye as I call off your name.

Michael Bugeja?

Robert Hoge?

Erik Jansen?

Gary Marks -- I am definitely here.

Michael Moran?

Member Moran: Here.

Chair Marks: Michael Olson is absent.

Michael Ross?

Mr. Ross: Here.

Chair Marks: Donald Scarinci?

Member Scarinci: Here.

Chair Marks: Jean Stevens-Sollman?

Member Stevens-Sollman: Here.

Chair Marks: Tom Uram?

Member Uram: Here.

Chair Marks: Heidi Wastweet?

I have a count of six, that's not a quorum.

Mr. Weinman: You do not have quorum yet, so you

must wait.

Chair Marks: I was told -- I mean, yes, the others should be getting on the line, I was told that they intended to be a part of this.

Mr. Norton: Committee Members, I want you to know that Dr. Pijoux is on the line. This is Bill Norton. And, Dr. Pijoux is the Director of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. He has been, probably, one of the best liaisons and ROs that the Mint team has had to come across. It's a delightful group in Birmingham. We are all wanting to move to Birmingham now.

Dr. Pijoux: Smart people.

Mr. Weinman: Who else are we missing, other than Heidi and Michael Bugeja?

Chair Marks: Robert Hoge, Erik Jansen.

Mr. Norton: Mr. Hoge said he'd be -- he sent me an email and said he'd be on the line.

Mr. Weinman: I'm emailing him.

Dr. Pijoux: Now, I do have some of my colleagues in the room with me. Is it appropriate to introduce them now?

Chair Marks: Sure, go ahead.

Mr. Weinman: We're on the record.

Ms. Hancock Cooper: This is Priscilla Hancock Cooper. Hello, everybody. I'm Vice President of Institutional Programs at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

Ms. McNair: My name is Lisa McNair, and my sister was Denise, one of the four girls.

Mr. Ward: My name is Ahmad Ward. I'm the Head of Education and Exhibitions here at Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

Dr. Pijoux: And, we're expecting Laura Anderson to join us at some point.

Mr. Norton: She's here.

Ms. Anderson: I'm here, sorry. I introduced myself before you all got on the call.

Dr. Pijoux: Oh, okay. She was cooling her heels at the beach.

Ms. Anderson: Sorry. I was in a --

Dr. Pijoux: Still working, still on the job.

Ms. Anderson: I was watching all the fighter jets flying over from the Air Force Base.

Dr. Pijoux: I first went to Destiny in 1957, my first trip to the beach. And, I can tell you, it was nothing but a spit of sand and a wide spot in the road at that point in time. And, I should have bought land.

Ms. Anderson: Yes, you should have.

Member Bugeja: Hello, folks, this is Michael, sorry for the slight delay, Michael Bugeja.

Chair Marks: Hi, Michael. Okay.

Member Wastweet: We have a quorum.

Chair Marks: Michael is on the line, we have a quorum now. So, I'm going to ask staff to identify themselves.

Mr. Weinman: I'll start, this is Greg Weinman, Counsel of the United States Mints.

Mr. Norton: Bill Norton, Director of Legislative Affairs at the Mint.

Ms. Stafford: April Stafford, Stakeholder Relations Manager.

Ms. Sullivan: Megan Sullivan, Program Specialist.

Mr. Weinman: Also in the room are two law students from Counsel's office, Jordan Stivers and Frank Brickfield.

Chair Marks: Okay. And, have all the guests been identified?

Mr. Menna: We have Philadelphia here represented with Joe Menna and Don Everhart.

Chair Marks: Is there anyone else who has not heard their name? Okay, I think we are all on the record then.

And, Members, Committee Members, as you take part in the meeting, just prior to your comments if you could identify who you are so the court reporter can accurately record our proceedings. I would appreciate that.

#### Themes for the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church Commemorative Congressional Gold Medal

So, the item -- the single item on our agenda today is the Review and Discussion of Themes for the Congressional Gold Medal for the four little girls who lost their lives 50 years ago in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church.

Is there a staff report? April, would that be you?

Ms. Stafford: Yes, sir.

Some background information to enter into the record.

On Friday, May 24, 2013, President Obama signed Public Law 11311, awarding a Congressional Gold Medal to Addie Mae Collins, Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, and Cynthia Wesley, to commemorate the lives they lost 50 years ago in the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church. This tragic event served as a catalyst for the civil rights movement.

The legislation does not require any specific design elements, but designs must feature suitable

emblems, devices and inscriptions.

Following the award of the medal, it will be given to the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute in Birmingham, Alabama.

Our liaison is Dr. Lawrence J. Pijoux, Jr., President and CEO of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. Dr. Pijoux and his team have provided recommended source materials to direct the artist designs, including Spike Lee's documentary, "Four Little Girls," the Birmingham Public Library's digital collection on the church bombing, featuring photographs, news clippings and documents, the New York Times coverage of September, 1963, Larry Dane Brimner's book, "Birmingham Sunday," and newspaper reporter, Frank Sikora's, "Until Justice Rolls Down, the Birmingham Church Bombing Case."

To assist in today's discussion on themes for this Congressional Gold Medal, we have on the phone representatives from the BCRI, so I'll ask Dr. Pijoux to make any opening comments to further articulate the design direction for this Congressional Gold Medal.

Dr. Pijoux: Well, I'll begin by indicating how excited we are to participate in this process, and we do have some ideas about the look and feel of the medal.

We haven't really thought in detail about themes, but we know what we'd like this medal to look like, and to represent.

Ms. Stafford: Would you like to share that with us?

Dr. Pijoux: Yes. I'd be more than happy to.

We envision a medal that would have the images of the four girls, and they are iconic images that have been seen, not only in Birmingham, but, literally, around the world. Those four images, with the names of the young ladies below each image, and



at the bottom of the medal it will indicate September 15, 1963. And, across the top of the medal it may indicate Birmingham 16th Street Church bombing, with the date below it. And, on the rear an image of the church, with the actual name of the church scrolled above -- not scrolled, but in circular form above it, and below it the location of the church.

Ms. Stafford: I think we have a couple of people who have joined us. Can we ask who has joined?

Member Hoge: This is Robert Hoge.

Mr. Jansen: Erik Jansen.

Chair Marks: Welcome, gentlemen.

Just to get you caught up, we've started the meeting. April Stafford has been conducting her staff report, and some of our guests with our recipient organization have been making their comments.

Member Bugeja: Gary, this is Michael Bugeja. I was wondering if I could mention just one small thing for all of us to consider concerning this medal. And, that is, and, Greg, you are there, is that correct?

Mr. Weinman: I am here, yes, go ahead.

Chair Marks: Michael, are you going to talk substance on themes?

Member Bugeja: No, this is a technical -- this is going to be a technical question.

Chair Marks: If you could hold that just for a minute. I wanted to make sure that our guest was --

Member Bugeja: Absolutely.

Chair Marks: -- done with his comments.

Dr. Pijaux: This is Lawrence Pijaux speaking again.

I'm finished with my comments about the medal.

Chair Marks: Okay, thank you, sir.

Now at this point, we will go to any technical questions the Committee might have.

Michael?

Member Bugeja: Yes. This is a very interesting situation that I have never encountered before. And, I'm sure it's going to work out just beautifully, and I couldn't be more in support of this medal.

But, as a journalist, and with Greg here as an attorney, I want to point out that it's important for the artist to understand that we have an establishment clause of the First Amendment, and because this is coming -- in other words, let me see if I can explain this as best I can. And, Greg, I'm going to need you to help me out.

Do you know where I'm going with this, Greg?

Mr. Weinman: I think so, go ahead.

Member Bugeja: Okay. Now, the most iconic image, beautiful image, and I'm old enough, incidentally, I'm 61 years old, to remember how journalists covered this, is the faceless Jesus.

Now, the faceless Jesus is a very interesting iconic effect, and the church is also a very interesting iconic symbol.

On the one hand, if depicted historically, Greg --

Mr. Weinman: Yes.

Member Bugeja: -- then we should be on faith grounds with the Establishment Clause.

Mr. Weinman: Agreed.

Member Bugeja: So, everything has to be depicted historically.

However, that would still open up debate if we have pure artistic freedom without consideration of the Establishment Clause, and that's all -- so I did call up the First Amendment Center on this to get some advice, and was told that as long as the pictures are of a variety of scenes, which we have done, that we are on safe grounds.

But, Greg, I thought I would just contribute that and then turn it over to you, sir.

Mr. Weinman: No, I appreciate that.

This is not the first time that we have awarded a Congressional Gold Medal that had a religious theme to it. And, to some extent, every design stands on its own facts, and has to be reviewed once it is created, based on context, and based on the historical nature of the scene.

I think, basically, everything you described I concur with, but I wouldn't -- obviously, depending on what type of designs come back from our artists, we'll have to review that to make sure that we are depicting that.

Member Bugeja: The most important thing we've done already is, we've provided many, many pictures, not just one. But, the depiction of the church, we know there will be some who will, you know, take umbrage with that.

My feeling about it is, history is part of our history, we should be proud of it, but we should also be careful.

Mr. Weinman: Yes, this is not the first time we've depicted a religious theme.

Member Bugeja: Thank you for all of your help.

Chair Marks: Thank you, Michael.

Are there other comments that would be more of a technical nature?

Member Ross: Well, Gary, can I get a question in of our guests, before we --

Chair Marks: Go ahead.

Member Ross: This is Michael Ross.

Chair Marks: Go ahead.

Member Ross: I just -- I don't think we should pass the opportunity of asking Lisa McNair of her impression of the significance of that event to her, because that might have some influence upon the artist, as the sister of one of the bombed victims that's in the room. I would be interested in her perspective.

You know, I teach the event in my history survey, but I think someone who had lived it might be an interesting perspective for the artist to hear.

Chair Marks: I think that's an excellent idea.

Ms. McNair: Hello. Actually, I wasn't born when Denise was killed.

Chair Marks: Oh, okay.

Ms. McNair: Denise was my sister. She was the youngest of the four girls, and she was an only child at the time. Mom and Dad had tried to have children, and they weren't able to. And so, I was born a year and four days later.

But, I guess you were asking the impact on me, it's something that has been part of my life all of my life. I've never not known about it. I've never -- it's a bit of sorrow that I carry around all the time, because it is ever-present. Now, in a way, I think because she left and I'm here.

So, knowing my parents, and loving them, and knowing the love they gave for me, I know the love

they gave to her, and how they must have grieved and still grieve that she is gone.

Member Ross: Did your parents take any solace in the historical importance of the event, the galvanizing effect it had on a good portion of the Nation?

Chair Marks: That would be, for the court reporter, that would be Michael Ross.

Member Ross: Oh, yes, sorry, Gary.

Ms. McNair: I don't know if solace is the right word, but I'm sure that they -- you know, and over time you see they've changed as things in their lives, you know, they didn't die in vain. We have made so many changes. We have an African American Surgeon General, African American Attorney General, African American President, which at that time was something that no one could ever imagine or vision.

And so, I think they surely they have to think along those lines when they think about that.

Member Ross: Thank you.

Ms. McNair: You are welcome.

Chair Marks: Other technical questions?

Mr. Jansen: Gary, Erik Jansen here. I have one.

Chair Marks: Please go.

Mr. Jansen: On the medals here, both the large version, bronze and gold, as well as the smaller ones, typically, what textures are available here, vis-a-vis historical trends in medals, as well as new technical capabilities that I know the Mint is bringing forward also.

Mr. Weinman: Donald?

Mr. Menna: Steve Antonucci has joined the meeting

as well.

Chair Marks: He would be the man with the answer.

That was Joe Menna speaking.

Mr. Antonucci: We have a number of different techniques, polishing techniques that we would be willing to go to, to move forward with many of these on these programs as we can simultaneously.

Mr. Menna: This is Joe Menna. Beyond the frosting, we also have a number of textural techniques available to replicate the full range of textures that one would see in sculpture and any media.

So, you know, the textures on a building, or decorative textures in the field, we have a full palette available to us.

Mr. Jansen: I asked this question, we'll get into symbology later, but I asked this question, not so much inviting a discussion of continuum of textures, but, actually, as strongly contrasting textures as we can possibly imagine.

Mr. Menna: Define strongly contrasting.

Mr. Jansen: Black and white.

Mr. Menna: All right, it doesn't get any better than that.

This is Joe again, I know that we've done designs in the past, right, where we submitted designs where we were going to indicate differences of skin tone, or even color, for using textural devices.

Mr. Everhart: We are doing that with the Civil Rights Program.

Mr. Menna: Yes. We've done that in the past, and we are fully capable of that, even though it's a bronze medal, we can introduce texture or frosting

to give color effects in any capacity, within the realistic parameters that we are capable of doing.

I mean, you know, you can't make green, you can't make -- I was about to say, without those capabilities, but we can definitely indicate a gradient of tone, from black to white.

Mr. Menna: Right. South of the east/west border between us and our neighbor, we don't want the color.

Mr. Jansen: Speaking of Canada.

Mr. Menna: Who?

Mr. Jansen: You are speaking of Canada, are you?

Mr. Menna: Speaking of Canadian coinage, yes.

Mr. Weinman: Once again, gentlemen, please identify yourself before you speak, so the court reporter has it on the record.

Mr. Everhart: Okay, that was Don.

Mr. Norton: Everhart.

Chair Marks: This is Gary Marks.

Are there any other technical questions?

Mr. Jansen: Another one from Erik.

Do we do edge lettering on medals?

Mr. Antonucci: We don't do -- this is Steve -- we don't currently. We are in the mode of, actually, doing development work as I speak to you right now to do exactly that.

Mr. Jansen: We are going to talk about symbols later. I don't view, and my comments are not meant to inflame, they are meant to distill, I don't view this as a memorial to four young ladies. They are tragic artifacts of the events.

However, I'm thinking more on best reach beyond them. However, I might -- I might ask the etch lettering question, in the event that we would choose to put their names on the perimeter, on the edge circumference.

Chair Marks: Okay. We are going to work to very hard at doing that very thing.

Ms. Stafford: I would be remiss in just bringing to everyone's attention that the --

Chair Marks: Please identify yourself.

Ms. Stafford: I'm sorry, I apologize. This is April Stafford.

So, I just wanted to note, we do have an extremely, and I underscore extremely, aggressive schedule, in order to, not only design, but also produce this medal, so that it can be ready for a presentation upon the 50th anniversary this year.

So, I absolutely don't think we should disclose anything at this point, but we just need to remember that, you know, timing is definitely a major factor here.

Mr. Jansen: Thank you, April. This is Erik.

Chair Marks: This is Gary Marks.

April, could you tell us during that timeline when you would expect designs to be coming back to the Committee?

Ms. Stafford: We will be bringing the designs to Committee July.

Chair Marks: July. Okay.

Thank you.

Are there other comments of a technical nature? Okay, I believe we are done with that part.

We are going to go on to our actual discussion on



themes, and I'm going to go ahead and start off, and then when I'm done, I'm just going to ask for Members to just chime in as they feel that they are ready and prepared to talk about themes.

Mr. Jansen: Gary --

Chair Marks: Who is speaking?

Mr. Jansen: I'm sorry, Erik again.

Is the work product of this meeting a transcript, is it a summarized list of ideas raised, what is the work product here?

Chair Marks: I think the work product is for us to contribute ideas about potential themes that would be reflected, of course, in the record, that might, hopefully, provide inspiration to our artists.

Mr. Jansen: So, the artists will get access to the transcript, or a condensed form of it, or what?

Chair Marks: I would defer to the staff to answer that question.

Ms. Stafford: Well, the transcript is always available, because it's a public record, but we will be summarizing the design input and providing it to them, so they can begin work immediately.

Mr. Jansen: All right, thank you.

Chair Marks: Okay. Well, I'm going to go on with my comments.

Before, there were comments made about the recipient organizations of ideas about the medal, that being on the obverse the four little girls, and then an image of the church on the reverse. So, hold those thoughts, I'm going to come back to those as I work through my thoughts here.

As always, I like to look at the actual legislation, and I want to thank the staff for providing that to us. And, as I read through it, I wanted to look, and

I always do this, I look for those words that spark an image in my mind, some sort of allegorical imagery that maybe conveys the essence, or the idea, or the message, that we are trying to impart with the medal.

And, we know for our guests on the phone that maybe don't spend the time that we do in medallic art, and considering design and all, normally, the best -- the best poised medals, as far as artwork goes, are those that can reach for imagery that uplifts and inspires. Sometimes that's not -- that's not an image of a building. Sometimes it's more of an abstraction.

And, I'll just use as a reference the 9/11 medal that was produced in 2011. If you want to look that up on line, or the Mint can provide copies to our guests, I think it helps convey what I'm trying to communicate here, that sometimes we want to look for images that honor, that give gratitude, however you want to define it, to the subject, or the message that's trying to be put out, if we can reach for those allegorical ideas, those images that grab the soul, that grab your heart.

And so, as I went through the legislation, there were some words that jumped out at me, and if you want to have that in front of you as I go through this, if you look at Section 1 under the Findings, the Findings are usually the rich place where you can get some inspiration.

You go to sentence No. 2, it says, "The senseless and premature death of these four little Black girls spark the movement that changed the world." To me, that sparks, puts an image into my head about how the larger theme of this is that this event sparks something very important.

And so, hold onto that sparks idea, because if we go down to sentence No. 5, and you see where it says, "The tragedy galvanized the civil rights movement and sparked a surge in momentum that helped secure passage of the Civil Rights Act ...," and then

it goes on to say later, "... the Voting Rights Act."

Other words that jump out me in line 6 would be, "Justice was delayed." There's images that might come to mind in that. If you skip down to sentence No. 8, it talks about, "The legacy of these four little Black girls left to live on in the minds and hearts of us all for generations to come." The word hearts jumped out at me, and I'm going to circle back and tell you how these images kind of consolidated themselves for myself.

Then you look at line 9 again, that word sparked jumps out there, their externally sacrifice sparked real lasting change.

So, for me, with that inspiration, again, think about how could you portray that in an allegorical sense, something that might be beautiful.

And, what comes to mind for me is an allegorical image of freedom, which that would be a person, an allegorical image of freedom holding a hammer of justice, striking a chain, and a spark flying off of it.

I would be really interested to see if our artist could produce an image like that. And, I'm thinking about that maybe for the reverse. I think the obverse, and I agree with our gentlemen from our recipient organization, I think the obverse rightly should be the four images of the four little girls, but I want to take off from that word hearts that I talked about earlier in line 8.

Perhaps, the image of those four girls could be put within an outer perimeter shaped as a heart, something that would, in fact, pull at our heart strings when we see it, to remind us that these were four little girls who, obviously, were loved by their families and their communities, and they were lost. And, I think it would be a fitting memorial to kind of frame them in that sort of an outline.

So, those are my comments, and I would entertain others who are prepared to contribute theirs.

Member Bugeja: This is Michael Bugeja. I just have one final comment, Gary. I'm happy that you brought up the Civil Rights Movement on the reverse, because we are attempting, in the CCAC, to tell the story.

And, to tell a story does not only mean to depict the lyrical or tragic moment, but the outcome of that moment. And, the portraits of the little girls are absolutely essential on the obverse, but there are symbols associated with the civil rights movement that can, not only be personalized, as with a heart, but also great speeches, great gatherings, great dreams. The images of the civil rights movement are exceptionally powerful.

The story of this medal would be how this tragedy, not only commemorates the beautiful girls, but the outcome of it is an American story of civil rights and the importance of that.

So, I just wanted to make sure that I got that civil rights reverse firm, because I had that as my only other comment.

Thank you all for indulging me in both comments.

Mr. Weinman: Mr. Chairman, this is Greg Weinman. Could I add something just for a moment?

Chair Marks: Yes, please.

Mr. Weinman: When it comes to portraying the actual images of the four little girls, we'll probably need to have an off-line conversation with the liaison.

There are what are called publicity rights that come along with --

Chair Marks: Oh, yes.

Mr. Weinman: -- having images of individuals, living or dead, on coins or medals.

And so, while I think all options are certainly open, I

just wanted to be on the record to let you know this is something that we would have to address and discuss.

Sometimes it's difficult to obtain those rights in a short period of time.

Chair Marks: Thank you.

Michael Bugeja, are you done with your comments?

Member Bugeja: Yes, thank you.

Chair Marks: Okay. Is there someone else who is ready to speak?

Member Scarinci: I'm ready if you'd like.

Chair Marks: Okay. That sounds like Donald Scarinci.

Member Scarinci: Donald Scarinci.

Chair Marks: Go ahead.

Member Scarinci: You know, most of you know exactly what I'm going to say, but, you know, let me say it again.

When it comes to these civil rights issues and things like this, what I don't want to see, and the only thing -- the only thing that -- especially with the time frame, you know, this one, you know, you are going to do what you are going to do because you've got to meet the deadline. And, that's a very difficult thing to do.

But, what I don't want to see is, I don't want to pretend -- I don't want a piece of medallic art that in any way, shape, or form, pretends that, you know, we are done, that civil rights, you know, for all has been achieved in America in our great society, and everyone is treated equally, and that, you know, just because, you know, we have Barack Obama, you know, all is well with the world, okay, because I've got about a dozen cases here that

would rip your heart out about what people are still doing, still saying, still thinking, there's a lot to do. And, there's a lot that remains.

So, I just don't want to see a piece of medallic art that in any way portrays the job is over. What happened is, you know, people lost their lives, and many people lost their lives and much else, and the work began, you know, it began, and it continues, and there's more to do. So, maybe something that portrays that.

In terms of the images of the girls, you know, I know that's important, you know, to people, you know, on the constituent committee, you know. And, all I could suggest is that, you know, maybe if you have to do portraits we do something that, you know, de-emphasizes the portrait, and, you know, like blending it into something else.

I love what Gary had to say, because he's absolutely right, you look to the legislation to find some key words, and if that could give you some, you know, some symbolism, spark, inspire, you know, it's the spark, it's the fire, it kept people going during the hard times. It moved people's conscience, and minds, and hearts, and got them to do things that maybe, you know, they wouldn't have otherwise done, you know.

So, I think what you want to portray, you know, you don't want to highlight -- what I don't think you want is a coin, or is a medal that has four portraits on it, and that being the depiction of the four girls. If you have to do portraits, and I know there's passion, you know, on the part of a lot of people to do that, you know, maybe you can go with portraits that blend into something else like kind of speeding in.

And, I keep thinking of the type of thing that Paul Genowine might do, you know, and this is also a medal from the Society of Medalists called, "The Four Virgins," where, you know, the technique is kind of, you know, a blending of images, you know,

to communicate a broader, a broader and more, you know, more encompassing thing. It's not just about these four people.

It is, you know, but it's also about, you know, the justice that was not done, and the things that did not happen, and the things that, there was a double standard. I mean, it took until 2000, and, you know, that's incredible, you know. I mean, it certainly has to strike anybody as incredible, that it took so long.

So, and the fact that we are commemorating this event today, you know, it's almost, you know, the medal itself is almost a symbol for, you know, the things we say versus the things we do are not, necessarily, the same.

So, you know, certainly, I'm not suggesting that we commemorate anything that's a negative thing, but I just don't want to portray, you know, that life is good, it's all over, everybody is done, let's go home, let's celebrate, and, you know, open up a bottle champagne. I just don't want to see that in the medal, that's all.

And, I'm not going to be picky about what you come up with, because, you know, I give you credit, you know, for getting this done, in any case, in this time frame. I know how hard this is to do for other things. This is the kind of a time frame, you know, that, oh, the medallic art company, the medal craft men would look at you and say, you want it when?

I appreciate that, and you get all the credit in the world, even if you get done, and that may be.

Chair Marks: All right. This is Gary. Thank you, Donald.

Is there someone else?

Member Wastweet: This is Heidi.

Chair Marks: Heidi.

Member Wastweet: Hi.

Chair Marks: Actually, Heidi, I don't know if we knew you were with the meeting.

Member Wastweet: Yes, I kind of slipped in.

Chair Marks: I want to make sure the court reporter has Heidi Wastweet on the attendance.

Mr. Weinman: She does.

Chair Marks: Okay, thank you.

Go ahead, Heidi.

Member Wastweet: All right. I agree with what Donald said, that this is not the end of the story. And, I agree with what you said, Gary, about keeping the positive, and looking toward the future.

So, I would not like to see any pictures depicting the destruction, or, for example, that faceless Jesus in the stained glass. I'd like to steer away from those images.

I do, actually, like the idea of having the building depicted, but as a symbol, not being literal. We talked a lot about not being too literal, so I want to reinstate, let's not be too literal here. But, the symbols, to me, can be a symbol of the story, and this is why -- what the story means to me is this act of violence was done in an effort to suppress people, and it did not succeed. That's the story that I think is the strongest part here, is it did not succeed in suppressing.

And, the building is a symbol of that, as it's a strong stone structure, and it still stands today. It is not gone, and to have the portraits of the little girls, I think, steers away from the bigger picture of the story. It focuses on just those four lives lost, rather than the bigger picture.

And, I hear a lot of comments here about wanting the portrait. I'm going to be a little alternate



voicing. I'm not in favor of a little portrait of the girls. I would rather have them represented symbolically. I'm thinking something delicate, like four flowers around the building, showing the delicateness of their lives. But yet, flowers, as delicate as they are, they come back year after year. To have the contrast of the flower next to the strong building is a symbolic way of telling the story.

And, we could even incorporate their names around the flowers, instead of having the little faces.

That's all I have.

Chair Marks: Thank you, Heidi.

Someone else?

Member Moran: Gary, it's Mike Moran.

Let me kick in a little bit about the issue of the faces. That's been addressed already in a plaque, which is out in front of the church, which I think is very appropriate, and it shows the four little girls arm in arm with their backs to the viewer, nursing an outline of the church. And, I think that some variation of that would work.

The bell towers, and the dome of the church, an iconic, and they are easily identifiable in any image that you do of that building.

The other thing that I'm seeing also in my search of background material, there is a plaque inside the church, a phrase that I think steps beyond the fact that it was the deaths -- the tragic deaths of the four little girls. And, the quote is, "They then learned to replace bitterness and violence with love and understanding."

I think that you can transcend the specifics of the issue with a quote like that, something of that nature.

I don't want too much on the medal that tends to

break up the artistic theme.

The last point I want to make is, there is a picture of all the little girls in dual images. I was working on this part, I had it all done until my wife spurred me up this morning, and she said, "Well, what about the little girl with the doll?" And, yes, it's there. You do images on the bombing. It's a sweet innocent face, it implies like the little girl I think is still color blind in that regard.

I don't know what can be done with that. I do know that Thomas Merton wrote a poem about it in prose, and it's something that needs more research by the Mint staff.

And, my last iconic image that we've kind of passed over is the oak cross with the name of the church there, 16th Street Baptist Church, but that certainly is something along the lines of that cross, you get the church location identified.

Ms. McNair: I wanted to say, I want to comment. I don't remember what your name is, I'm sorry.

Mr. Weinman: Who is speaking?

Ms. McNair: That picture of Denise with the doll is my sister, Denise, and I've always found that to be very poignant, that she's hugging and loving a White doll, because there probably weren't any Black dolls. And, she just loves the doll, no matter who the doll is, regardless of color.

I agree with you, I love that image.

Member Moran: It has not left me since I saw it this morning.

Ms. McNair: Thank you.

Chair Marks: Okay, thank you, Michael.

Is there someone else?

Member Uram: Tom Uram here. Hello?

Chair Marks: Go ahead, Tom.

Member Uram: There's a lot of static on the line. There we go.

I just feel also that the church is a good symbol, but also I like what Erik had to say about the names on the edge, maybe the edge can't be worked out, maybe somewhere on the front, their first names could be on there maybe.

Mr. Jansen: Gary, Erik here.

Chair Marks: Go ahead, Erik.

Mr. Jansen: April, Megan, thanks for your work here, and, Dr. Pijoux, thanks for coming, and, Ms. McNair, is that right?

Ms. McNair: Yes.

Mr. Jansen: What's your first name?

Ms. McNair: Lisa.

Mr. Jansen: Lisa, thank you for coming.

Ms. McNair: Thank you.

Mr. Jansen: I have rarely found so much gravity from this Committee, and the Mint, and the intention here that I feel on this medal. The 9/11 had a lot, but somehow people figured out that this -- I mean, we are seeing latent potential here.

And, before I go through some symbols and ideas, I just kind of want to share a vision here.

This medal, done right, could become the bling of choice nationally, for the entire generation. Imagine a whole girl in a \$7.00 or whatever the smaller bronze coin is, put on the next tens of hundreds of thousands of young people in the country. I see that as the potential here.

And, the design has to live up to that.

Gary, I did the same thing you did. I went through the motions and pulled out inspirational themes, in order to meditate on and see what pictures came to my head, and I pulled the same ones you did, and I was so glad to hear you walk through that.

Mike Bugeja, I loved your highlighting the journalistic reality of there's an event, and there's the outcome, because I would love to think of this medal not having an obverse and a reverse, but having one side that memorializes the event, and one side that constitutes the outcome, the conclusion, the realization, the resolve.

So, less about obverse and reverse, more about the event, and the change, the spark that came.

Mike Moran, I pulled out the same phrase, "Replace bitterness and violence with love and understanding." You know, that incite leaves four little girls at the 4:15 second point, and I would further encourage the artists who aspire to submit here, that film is an hour and 40 some minutes long, spend an hour watching the first hour, and you'll get 80 percent of maybe the inspiration here. It gives you the backdrop, the history, the feelings, the tone. It was an awful time to be Black in Birmingham. It still is a hard core existence to integration.

So, that's the set-up in my mind as to getting the event right, a hard, awful time to be Black in Birmingham.

Now, having said that, I don't believe, certainly not the resolve, the issue, yes, this is the issue of a horrible time to be Black in a town, they bomb a church, and this is as horrible as it gets.

But, at its roots, this is not a clan, this is not a Black holy issue, this is not an issue about four lives tragically sacrificed to a bigger mission, this is about a crime of loss on human compassion.

This is about a crime of social injustice, a crime of

human cruelty. This is a crime of fear, fear that one side would have -- that would evoke them to do horrible things, fear that their opponents, their targets, horrible thought, had rightfully for their lives.

So, as I go to the obverse and reverse here for kind of direction, harmonization, and symbols, I think of the obverse as the event. I share the ideas that putting four portraits on here, were maybe a legalistic morass that can't be resolved in time, as Greg pointed out.

You know, four portraits of four girls, we get this portrait of three girls, and it was an uplifting Girl Scout medal, I think we have to recharter further than that, pulling on a heart string, right on, Gary. Symbols, faces away from us, arm in arm, shoulder to shoulder, you know, we are getting closer.

I would really hate to think we put a building on this medal. This medal is not about a building, any more than it's about a bomb. I would hate to have a picture of a bomb on this medal. It's the same mistake, I think.

I love the idea of four of something. When I meditated on this, what I saw was an eye looking at things. That eye was full of tears, and maybe there's four tears. You know, I apologize, but this is very, very -- this is very hurtful stuff. I saw a single eye looking back and these crying tears. I saw symbols of compassion and pain. I didn't see religion, I saw spirituality as the redeeming force of humanity.

I didn't see flames. I didn't see bombings. I didn't see a crucible. I didn't see a mortar and pestle. I saw something that brings forth the healing power of pain to the realization that this whole event is about the loss of compassion.

So, those are symbols of meditations I would put out there. Artists, I would encourage you to pair your work, give us events, and give us a resolution,

give us an obverse, give us the reverse.

I don't know where we go from there. This medal is, perhaps, the most powerful opportunity the Mint has, and this Committee has, and these people who care have, to relive the event and make it even bigger.

Thank you.

Chair Marks: Thank you, Erik. I really appreciate what you had to say there. Again, thank you very much.

Okay. Let's see, I'm trying to keep track of who has spoken and who hasn't.

Robert, have you spoken yet?

Member Hoge: No, I haven't.

Chair Marks: Are you prepared?

Member Hoge: Listening to all these comments, you know, I think we might want to consider the form of a cross.

Chair Marks: We can barely hear you, Robert. I'm sorry. Can you speak up louder?

Member Hoge: We might think in terms of just putting four little crosses with flowers and the other symbols that we've talked about, because this is, after all, a very Christian point in time.

And now, we try to be careful with our First Amendment establishment issues, but it seems to me that something like that might well be appropriate, in combinations with other aspects.

Chair Marks: Okay, Robert, are you done?

Member Hoge: Yes. I may want to chime in on something else.

Chair Marks: Thank you.

Jeanne, I don't think we've heard from you.

Member Stevens-Sollman: No, you haven't, and I'm -- Gary, I was very moved by your comments, because they were so similar to mine, and you articulated them very well.

I think that we do have to think seriously about the symbolism of this medal. I'm very much in favor of the beginning of how we are working with the civil rights movement. I think that that is an extremely historic event, and it sets a part of our history in motion.

And, I think it's so much more important to have that kind of symbology on the obverse of the medal, as opposed to having an image of the church.

And, I also have to agree with fellow colleagues about the portrait. I think somehow we need to recognize these little girls, these little girls were the beginning of something so very important, somehow we need to recognize them, but I don't think that their portraits -- I have to agree with so many of you by saying, we don't -- we shouldn't have to do those. We should use some kind of other symbolism, flowers, like Heidi mentioned, I think is quite lovely.

You know, how can we say how important this was in our Nation's history. I think that's the whole part of what this medal is, what do we want this medal to say in the world of medals, in the world of how is the best way to send up a story of history. It was a very sad time 50 years ago.

Anyway, I hope that we are working with symbology with this medal, and not something that is so obvious as portraits and the church. I think we need to go beyond that. It's so important.

That's all I have to say.

Chair Marks: Thank you, Jeanne.

Michael Ross, are you complete, have you completed your thoughts yet?

Member Ross: Yes.

Chair Marks: Hang on.

Member Ross: Gary, can you hear me?

Chair Marks: Yes.

Member Ross: Yes, I think that the Committee has done a good job of conveying my thoughts on this issue, an idea that I think something symbolic is the way to go.

Chair Marks: Okay, great.

Now, I've been checking off each of the names of the Members as they've spoken. According to my list, everyone has spoken. If I've missed someone, would you please speak up now? Okay.

I'm going to circle around this way with a couple of closing comments for myself.

One, I want to go to Heidi's comment about the portraits and amend my own. I think your idea of some sort of a trail of the little girls in some delicate form, I think flowers would be a wonderful image, there may be others, and I'll leave that to the artists. But, I do really like that idea of something, again, and I said this before, something that really pulls at the heart strings.

And then also, I wanted to just chime in with Donald's comment about the idea that we are certainly not done in this struggle of civil rights, human rights, and that this event in no means brought closure. It ignited, it sparked. And, I find it curious that the legislation landed on that word spark so many times.

So, I want to come back to that and encourage the artists, I really hope you are going to present us with some sort of images of that spark, whether it's



with the hammer idea that I spoke of, or some other original concept that you might be inspired to provide to us. I think that's at the core of this, this was an event that moved the Nation, that really struck at who we are as a people, and made the Nation look at itself, and that was the beginning, the beginning of a process, a very long process that is still ongoing.

So, I really do like this idea of a spark.

So, with that, we'll start, are there other quick summations, I'd like to do those and then we will be concluding the meeting.

Someone else?

Mr. Ward: Hello?

This is Ahmad Ward from the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. Can you all hear me?

Chair Marks: Yes.

Mr. Ward: Okay. You know, we went through quite a few ideas, and I've heard some -- they seem the same, but I've got to say this.

The symbolism around using four other things, like flowers, or crosses, I understand where you are going with that, but let's please understand that children are the reason we are having this conversation.

I think even if you don't show their portraits, I think some depiction of children should be on the coin. That's just my opinion.

Dealing with the situation, yes, you want to say it's about a bigger situation, we understand, but people do not change minds in this city, or in this state, until they've understood that children were killed at church. Children being killed going to church, that you had what happened here, and this was not the beginning of a movement, this is close to a crescendo, because what happened in the park

across the street, where the kid parked and they sprayed the dog, compounded with what happened, March on Washington, then the bombing of the church, are the reasons you have the impetus for the Civil Rights Act of 1954.

So, this is kind of something that pushed us to getting those rights and that legislation through. So, I hesitate to call it the beginning. I can't call it the beginning, because the beginning goes back to Brown, or Plessy v Ferguson, however far you want to go.

So, I just wanted to understand that we are talking about young people lives, and so I think we would be comfortable, if it's not a portrait, but that some children are depicted on this coin in some way, four girls, because without the notion of being children you would not have had the situation with the Civil Rights Act being passed.

I think there's a possibility of the Wales window, if you want to do our research and look at the Wales window inside the church being a part of this design, that John Pets created a response after these four little girls, that might be a good thing to do. It's great symbolism, and the description is, "Do this unto me," it goes into scriptures, it refers back to Jesus saying, "What you do to the least of these, you do also unto me."

It does not have to be involved. And, I just think we need to get back to understanding the history of these young people that were killed here is why this is an important thing.

And, the folks who are on the fence, and in doubt, because kids were killed in a church getting ready to go sing in the choir.

Mr. Menna: Echoing the gentleman's sentiment, this is Joe in Philly. Can I say something?

Chair Marks: Yes, please.

Mr. Menna: I'm just, you know, this event has been commemorated by a great American artist already. I just found this Langston Hughes poem on line, and echoing the gentleman's sentiments. And, if I could take a few seconds to read the poem, it's really cool.

Chair Marks: Go ahead.

Mr. Menna: "Four little girls

Who went to Sunday School that day

And never came back home at all--

But left instead

Their blood upon the wall

With spattered flesh

And bloodied Sunday dresses

Scorched by dynamite that

China made eons ago

Did not know what China made

Before China was ever Red at all

Would ever redden with their blood

This Birmingham-on-Sunday wall.

Four tiny little girls

Who left their blood upon that wall,

In little graves today await:

The dynamite that might ignite

The ancient fuse of Dragon Kings

Whose tomorrow sings a hymn

The missionaries never taught

in Christian Sunday School  
To implement the Gold rule.  
Four little girls  
Might be awaked someday soon  
By songs upon the breeze  
As yet unfelt among  
Magnolia trees.

I read this poem as Gary was talking about the spark, and to me the spark seems like the potential of also kind of evoking the image of the explosion itself. But, this poem, it seems to commemorate these girls very specifically. It's a very specific point in time, at this very specific place, that seems to be the mission of the medal.

I just thought this poem was kind of poignant, and it echoes the gentleman's that just spoke sentiment indirectly.

Chair Marks: Joe, I agree with you. Thank you for sharing that.

Member Wastweet: Joe, this is Heidi. I really like the poem, and I also like the previous comment about this being a crescendo.

So, Joe, what images are you thinking about to use?

Mr. Menna: The magnolia trees kind of echoes your sentiment about the flowers, you know.

Member Scarinci: Joe, this is Donald Scarinci.

I think you guys go with it, and, you know, I like the image of the four tombstones and graves, you know, maybe on one side.

If we do this as a medal, like two sides, one side, second side, first side, second side, there's death and there's something that came out of that death.

Maybe, you know -- I think don't listen to what any of us are all saying.

Mr. Menna: I was also struck with the image of the doll, what about Denise's doll with no one holding its hand any longer, I mean, or something.

I mean, there's just so many poignant images that could be symbolic, but still be very specific to these individuals, who lost their lives at a very specific point in time, in this very specific place.

Member Scarinci: It's a great image.

Chair Marks: Hey, Joe, those are great, great, great thoughts. Thanks for that.

I read the poem, and I didn't think to bring it.

I'm hopeful we don't have an image of four head stones.

Dr. Pijaux: We agree with that.

Chair Marks: Okay. I think that -- I mean, that's a dead design of death. What we need is an alive design of blissful youth singing from church. Oh, my God. Oh, my God.

Member Wastweet: This is Heidi again. Pardon me for forgetting the name of the gentleman who spoke previously from the church.

Mr. Ward: Ahmad Ward.

Mr. Weinman: Ahmad Ward.

Member Wastweet: Mr. Ward.

So, I like what you are saying how the fact that they were girls at church is what got people off the fence. I like that statement.

Was it a matter of just the last straw, or was this a safety issue, like people thought that was the safest place on earth to be a child in church, was it a safety thing, or was it just kind of crossing a moral

boundary that no one could accept?

Mr. Ward: It was crossing a moral boundary. We had folks here who did not want to believe that things in Birmingham were as bad as folks said they were. And, that's due to a couple of things, not wanting to see information suppression, and, you know, just not being savvy enough to understand what was going on.

So, people heard things, and those things happened. So, when you have these four little girls just at Sunday School, that were putting choir robes on, get killed in church, those people had to acknowledge what was going on around them.

Between the Children's Crusade and the bombing, you start having to pivot in Birmingham. And so, that's why we -- I feel strongly that it's not a portrait, but a depiction of youth should be on the coin.

Member Wastweet: Were people in denial before that, and this was --

Mr. Ward: Absolutely.

Member Wastweet: So, this was in their face, and can't deny it anymore.

Mr. Ward: That's right.

Member Wastweet: That what people are saying is true, and you can no longer look away.

Mr. Ward: That's it.

Ms. McNair: This is Lisa McNair. I think it's something also, being down here in the Bible Belt, church is everything. There's a church on every friggin' corner.

You know, and I have a lot of White friends now, you know, in my life, and I don't believe Denise probably did because of the time. I have a lot of women friends who are around Denise's age in my

circle, who all can recount that day and their particular fear of when that happened, and their Mama's fear. They just got them ready for church and put their little clothes on, too, and that, you know, could have very easily been them, or they could relate to a Black woman who took her child to church that morning, because that was the bonding, we all go to church down here.

And so, I think that really kind of just shook everybody up like Ahmad said.

Member Wastweet: And, when I was young and going to church, it was a big deal, Sunday dress was a big deal. Is that your experience as well?

Ms. McNair: Yes. Yes. The clothes, you had special Sunday clothes, you didn't get to wear 'em any other day of the week.

Member Wastweet: Yes.

Mr. Ward: This is Ahmad again. There's something else about that day that has to be said, it was Youth Day.

Okay, so the young people had the front of the church. This was -- the kids were excited about being involved with the regular service. So, these kids were singing, they would get time to sing in church, they were ushering in Sunday School. So, it was a big day for the youth at 16th Street, and then this happened.

Ms. Hancock Cooper: This is Priscilla, and just in terms of historical context, you know, we talked about the children's campaign, and the demonstrations here, which generated a lot of media attention, and you can't, you know, discount that.

But then, this came on the heels of the euphoria of the March on Washington. Birmingham had begun to break down barriers. Nationally, Dr. King had delivered that iconic "I Have A Dream" speech,

people were feeling extremely hopeful about change in this country, not just in Birmingham, but everywhere.

And then, somebody bombs a church, and kills four children? That was such a contradiction and such a shock, you know, the juxtaposition of this feeling of almost euphoric hope, and then this devastating tragedy.

I remember, you know, I did not grow up in Birmingham, but, you know, it's very difficult to convey the emotional devastation of that event.

And, all of that is why it was an emphasis for change.

Mr. Ward: This is Ahmad again.

Our group here in Birmingham really thought that in some way four young girls should be portrayed on this medal, and some reference to the church. Those are the two key pieces of what happened here. Four young girls were killed in a church.

It's not form or fashion of the medal, if this is going to project what happened here it has to have some reference to the four young girls.

How that is going to be done, we don't know, but we think those two pieces are an important part of this medal.

Chair Marks: Okay. I want to thank everyone for all their comments.

We scheduled this meeting for an hour and ten, and we are past that. I fear that now we are going to start losing some of our members with busy schedules.

I want to especially thank our guests. Your comments have been so illuminating and so very important to this whole process. Thank you for contributing all those. I think you all made some very excellent points.



I'm very hopeful that because of a process like this, that, ultimately, we are going to end up with a medal that is going to be something like I think was said earlier, that -- I think it was Erik -- that this is something that the younger generation would wear as something around their neck.

So, I just feel very good about this process we've gone through for a little more than an hour now, and I just want to thank everyone, the Committee also, and my thanks, of course, to the staff. And, I truly hope that there's some materials here that are arched out we'll find useful.

So --

Ms. Stafford: Mr. Chairman?

Chair Marks: April or Greg, is there anything else that we need to cover before we conclude the meeting?

Ms. Stafford: Actually, if it's okay, this is April Stafford, I just -- something that Mr. Ward and Ms. Cooper said reminded me of something I read on the Birmingham Public Library's digital collection yesterday, their comment about Youth Day, as well as the juxtaposition of the innocence that was in the church that day, and the violence that it saw shortly after.

I read that the name of the sermon for the Sunday School that day, that the little girls had just heard, was called, "The Love That Forgives."

So, I just wanted to add that in, because I think that's -- yes, quite something, especially, when you compare it to the quote several folks commented about earlier, about men needing to learn to replace bitterness with love and understanding. I just think it's very poignant that that's what the little girls had last heard.

Chair Marks: Right. So poignant, and there's so many poignant points that have been made today.

Again, I want to thank everyone, our guests, our staff, and I think as a Committee we are very much looking forward to seeing the designs as they come back to us in July. So, if there's nothing else, I'm going to adjourn this meeting. Thank you all.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter was concluded at 2:13 p.m.)