

MINUTES OF MEETING

Illinois Commission - New York World's Fair  
July 26, 1963

The first meeting of the Illinois Commission - New York World's Fair was held at the Sherman Hotel, Chicago, on Friday, July 26, 1963, at 11:00 AM. Mr. Ralph Newman, Chairman of the Commission, presided at the meeting. Mr. Gene Graves, Secretary of the Commission, was secretary of the meeting.

Members of the Commission attending the meeting were:

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Representative Charles M. Campbell             | Danville     |
| Representative John G. Fary                    | Chicago      |
| Representative J. Horace Gardner               | Chicago      |
| Representative Clyde Lee                       | Mount Vernon |
| Representative Paul J. Randolph                | Chicago      |
| Senator Arthur J. Bidwill                      | River Forest |
| Senator George E. Drach                        | Springfield  |
| Senator Dwight P. Friedrich                    | Centralia    |
| Mrs. Vernon Barnes                             | Rushville    |
| Mr. Robert Gaiswinkler                         | Belleville   |
| Mr. Eldon Hazlet                               | Carlyle      |
| Mr. Al Weisman (representing Mr. Fairfax Cone) | Chicago      |
| Mr. Albert Myers, Jr.                          | Springfield  |
| Judge James Benton Parsons                     | Chicago      |

Also attending the meeting were:

James Cassin, Illinois Commission - New York World's Fair  
Olga Corey, Board of Economic Development  
Mary Ann Miller, Board of Economic Development

Additional guests at the luncheon were:

Colonel Edward D. Marshall, International Fair Consultants, Inc.  
William E. Hartmann, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

- 2 -

I. BACKGROUND - POSSIBLE THEMES AND ELEMENTS OF ILLINOIS EXHIBIT

The importance of Lincoln as a major asset of Illinois (an "exportable product") was pointed out to the Commission by Mr. Newman. Since one objective of the Fair exhibit will be to encourage tourists to come to Illinois, he suggested the use of Lincoln--according to a United States Travel Service survey, one of the top ten tourist attractions in the United States--as the central theme for the Illinois exhibit.

Mr. Newman told the Commission of informal negotiations to lease a life-size, auto-animated figure of Lincoln from Walt Disney. Present price on leasing the figure, including maintenance, for a one-year period is \$400,000.

An advisory committee, which previously met in Springfield and advised the Governor to sign the New York World's Fair bill, did so after favorably considering the possibility of using the Disney figure.

However, Mr. Newman pointed out that Disney, rather than Lincoln, might become the predominant theme, and that the use of the life-like figure, not the man himself, might be of questionable taste. On the other hand, the Disney figure would be an important visitor attraction at the Fair. Robert Moses, president of the New York World's Fair Corporation, estimates that it would rank as one of the top five sights.

Mr. Newman outlined a second possibility for a Lincoln exhibit--one built around authentic historical documents, sound projections of Lincoln quotations, a film on Lincoln, and dioramas. A film entitled "Meet Abraham Lincoln" could be obtained from NBC and shown in a small theatre where visitors could stop during a tour of the Illinois exhibit. A Lincoln book and souvenir shop would carry the message of the exhibit outside the Fair. It has been estimated that this type of exhibit could attract 8 million people, as opposed to an estimated 12 million for the Disney-Lincoln production.

Information centers on tourist attractions and economic and industrial opportunities offered by Illinois should be a supplement of either type of Lincoln exhibit.

State departments, which will probably be represented in the Illinois pavilion exhibits, are:

- Board of Economic Development
- State Historical Library
- Department of Conservation
- Department of Agriculture

The suggestion was made that the Commission should obtain assurances from the New York World's Fair Corporation that Illinois would have exclusive rights to the use of Lincoln in a Fair exhibit. This would preclude the possibility of Disney leasing his figure to any other Fair exhibitor. Since the New York World's Fair Corporation is anxious to have a Lincoln exhibit in the Fair and is anxious to have Illinois participate in the Fair, Illinois would be in a strong bargaining position. Action was taken during the meeting, and assurances of exclusive rights to the use of a Lincoln theme were obtained from General Potter.

*Drach. See p. 3  
2nd by  
Bidwell  
Support by  
Myers*

discussion of the two possible means for implementing the Lincoln theme included the following opinions:

MR. WEISMAN - The prime advantage to not using Disney's Lincoln figure is that exhibit material created or collected for the Illinois pavilion would become the property of the state. A second advantage is that more space would be available to tell the story of Illinois if the figure and the theatre to house it are not part of the exhibit.

MRS. BARNES - Favored the use of the Disney Lincoln figure.

MR. FARY - Favored use of the Disney figure.

MR. GAISWINKLER - Suggested making Disney a final, lower offer. Favored using the Disney figure, if the price can be greatly lowered.

MR. HAZLET - Approved of using the Disney figure, but thought that a general exhibit with Lincoln as the theme would give more opportunity to feature other assets of Illinois.

MR. DRACH - Favored use of the general Lincoln exhibit, unless Disney's price can be substantially lowered. Stressed the importance of getting exclusive rights to the Lincoln theme.

MR. BIDWILL - Proposed passing a resolution that Illinois must be assured exclusive rights to the Lincoln theme.

MR. FRIEDRICH - Opposed spending such a large percentage of the total appropriation on the Disney figure. Favored the general Lincoln exhibit, concessions of Lincoln souvenirs, and especially use of the Lincoln movie.

MR. MYERS - Favored trying to get the Disney figure, if the price can be lowered. Agreed that Illinois should not enter the Fair unless exclusive rights to the Lincoln theme are secured.

MR. GRAVES - Favored trying to get the Disney figure.

MR. NEWMAN - Suggested, and the Commission agreed, that a \$250,000 ceiling would have to be set on the Commission's offer to Disney. The remaining \$250,000 would be used for pavilion maintenance costs, staff salaries and expenses, etc.

## II. ADDITIONAL FINANCING OF EXHIBIT

It was pointed out that there is not adequate time to solicit funds from private industry. The question of whether money appropriated by the 73rd General Assembly for tourism promotion could be used to supplement the appropriation was raised. Mr. Graves stated that local matching funds would have to be obtained. This would be very possible in some areas, i.e., Chicago. It was suggested that local communities which would profit from tourism promotion at the Illinois exhibit, such as Springfield and Chicago, might be approached for contributions to the Illinois exhibit fund.

Mr. Weisman outlined possible sources of revenue:

- A. Leasing of space within the pavilion to private exhibitors (Illinois businesses),
- B. State operated concessions,

An additional appropriation from the Legislature. An appropriation might be obtained, if it were shown to be absolutely necessary, and substantiated by a financial report and evidence of favorable attendance records at the Illinois pavilion.

∴ Newman proposed, and the Commission agreed, that no admission should be charged.

### III. DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDING

After informal negotiations, attaching no obligations as to contract, with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (architects), a figure of \$500,000 was arrived at for the estimated cost of building the Illinois pavilion.

William Hartmann of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill outlined some points regarding the building:

- A. Land area set aside for Illinois (56,000 square feet),
- B. The pavilion, including courtyards or semi-enclosed areas, would cover 30,000 square feet, the theatre 8,000 square feet, and landscaping the balance. Much of the total area could be open air. The enclosed space must be constructed to fit the budget.
- C. Location of the site of the Illinois pavilion is near the entrance to the Fair grounds, across from the United States pavilion and next to the press room. This location should augment the attraction of large crowds and should make the pavilion an ideal spot for visiting dignitaries.
- D. Hiring a contractor who is already doing some work on the Fair was considered advisable by Mr. Hartmann.

### IV. COMMISSION ACTIONS

After considerable discussion on each point, the Commission took the following action.

It was generally agreed that:

- A. Ralph Newman should be the Commission's exclusive contact with the press.
- B. Any members of the Commission who wish to visit the Fair site before the official opening (April 1964) should do so immediately. Mr. Newman suggested that one or two members might go and report to the Commission.
- C. An advisory committee be established and that its membership should be drawn from non-Commission members. Two subcommittees of the advisory group were suggested by Mr. Newman--a history subcommittee, and a public relations subcommittee. Clyde Walton was suggested to head the former, and Al Weisman to direct the latter.
- D. The Chairman or the Co-Chairman, and the Secretary of the Commission should co-sign all vouchers.
- E. The final choice of the type of Lincoln exhibit to be created be left to the officers.

the following resolutions were passed by unanimous vote:

- RESOLVED: That the dominant theme of the Illinois exhibit be Lincoln, and that the Commission secure exclusive rights to the use of this theme in the New York World's Fair. (Moved by Mr. Bidwill; seconded by Mr. Graves.)
- RESOLVED: That the officers of the Illinois Commission - New York World's Fair be authorized to negotiate and enter into agreements with the architect, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. (Moved by Mr. Drach; seconded by Mr. Friedrich.)
- RESOLVED: That the Chairman and the Secretary of the Illinois Commission - New York World's Fair approach the Governor in regard to the appointment of a co-chairman and that they then appoint vice-chairmen in satisfactory number, so that the business of the Commission in regard to contracts, etc., can be easily facilitated. (Moved by Mr. Gaiswinkler; seconded by Judge Parsons.)
- RESOLVED: That the job of Director of the Illinois Commission - New York World's Fair be created for the period of August 1, 1963 to December 31, 1964, and that James A. Cassin be hired to fill this position, with the option for contract renewal at the end of the period, and that salary in the amount of \$15,000 per year be provided. That a secretary be hired for the same period at the going rate. That money be provided for moving expenses of the Director in an amount not to exceed \$1,000. (Moved by Mr. Hazlet; seconded by Mr. Lee.)

Respectfully submitted,

Gene Graves, Secretary  
Illinois Commission  
New York World's Fair