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# News Release

For Immediate Release: April 27, 2018

## **City-County Committee on Confederate Monuments and Memorials to Begin Its Work**

*Committee scheduled to meet nine times from May 10-October 11*

DURHAM, N.C. – Durham County Commission Chair Wendy Jacobs and Durham Mayor Steve Schewel announced today that membership on the City-County Committee on Confederate Monuments and Memorials is now complete, and the Committee is prepared to begin its work.

Co-chairing the 12-member committee will be Charmaine McKissick-Melton and Robin Kirk, chosen jointly by Schewel and Jacobs.

Dr. McKissick-Melton is Associate Professor of Mass Communications at North Carolina Central University with a Ph.D. in communications with a focus on race relations from the University of Kentucky. She is the youngest daughter of Civil Rights leader Floyd McKissick, Sr., and she was involved with her family in many Civil Rights marches and the integration of Durham's elementary schools. McKissick-Melton shared meals with Civil Rights leaders from Martin Luther King, Jr. to Malcolm X, and she is steeped in the history of the movement.

Kirk is a Faculty Co-Chair of the Duke Human Rights Center at the Franklin Humanities Institute and is a founding member of the Pauli Murray Project. An author and human rights advocate, Kirk formerly served as a senior researcher for Human Rights Watch.

In addition, both McKissick-Melton and Kirk have a history of involvement with the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The City-County Committee on Confederate Monuments and Memorials was established by the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners in the wake of the toppling of the Confederate statue outside the Old Courthouse. The committee is charged with:

- Engaging the Durham community in an expansive and transparent public process regarding public monuments and other remnants of the Confederacy present in Durham;
- Making recommendations to the board of county commissioners regarding disposition of the toppled Confederate statue as well as the remaining monument outside of the Old Courthouse/County Administration Building; and
- Cataloging all other public Confederate monuments or symbols of the Confederacy in Durham and making recommendations as to their future disposition to the city council and board of county commissioners.

McKissick-Melton is looking forward to her work on the Committee. “As one of the youngest to desegregate Durham public elementary schools while only in the third grade,” she says, “my perspectives are informed by those experiences. My life work is focused on human and social justice. My goal is help create a process which is fair, has transparency, and provides diverse voices of the community to guide the committee.”

Kirk says, "Like many American families, I have ancestors on both sides of the Civil War as well as immigrant and Native American forebears. In a vibrant, diverse community like Durham, I hope we can celebrate our values through public art in a way that embraces that reality."

In addition to the Committee chairs, members of the Committee are Deondra Rose, Cynthia Greenlee, Barbara Lau, Elizabeth Sappenfield, Stephanie Ford, Watson Jennison, Susanna Lee, William O'Quinn, Jacob Rogers and Dominique Walker.

The Committee is scheduled to begin its work in May. It will hold a series of public meetings to hear from a wide range of voices in the Durham community about the Confederate monuments and other remnants, and the Committee will be reporting its findings and recommendations to the city council and county commission at the end of this year.

A schedule of the dates and times for the Committee meetings is below.

**City-County Committee on Confederate Monuments and Memorials  
Meeting Schedule  
(Topics to be announced)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Time</b>
Thursday, May 10	Durham County Commissioner Chambers, 200 E. Main St., Durham, NC	7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Tuesday, May 22	Stanford L. Warren Library, 1201 Fayetteville St., Durham, NC	6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, June 7	Durham County Commissioner Chambers, 200 E. Main St., Durham, NC	7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Thursday, June 21	Rougemont Ruritan Club, 212 Bacon Rd., Rougemont, NC	7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Tuesday, August 7	Southwest Regional Library, 4505 S. Alston Ave., Durham, NC	7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, August 23	Durham County Commissioner Chambers, 200 E. Main St., Durham, NC	7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Thursday, September 13	To Be Determined	7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Thursday, September 27	North Regional Library, 221 Milton Rd., Durham, NC	7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Thursday, October 11	Durham County Commissioner Chambers, 200 E. Main St., Durham, NC	7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

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