

Minutes BLACK AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

March 6, 2013 SPCC-10th Floor

Chaired by: Priscilla Dames-Blake

Board Members Present: Priscilla Dames-Blake; D. J. Fabien; Ms. Dannie McMillon; Stephen Hunter Johnson; Gerri Lazarre; Tracey Bowen,

Excused Absences: Ronald Mumford, Edgar Wright

Unexcused Absences: Valerie Jeune

Staff: Retha Boone-Fye

Guests: Sonless Martin; Traci Pollock (MDEAT); Barnabas Johnson

Quorum: Yes

The meeting was called to order at 10:18 a.m. with the Chair requesting that one of our guests Mr. Barnabas Johnson provide the inspirational message.

**Chair's Report:** Ms. Dames—Blake requested that our visitors introduce themselves and provide a brief background on themselves. Mr. Sonless Martin indicated that he is a graduate of Florida Memorial University and a nursing program. He is currently involved in volunteer work and travels to The Bahamas in order to deliver supplies to children. He is interested in volunteering to work on a BAAB committee. The next guest was Traci Pollock who is a staff member of the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT) and is interested in observing our board in session. MDEAT's board meets the third Thursday in each month and she extended the invitation to our board to attend. Ms. Pollock gave a brief overview on MDEAT, which was formally known as the Metro-Miami Action Plan (MMAP). The board has undergone a name and board change and is interested primarily in bolstering the economic status of Black citizens. The board is sustained through sales taxes and traffic tickets (a portion of each one is distributed to MDEAT). They will be holding a series of breakfast meetings as well as expos in the community. They are also planning a conference early next year and would like to collaborate with the BAAB on this effort. Ms. Lazarre, Ms. McMillon introduced themselves at this point. Our final visitor is Mr. Barnabas Johnson who heads a Christian based youth group in the community whose mission is to help stem the violence impacting the community. Both young men indicated that they would like to volunteer to work on behalf of the BAAB. Ms. Dames then provided a copy of the Chair's report and commended the Black Heritage Planning Committee for their excellent work last month on behalf of Black History Month. There was no Council of Chairs meeting last month and she asked if there were any comments or questions concerning her report. She reported also that she had contacted the Mayor's office in reference to the Mayor's Roundtable/Task Force on Youth/Violence to determine why the BAAB had not been invited to the table since we needed to be involved. That task force is divided into two phases and the BAAB was sent to the one dealing with parks. She feels that we should also be represented on the Schools side—Ms. Bowen-Bell will assist in this effort. Another issue she reported on is the public forum pertaining to Brian Beckman the Miami-Dade firefighter who made disparaging remarks on his personal Facebook page. She feels that we need to be more "out there" in the public eye as members of the BAAB. She is on the CRB and as a result is interested in the CRB's Trayvon Martin event and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary currently being planned.

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She feels that we should be more involved in this process and has received encouragement from the Martin/Fulton family to be more involved in that event. Also, as members of the CRB they have been requested to raise funds in order to support the CRB's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Several of the other chairs, including Ms. Dames voiced opposition to them being asked to raise funds for the CRB's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary when each of their boards has their own events for which they raise funds. Ms. Boone-Fye briefly noted that she receives updates on the Trayvon Martin situation from Miami-Dade Police, and that the new director J. D. Patterson is interested in attending our meeting when requested. Ms. Dames also noted that she was invited to be a panel member on the University of Miami's Domestic Violence task force. As for the Village Dialogue held in conjunction with the Beacon Council, she remarked that it was a "disgrace." The content and program was excellent, but attendance left much to be desired. The event was held at the Fountain of New Life and she felt that it was not pushed as much as it should have been. She was disappointed that the CEO-Frank Nero did not attend as well and before she begins to plan the second one in the City of Miami with Chief Osorio she needs to know if the board wants to proceed. Ms. McMillon requested that we collaborate with the NAACP. Ms. Dames indicated that she had reached out to them, however they have not adequately responded. Ms. McMillon and Mr. Hunter Johnson indicated that there are new officers and now is the time to contact them again to seek collaboration. Ms. Dames agreed to do that.

Mr. Hunter Johnson suggested that if we do it in the South Dade community we invited prominent pastors to sit on the panel and that would encourage their congregants to attend.

**Program Officer's Report:** Ms. Boone-Fye reported that she met earlier with Traci and Mr. Dixon from MDEAT and one of the topics was the Black World Guide and they suggested that we collaborate on the project. Ms. Pollock reported that MDEAT would like to create a special subsection that would include the Target Urban Areas (TUA) businesses and attractions. Mr. Dixon approved of the concept and said that the MDEAT board would meet on the 20<sup>th</sup> of this month. There was a motion made by Mr. Fabien and seconded by Mr. Hunter Johnson to give Ms. Boone-Fye permission to move forward on the Black World Guide collaboration with MDEAT and to expend no more than \$1,500 on the research section (for Shirley Ellison) which will be reimbursed by MDEAT. It was unanimously approved. Ms. Boone requested approval of the minutes since we have quorum. It was moved by Ms. Bowen-Bell and seconded by Ms. McMillon and the minutes were voted on and approved. Ms. Boone-Fye announced that there are several community issues such as: the Disparity Study; the Hospitality and Training Levy project is an important issue and she will keep the board updated on the status. We have a new member, Mr. Jihad Rashid, who was appointed by Commissioner Suarez and the recommended member is Kevin Chambliss (from Congressman Joe Garcia's office) for Commissioner Moss's appointee. Another issue is violence among youth and the number of shootings in Miami. A reporter is requesting information on what our board is doing to address this issue. The suggestion is that we do a separate project to address this issue. Next, we have a close-out meeting with the South Dade Cultural Arts Center for the gospel fest expenses. There was some discussion on the disconnect between the BAAB and the Black Heritage Planning Committee. BAAB members would like to be more involved earlier in the planning and fundraising phases of events.

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Ms. Dames suggested that the BAAB formally thank the Black Heritage Planning Committee. Mr. Fabien commented that the BAAB members should reach out to the BHPC more and volunteer to help with projects earlier. The motion was made to formally recognize the BHPC and it was approved.

Committee Reports:

**Black Heritage Planning:** in Mr. Wright's absence, Ms. Boone-Fye reported previously on Black History Month. Plans are now being made for the 2013 Pillars Awards. The recommendation is that we move the event to June in order to assure that students are given the awards prior to leaving if they are attending an out of area institution. We are in negotiations with the Coconut Grove Marriott or the Arsht Center, depending on the price point. The board approved.

**Education:** Ms. McMillon said that she sits on a Miami-Dade Public Schools committee/task force that deals with curriculum issues impacting African American History. Schools can opt out of teaching — even though it is state mandated. She presented a copy of this year's Legislative Agenda and priorities. She will be attending the School Board meeting next week to discuss North Dade Elementary and North Dade Middle—there are lots of issues with these schools such as lack of space and several major construction issues—even though it opened on time as the Superintendent promised. She is monitoring the process and counseling parents at Norland Senior High as they go through the construction process.

**Economic Development:** Mr. Hunter Johnson submitted a written report on two upcoming events: April 4<sup>th</sup> at Florida Memorial University partnering with ICABA and YPN for a "Keeping it Real and Keeping it Professional" seminar from 1-3 p.m. The other event will be held April 20<sup>th</sup> as a Civil Law outreach clinic in conjunction with the Wilkie Ferguson, Caribbean and Haitian lawyers associations to offer free advice to the community. Mr. Hunter Johnson will be exploring other Village Dialogues in this area as well.

**Haitian American Emergency Relief Committee (HAERC):** Mr. Fabien reported that he will be travelling to Haiti this month again on behalf of the HAERC.

**Housing:** Mr. Mumford phoned in his report since he is at a work related event. He said that NACA would be in Miami March 7-11<sup>th</sup> at the James L. Knight Center.

**Budget and Finance:** Report by Gerri Lazarre who has been attending Miami-Dade County budget meetings and they are in the process of planning the budget for 2013-2014 and reaching out to county departments to see what their projections are for the upcoming year. The budget process is online and it gives businesses the opportunity to see what services or goods will be needed by the various

departments. By June 1<sup>st</sup>, the preliminary tax rolls are released and by July, and August the estimated tax rolls will be submitted to the public. (more)

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She believes we should get a 'heads up' and become more involved prior to the public input sessions. This year's budget will be approximately \$5.9 billion. She was also concerned with the fact that the BCC was attempting to convey County owned land to a non-profit organization which would open the door to other organizations. Ms. Boone-Fye requested that she sit down with Ms. Lazarre in order to work on the BAAB budget since she felt she did not have the financial background to generate the required reports. Ms. Lazarre agreed and asked where the funds would come from for the 2013 Pillars awards program. Ms. Boone-Fye requested the BAAB's assistance in meeting that goal.

**Health Care & Social Services:** No report

**Crisis Intervention/Respect Life:** (see Chair's Report)

**Marketing:** No report

**Legislative Affairs:** No report

**Social Media:** Ms. Bowen-Bell requested that Board members request 10-20 friends or associates to "Like" the BAAB's Facebook page to drive traffic to the page. She also commented on the Miami Children's Initiative events and that we should monitor them in the future.

Old Business: None

Announcements: Ms. Boone-Fye will be attending the In the Company of Women event where Ms. Dames will be honored March 7<sup>th</sup>.