

## MINUTES BLACK AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

July 10, 2013

Chaired by: Priscilla Dames-Blake

Board Members Present: Gerri Lazarre; Jihad Rashid, D.J. Fabien;

Excused Absences: Edgar Wright; Ronald Mumford; Stephen Hunter Johnson; Tracey Bowen-Bell

Unexcused Absences: Ms. Dannie McMillon

Staff: Retha Boone-Fye

Guests:

Quorum: No

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Dames at 10:15 a.m. and Mr. Rashid provided the opening meditation. Following the meditation, Ms. Dames indicated that we did not have quorum, therefore we would have a discussion on certain issues. Prior to presenting her written report, she informed members that she had been attending many community meetings and she would appreciate other board members attending these meetings on behalf of the Black Affairs Advisory Board. She would like a better representation in the community by board members—it is important because there are many situations affecting our community where we need to be present.

Ms. Dames also reported on the election of officers for the Community Relations Board. She indicated that there were a few community items such as the School Board Bond Issue where we needed to receive an update since they came to our board requesting our support. Other matters she mentioned were the successful Pillars Awards and Richmond Heights' 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event—where she offered the board's assistance in their celebration on November 11<sup>th</sup> of this year and she has invited members of their planning committee to attend the September meeting. She also attended UCOMB's last event which was great. She then introduced her position paper: "Breathing While Black" and requested that Ms. Boone-Fye release it immediately after the board reviews it. Ms. Boone-Fye also recommended that we put the position paper on our Facebook page.

There was a short discussion on the Miami-Dade Public Schools' and the fact that so many African American students graduate without being able to read much less transition into a viable career.

Mr. Rashid offered that even when we study the situations affecting the Black community and resolve to follow "best practices" even then, nothing is generally accomplished. We need to find a better way of tackling issues—we have enough studies and methods. It's time to do something different.

Ms. Dames said that we should still invite the police department chief from Miami Beach so that we begin planning this year for next year's events. Mr. Rashid agreed to be on an ad hoc committee along with Tracy Bowen-Bell for Urban Beach weekend with Ms. Dames so that the recommendation can be made to have a formal event instead of just having visitors come to Miami Beach just to "hang out."

Ms. Boone-Fye then gave an update on several projects such as the Beacon Council's involvement in projects in Coconut Grove; she passed that information on to Mr. Rashid. Next, from an administrative standpoint, Mr. Hunter Johnson sent a copy of the BAAB By-Laws to her, but Mr. Rene Diaz is also working on revamping all board by-laws and ordinances. Once that process is complete, Ms. Boone-Fye will share with the entire board. She is also working with the Clerk of the Board to make sure that our board is in compliance with all requirements.

The next issue was the MD-CRT which has to be completed by September. Ms. Boone-Fye will be meeting with Community Information and Outreach in order to comply with the resolution. Appointees to each board must now be subjected to a background check as well before becoming a part of each board. We have two new appointees—Rene Gordon, an attorney and Dr. Jonas Georges from Commissioners Bovo and Monestime respectively. Next, a follow up with the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT) was done and we have received funding in order to complete the Black World Guide. She is working on finalizing the document and waiting on the flash drive for MDEAT's portion which will include TUA's or "Targeted Urban Areas" as part of the document. Next, she reported on the Trayvon Martin community event held by the CRB which she attended. It was very well received by the community in anticipation of the verdict. The next item was the Hospitality Initiative which was well received by the Black Hospitality Initiative—they are interested in the concept. Further details are forthcoming. Mr. Rashid made some comments on Black and heritage tours.

The final issue she reported on was the Black World symposium concept. Ms. Lazarre commented that we should do it on a Saturday and at Miami-Dade so that residents could attend. A sub-committee meeting is planned within the next few weeks to further discuss this issue.

There was a discussion held on the status of Trayvon Martin's family wanting the BAAB to be more involved in the process.

#### Committee Reports:

Black Heritage Planning Committee: Planning is underway for Black History Month 2014.

Education: No report

Health Care: Ms. Boone-Fye will be meeting with Ms. Maria Hidalgo from VITA Slater this month to discuss holding a Village Dialogue in September at North Shore Hospital.

Housing: No report

Economic Development: Mr. Hunter Johnson reported via conference call and submitted a written report. He spoke about his meeting at length with Robin Reiter from the Beacon Council and how Black businesses should be focused on as well as looking at other areas where these businesses are successful to act as a template. Another issue was the GOB and how these funds could be used to improve the infrastructure in targeted urban areas—specifically in the Black community. That would be something the board could effectively push. Mrs. Rashid commented that the Beacon Council could recalibrate their focus and help to bring nationally recognized successful Black businesses to the area. These recommendations could be made and discussed formally through the symposium and presented to

them as a method of economic revitalization. Mr. Hunter Johnson and Mr. Rashid will be collaborating on this process and report back to the board.

Budget and Finance: Ms. Lazarre provided a verbal report. She will continue to monitor funding and expenditures for the BAAB.

Social Media & Marketing: No report

Legislative: (vacant)

HAERC: Mr. Fabien announced that the organization does not have a project at the moment, but they are keeping an eye on Tropical storm Chantal to see if it would impact Haiti.

New Business: Ms. Boone-Fye will be working with the American Diabetes Association and is requesting support from the Board.

Old Business: None

With all business being concluded, the meeting adjourned at 11: 40 a.m.