

MINUTES BLACK AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

September 4, 2013

Chaired by: Priscilla Dames-Blake

Board Members Present: Gerri Lazzare; Jihad Rashid, D.J. Fabien; ; Ronald Mumford; Stephen Hunter Johnson; Tracey Bowen-Bell; Dannie McMillon; Rene Gordon, Dr. Jonas Georges

Excused Absences: Edgar Wright

Staff: Retha Boone-Fye

Guests: Rachelle Salnave

Quorum: Yes

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Dames at 10:14 a.m. and Dr. Jonas Georges provided the opening meditation. Following the meditation, Ms. Dames indicated that we did not have quorum, therefore we should take the opportunity to preview the minutes. She then requested our members and then our new members to introduce themselves. Our new members are Rene Gordon, Esq., and Dr. Jonas Georges. Copies of their bios were presented. Ms. Rachelle Salnave an intern from the University of Miami—she is a graduate student at the University of Miami. Mr. Rene Diaz joined the meeting accompanied by Ms. Brittnie Bassant, a representative from Commissioner Lynda Bell's office who requested that we give board updates on a consistent basis to Commissioner Bell and Vanessa Ortega—who is Mr. Diaz's assistant.

Ms. Dames then submitted her written report; Ms. Dames informed members that she was on vacation last month but that she had attended a meeting of the Council of Chairs. There were some interesting discussions on the board—such as each board's by-laws, sunshine laws being followed, what each board's emphasis was on whether the boards serve the staff or vice versa.

Program Officers' Report:

Ms. Boone-Fye reported on the status of the BAAB by-laws as well as the other boards being reviewed by Mr. Rene Diaz. She presented a copy of the proposed changes and requested that each member submit questions or concerns immediately. Ms. Bowen-Bell questioned the policy on board absences. Ms. Hunter Johnson also had a question regarding how additional members are appointed. Ms. Boone-Fye requested that all suggestions be made in writing. She then discussed the Black World Symposium scheduled for September 19th and requested that the board consider rescheduling the event since the date conflicts with the Congressional Black Caucus being held in Washington, D.C. Next was an update on the Miami-Dade Coordinated Response Team (MD-CRT) which is in the process of being worked on and a smaller version (brochure) should be ready before the end of the month. She also updated board

membership. We have two new members and are now holding two vacancies. Mr. Antonio Crawford's name has been offered as an appointee.

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The final issue she reported on was the MDEAT follow-up on the Black World Guide. That process is in its final stages.

Committee Reports:

Black Heritage Planning Committee: Ms. Boone-Fye reported that for Black History Month 2014 she had met with a staff member from Commissioner Monestime's office and that there are positive movements in favor of holding a "Passport to Africa" fair at Gwen Cherry Park February 15th. The other two events would be the kickoff in the SPCC and the Gospel Fest, held in the South Dade area. Mr. Rashid announced that the Coconut Grove Collaborative is working with the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau on heritage tourism.

Education: Ms. McMillon reported that it is necessary for us to monitor the School Bond issue and the need to answer the right questions such as which schools would be considered for reconstruction. She also reported on a meeting she attended in Miami Gardens in reference to the large number of young people being impacted by violence. She mentioned that Ms. Boone-Fye attended the meeting and gave the scenario that the community has a tendency to react for "96 hours" then go back to 'business as usual' and that the community needs to have a plan of action in between meetings. The Urban League held a town hall meeting on Education which covered information on charter schools as well as other topics. She will be speaking this Friday at Booker T. Washington Senior High to students about racial issues in Miami. She is reading a book on race and suggested that we have a Village Dialogue on the issue. Ms. Dames suggested that we revisit the School Superintendent to discuss the issues we spoke on at our previous meeting with him and his staff.

Health Care: Ms. Boone-Fye met with Ms. Maria Hidalgo from VITA S and they will be holding a Village Dialogue on health within the next month or so.

Housing: Mr. Mumford announced that he attended a housing workshop at Antioch as well as Mt. Moriah, but that would like to make a paradigm shift and take the committee in another direction. Although he understands that providing affordable housing is important, he is deeply concerned about the number of young African American males and females who age out of foster care and are then left either homeless or scrambling to survive. He would like to take this on as a project. The board agreed and he will explore either a Village Dialogue or make recommendations on tackling this issue. Ms. Dames indicated that she attended the Children's Trust event and picked up some possible partnership information.

Economic Development: Mr. Hunter Johnson reported that he would be attending a forum sponsored by the Southeast Overtown ParkWest board to discuss what will have a monumental impact on the Overtown community—the All Aboard Florida train. There are two competing proposals for the development and Overtown will be dramatically changed. He and his co-chair, Mr. Rashid gave us an update and suggested ways for the BAAB to deal with the issue. Mr. Fabien made a motion that was seconded by Dr. Georges that the board takes action when Mr. Hunter Johnson brings back a recommendation. It passed with no opposition.

Budget and Finance: Ms. Lazarre will provide an updated report once she receives the information from Ms. Boone-Fye on the expenses/income from the Pillars Awards. She also wants to meet with her on developing a budget for the upcoming year.

Social Media & Marketing: No report

Legislative: Ms. Rene Gordon agreed to serve as the chair of this committee.

HAERC: Mr. Fabien announced that he was in Haiti in August and noticed that the Haitian government is beginning to formalize its emergency response

New Business: Ms. Dames made note that North Miami has its first female Mayor, Lucy Tondreau and that we should send a formal congratulatory note. Mr. Rashid gave the board an update on the issue of the West Grove and its opposition to the Coral Gables Trolley being proposed for the area. The concern is that an industrial use is being planned near a residential area, which is contrary to the City of Miami's existing zoning laws. Mr. Hunter Johnson moved that Mr. Rashid formally put our position in writing and it was seconded by Mr. Fabien. It passed with no opposition. Mr. Hunter Johnson put forth that our board should have the Police organizations come before us to discuss the shootings of Black residents. Ms. Dames indicated that this was on the agenda previously but the board did not follow through. It will however get done.

Dr. Georges questioned how committee assignments were made. He then agreed to serve on the Economic Development Committee.

Old Business: Ms. Boone-Fye requested board action on four items: a new date for the Black World Symposium. She will find out available dates in October from Florida Memorial with the suggested date of October 9th. The minutes for July were approved, and she requested approval to pay the new intern Rachelle Salnave from the Trust Funds as well as shirts for the board from Holsen, Inc.; symposium expenses to Florida Memorial University and pins from Archie's Awards by Connie. The motion was made by Mr. Fabien, seconded by Mr. Hunter Johnson and the board approved without opposition.

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