

## MINUTES BLACK AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

November 6, 2013

Chaired by: Ms. Priscilla Dames

Board Members Present: D. J. Fabien, Edgar Wright Stephen Hunter Johnson; Tracey Bowen-Bell; Gerri Lazarre; Rene Gordon.

Excused Absences: Dannie McMillon; Mr. Ronald Mumford; Dr. Jonas Georges; Jihad Rashid

Staff: Retha Boone-Fye

Quorum: Yes

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Ms. Dames at 10:30 a.m. The inspirational message was given by Ms. Bowen-Bell. After reviewing the agenda, Mr. Hunter Johnson moved that it be approved, it was seconded by Ms. Lazarre and the board approved the agenda.

### Chair's Report:

Ms. Dames commented that the Symposium held last month at Florida Memorial University was successful and that the board was well represented. She gave an overview of the Board's past six years and its accomplishments, including its membership. She is concerned with the committee structure and she would like to have committee chairs become more involved and keep the other members better informed. She then gave a detailed description of the activities the board was responsible for including a gang-awareness seminar; youth speak out in Miami Gardens; the establishment of the Haitian American Emergency Relief Committee (HAERC); which led to a foray into Haiti by elected officials and others; several health initiatives—including partnerships with VITAS and North Shore Hospital; the "Respect Life! Anti-violence initiative as well as periodic meetings with The Miami's Herald's Editorial Board to keep them abreast of our activities and projects. She then passed out her report—specifically she mentioned that she is interested in several Dade County Public Schools projects concerning disabled students program that teaches employability skills and she will be following this issue. She then suggested that we utilize the BAAB Facebook page as a community resource for our constituents. She was also invited to be part of a documentary on Miami's racial climate which will be filmed in the near future.

Ms. Lazarre requested more details on the Dade County Schools aviation project and Ms. Dames provided details and asked that this board act as a conduit for information of value to the community. Ms. Bowen-Bell commented that she would like to proceed cautiously with postings on the Facebook page.

Some discussion centered on providing helpful information to our constituents on a regular basis.

Program Officers' Report:

Ms. Boone-Fye updated the board on several issues including the Veteran's parade sponsored by Commissioner Diaz. Next issue involved the symposium which had some outcomes. She recommended that we partner with other similar organizations to come up with a proposal that would enrich the Black World Community such as the Urban League; NAACP; Black elected officials and others. There is a meeting scheduled with the Beacon Council about some of these same issues. She requested that Mr. Hunter Johnson update the board on the meeting with the Miami Herald's Editorial Board. He spoke about the perceived treatment of the City of Miami Gardens' negative portrayal as well as on former Commissioner Barbara Carey-Schuler. He reminded the Editorial Board of their responsibility to report fairly across the board on the Black World Community. Ms. Dames also commented on whether or not organizations such as The Miami Herald and the Beacon Council are doing anything other than paying 'lip service' to the Black World Community.

The next issue concerned the launch of the MDC-CRT's website and the collaboration with four police departments—namely the City of Miami; North Miami Beach; Miami Gardens and Miami-Dade. We will be providing copies of the brochure to these department as well as the County Commissioners who have been provided copies. The collaboration between the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust and the BAAB is in its final stages with the design and printing of the Black World Guide. Ms. Boone-Fye showed a mock up and reported that the final document would be ready by the middle of December. A report was made on the Black History Month schedule. Our February meeting will be held on a different day so that we can officially kick off Black History Month. Also, Mr. Laroche wants to have a symposium on the South, so he will be locating a venue and letting us know early next year.

Ms. Boone-Fye requested permission to expend funds for Black History Month. The motion was made by Ms. Bowen-Bell and seconded by Mr. Hunter Johnson with the understanding that all expenses would be approved by the board prior to being submitted for payment.

The last item dealt with elections. A nominating committee was formed consisting of Mr. Fabien; Mr. Wright and Ms. Bowen-Bell. They will be sending a slate by December to be acted upon in January. This completed Ms. Boone-Fye's report.

Committee Reports:

**Black Heritage Planning Committee:** Mr. Wright reported that the Black History Month events are shaping up and a draft schedule should be ready by the January meeting. The "Passport to the African Diaspora" event will be held at Arcola Lakes Park at the request of Commissioner Monestime. Ms. Dames informed the board that members should make an effort to attend the South Dade Gospel fest since it was one of the largest and well-attended events for Black History Month. Mr. Wright also reported that we would be meeting with HistoryMiami to collaborate on future projects such as the inclusion of Black Miami in the new space. He would also like for the board to begin thinking about the Pillars Awards for June since people are planning their budgets now.

**Education:** No report, however Ms. Bowen-Bell requested that she begin to collaborate with Ms. McMillon since she is involved in education—especially at it relates to preparing for higher education. There are many changes/reforms at the federal level and our constituent’s needs to be kept abreast. Ms. Dames suggested that we meet with the School Board again and Mr. Hunter Johnson reiterated that position.

**Health Care:** Ms. Bowen-Bell suggested that we change the name to Health Care and Wellness and that she is willing to work as a co-chair on this committee as well.

Housing: No report.

**Economic Development:** Mr. Hunter Johnson requested that Ms. Boone-Fye set up meetings with the individual Commissioners to discuss the lack of Black developers approved to work with Miami-Dade County; the second issue concerned the School Board’s disparity study is possibly flawed; the third issue dealt with the establishment of a leadership development program for the Black World community led by the BAAB. He suggested that a certificate would be awarded to ‘graduates’ by the Board of County Commissioners. The curriculum would be developed and implemented by the BAAB. Ms. Boone-Fye, Mr. Hunter Johnson and Ms. Gordon will work on this project and have a draft to the BAAB by the April meeting.

**Budget and Finance:** Ms. Lazarre submitted a written report.

**Social Media & Marketing:** Ms. Bowen-Bell informed the board that the Miami-Dade Book Fair will be held Nov. 17-24<sup>th</sup> and that she will be providing entrance to any board member who wants to attend. Interested members should send the request to Ms. Boone-Fye to be given to Ms. Bowen-Bell.

**Legislative:** Ms. Gordon passed out information on “Bills that went into effect October 1, 2013.”

**HAERC:** No report.

New Business: Mr. Hunter Johnson will forward Ms. Boone-Fye information on an event at the Arsht Center.

Old Business: None

With all business being concluded, the meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

