

Minutes for Black Affairs Advisory Board

June 3, 2015

10:00 a.m.

Stephen P. Clark Government Center/10th Floor Conference Room

Quorum: Yes

Present: Stephen Hunter Johnson; Priscilla Dames-Blake; Gerri Lazarre; ; Antonio Crawford; D.J. Fabien; Francois Adrien; Jihad Rashid, Rene Gordon, Dannie McMillon, Edgar Wright, Tracey Bowen-Bell

Absent: Jeff Cazeau, Ronald Mumford

Guests: Richard Nelson (United Senator Marco Rubio's Office)

Staff: Retha Boone-Fye

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Robert Thompson from the Commission on Ethics provided required Ethics Training for board members. The training centered on how board members are expected to interact and do's and don'ts for members. He emphasized the need for any board member who has an issue or question to seek an opinion from the Inspector General's office. Ms. Boone-Fye will provide Mr. Thompson with the sign in sheet so that he can send the certificates attesting that they have completed training. He also reminded them that Financial Disclosures are due July 1st.

Chair's Report: Following the Ethics Training, Mr. Johnson introduced the new chair of the Hispanic Affairs Advisory Board, Ms. Abbie Cuellar, who wanted to issue a statement of support for the BAAB's stance on the need to make Bilingual education in Miami Dade Public Schools mandatory. Our stance is that the lack of opportunity for students—particularly African American students—places them in a precarious situation when most jobs require the ability to speak more than one language. Ms. Cuellar stated that she feels very strongly that the Hispanic Affairs Advisory Board should be more proactive and that she will work with the BAAB on issues that impact us all. She requested a joint resolution supporting this issue. Natalie Milian, Program Officer for the Hispanic Affairs Advisory Board thanked the board for their hospitality and mentioned that she will be working with Ms. Boone-Fye on issues that impact our boards.

Meeting formally opened at 11:15 a.m. with Mr. Wright offering the meditation. Ms. Lazarre moved to approve the agenda, it was seconded by Ms. McMillon and all members voted affirmatively. Approval of the minutes were tabled until the next meeting.

The chair said that we have reached out to the Superintendent and followed up with an editorial in The Miami Herald. There is a meeting later this afternoon that BAAB members can attend at 4:00 p.m. We want to keep up the pressure on the issue of bilingualism. He mentioned organizations such as the Urban League; Latin Builders Association; as well as the NAACP and the Beacon Council should join with us in this effort. He said that this is an economic issue that impacts us all and for that we should band together. He is concerned with the manner in which second languages would be taught in Dade County Public Schools.

He also mentioned that he would like to see an emphasis on Spanish being taught to non-Spanish speakers. Ms. Boone-Fye informed the members that she has received emails regarding a panel being put together to study this issue and we will get involved.

Page 2///

Regarding the B.O.B. initiative, he has a meeting with several pastors so that we can get them onboard and request that they are emphasizing to their congregations the importance of supporting Black businesses. There were a few questions about the concept and the Chair mentioned that we are attempting to get all churches involved in this project. He has a meeting set up with a several church leaders to promote the concept. Ms. Lazarre volunteered to write an article on the project so that businesses are aware of what we are doing.

Mr. Johnson then gave an update on the Sabadell Bank home ownership project. The bank has changed the program to a fixed rate 30-year mortgage and we need to push it so that it is deemed successful or risk losing funding for next year. He suggested that we contact realtors to make it successful. The object is to increase homeownership in our community. Next, he informed the board that we had submitted a letter to the Superintendent on bilingualism; also to The Miami Herald a letter was sent regarding the board's displeasure of the photos being released of Raymond Herrissee's autopsy by several Miami Beach Police officers. He has been invited by Chief Oates (City of Miami Beach) to speak at a convention in Washington, D.C. during a conference held by law enforcement officials from throughout the U.S.

Ms. Boone-Fye then brought the board up to speed on the process of bringing more members to our board. She will be meeting with Ms. Dames regarding this and have a report by the next meeting.

Program Officer's Report:

Ms. Boone-Fye then gave an update on several initiatives including the symposium for South Dade. She will be conferring with Ms. Dames and Mr. Laroche on this issues. Also, she is working with the CRB on the MDC-CRT project; she is attending the Chair's Prosperity Initiative meetings as well as Commissioner Edmonson's Task Force that will be linked with the "My Brother's Keeper Presidential Task Force."

She then requested approval for expenditures related to the Pillars Awards as well as the development of collateral materials for the board. It was moved by Mr. Rashid and seconded by Ms. Gordon. It was approved without opposition.

Following the Chair's report, Ms. Patrice Rosemond and Charles Scurr from Citizen's Independent Transit Trust, were introduced and Mr. Scurr proceeded to give an update on the status of the CITT. Following the passage of the half penny sales tax, the CITT was formed to oversee the operation and spending of the funds. The funds have basically been used to provide free transportation for seniors and to fund transit programs in the surrounding cities as well. They operate as a board (15 members); with strict conflict of interest procedures. He essentially said the surtax generates some \$240 million per year and the funds are used to support transit such as debt service; new equipment; 34 cities to provide their transportation programs. Most recently, they completed the Orange Line to Miami International Airport.

They also monitor SBD and DBE— \$65 million was spent with minority businesses. They are now purchasing new Metrorail cars—to the tune of \$400 million dollars. The contractor will be building a rail fabrication plant in Medley and will hopefully remain operational which should further stimulate transportation related economy.

Page 3///

They have also provided articulated buses; new Metromover vehicles, etc. He speculated that our next transit related transit will depend on future technologies. They recently sponsored a transportation summit which is aimed trying to see what transit can do to make travelling within Miami-Dade easier. We are looking at projects such as All Aboard Florida to alleviate traffic within the county and corridor. Mr. Rashid questioned the location of future transit projects and how they would impact the various neighborhoods. They are working with the City of Miami Gardens on a project on the north end but they have issued an RFP which needs a response. Mr. Crawford questioned the viability of new transit projects and the scarcity of funds to accomplish a first class system. Mr. Johnson questioned the viability of converting to a light rail system instead of buses. It has been considered, according to Mr. Scurr, the South Dade area is looking at this system since they already have busways. Mr. Rashid questioned the possibility of aligning transportation to housing and job development. One suggestion is to ask voters to vote on a penny tax for a year instead of over a long period of time, with the understanding that the funds will be used for specific projects instead of over a long term. Ms. Lazarre questioned the funding formula for unincorporated areas as well as utilization of SBE's and DBE's.

Committee Reports:

Black Heritage Planning: Mr. Wright reminded members that the 2015 Pillars Awards and scholarship reception will be held on June 20th at the Miami Shores Country Club at 11:45 a.m. Ms. Boone-Fye provided the names of the honorees and members approved the suggested list from the Heritage Planning Committee.

Education: Ms. McMillon reported that she sits on the Dade Coalition for Education Economic Justice—a brainchild of UTD. They had a town hall meeting on the north end and are preparing for one in the South Dade area for strategizing on testing. They are also looking at career and vocational strands in the schools—especially in the Urban Core schools. BAAB members are invited to a graduation ceremony of a charter high school called Stellar Leadership Academy on June 5th. On June '12th the NAACP will hold a meeting at the Belafonte Tacolcy Center on testing. She will send a notice to Ms. Boone-Fye for distribution for these events. Ms. Bowen-Bell mentioned a program at Miami-Dade which is geared toward African American males in which she would like the board's input. Ms. Boone-Fye mentioned the Black Male College Explorers Program which is federally supported and housed at Florida Memorial University.

Housing: No report

Health Care: Ms. Bowen-Bell reported that there will be a major health care forum at Bethel Apostolic Temple on June 20th at 8:00 a.m. and she is asking for at least verbal support from our board.

Page 4///

Economic Development: Mr. Rashid and Mr. Johnson reported on the B.O.B. project earlier.

Crisis Intervention/Respect Life: No report

Finance: Waiting on the reconciliation report.

Social Media and Marketing: Mr. Adrien and Mr. Fabien reported that the BAAB Facebook pages have been updated and they are requesting members to view it and comment.

Legislative Affairs: Ms. Gordon reported on several bills that passed through the Florida Legislature—particularly the Civil Citation bill that affects juveniles. The Direct File bill and juvenile confidentiality bill are still pending.

HAERC (501C3): No report

New Business: Ms. Bowen told members about a program that provides assistance to homeowners called the PACE program.

Mr. Richard Nelson, from Senator Nelson Rubio's office commented that he is impressed with the BAAB and is very much so interested in joining the board.

Announcements: Ms. Gordon announced that she will be running for Circuit Court judge in 2016.

Ms. McMillon will be forwarding some information to Ms. Boone-Fye for the HAAB. Mr. Wright announced that his daughter graduated cum laude from high school.

With all business being concluded, the meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

