

BLACK AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes – October 1, 2025

Location: Stephen P. Clark Government Center – Room 18-4

Time: 10:00 A.M. EST

Meeting Commenced: 10:31 A.M.

Attendance: Board members: Mr. Pierre Rutledge (Chair); Mr. Ronald Mumford (Vice Chair); Mr. Brandon Bartley; Mr. Cleveland Bell; Dr. Germany Dixon; Ms. Issaih Edwards; Mr. D.J. Fabien; Stephen Hunter Johnson, Esq.; Dr. Tisa Thomson; Mr. Jihad Rashid; Ms. Phyllis Simpkins; Dr. Jonathan Spikes; Ms. LaChanze Thomas; Ms. LaCriscia Fowlkes.

Guests: Mr. Broadway Harewood; Ms. Michelle Johnson (Mayor's Office); Rep. Roy Hardemon; Mr. Theophilis Williams.

Staff: Retha Boone-Fye; Yvans Morisseau, Shirley Ellison (BHPC Vice Chair)

I. Call to Order and Introductions

Chairman Rutledge called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m. and welcomed attendees and requested silent meditation. Guests and board members introduced themselves, including community representative Mr. Broadway Harewood from the Broadway Art District, located at 6214 Northwest 18th Avenue. A motion to approve the minutes and agenda from the previous meeting was made by Ms. Fowlkes, seconded by Mr. Mumford and passed unanimously.

II. Public Comments and Community Concerns

Mr. Broadway expressed concern over the lack of follow-through by County Commissioners regarding property ownership commitments along the 18th Avenue corridor.

He reported owning approximately 85% of the property in that area and detailed his long-standing efforts since 1987 to acquire and develop community assets.

He noted that despite submitting a cashier's check in 2010, the county failed to transfer promised lots. Mr. Broadway emphasized the importance of fulfilling these commitments and highlighted his nonprofit organization (established 2005), which has received White House recognition for its community impact.

III. Community Development and Property Ownership

The discussion continued regarding property access, fair development practices, and local revitalization. Mr. Broadway shared his family's background and personal investment in building community assets. Concerns were raised about county property giveaways to outside interests and the negative impact on neighborhood advancement.

Board members expressed support for exploring solutions to enhance equitable ownership and accountability.

IV. Human Library and Community Storytelling

Chairman Rutledge introduced the Human Library Project, intended to capture and preserve community stories.

Members discussed the importance of documenting cultural history to strengthen identity and continuity. Ms. Boone-Fye provided an update on the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT) and its upcoming MDEAT Community Activist campaign and awards program, which is slated for December 3rd. The Board agreed on the value of consistent community events and coordination across local initiatives. During the meeting, Ms. Boone-Fye scheduled photos and disseminated the Board's new shirts. Also, the November meeting location was discussed, with the suggestion that we meet at the newly opened Miami Dade Chamber office in Liberty Square.

V. Law Enforcement and Community Relations

The Chair, Mr. Fabien and Mr. Bell, shared updates from a recent meeting with the Sheriff's Office and deemed it successful. The suggestion was made that the Sheriff's office have representation at our meetings at least quarterly, to maintain communication and establish a referral network for community concerns. Sheriff Cordero-Stutz agreed. Ms. Thomas emphasized that we need to continue the dialogue with the Superintendent, emphasizing open dialogue and mutual collaboration.

Members stressed the importance of joint outreach programs to reduce misunderstandings and strengthen public trust. Planning for the "2026 State of Black Miami" conference was discussed. Board members Ms. Fowlkes; Dr. Spikes and Ms. Simpkins volunteered to provide planning and support for the conference. Ms. Boone-Fye also reported on the 2025-2026 Black World Guide and requested input from the board and community.

VI. Budget and Funding

Ms. Boone-Fye reported on the budget process and upcoming funding cycle. Key points included identifying sustainable income sources for the new fiscal year, securing a three-year commitment from the Miami Dolphins Foundation for the Pillar Awards, planning for the State of Black Miami 2026 event, and preparing for November board elections with an emphasis on community representation.

VII. Housing and Community Engagement

Community guest Theophilis Williams and former State Representative Roy Hardemon voiced concern over persistent housing issues in the Model City area and limited Black representation in development projects. Criticism was directed toward the County's lack of responsiveness to housing needs. The Board discussed the need for greater transparency, financial empowerment, and community participation in planning and development. Ms. Boone-Fye will follow up and report back to the board.

The Chair reported on the engagement process with the Dolphins Foundation. He went to the Miami Dolphins and New York Jets football game, where the recipients of the foundation's funding were presented on the field at Hard Rock Stadium. The BAAB is the recipient of a three-year donation, which will go towards providing funds to support our Young Pillar Scholarship recipients.

VIII. Membership, Committee Reports and Governance

Dr. Thomson presented the Membership Committee report, reviewing current board composition and district representation, noting vacancies requiring appointments. Stressed adherence to bylaws and qualifications for membership. She recommended forming a Special Committee to review the bylaws and ensure compliance with the founding ordinance establishing the Black Affairs Advisory Board.

Housing: Mr. Bell reported on the status of the plans to address homelessness and how constituents may be given the opportunity to receive services, versus being forced to be confined.

Black Heritage Planning: Ms. Boone-Fye gave an update on the new requirements for signing documents to engage community resources. All funds must be in the Trust Fund before any contracts are signed and they must be approved by the Chair's office.

Health Care: No report

Crisis Intervention/Respect Life: Dr. Spikes announced that he and board member Phyllis Simpkins will be speaking at FIU and the University of Miami for National Domestic Violence Awareness Month in support of the Domestic Violence Oversight Board's film presentation.

Economic Development: Mr. Rashid presented a detailed report on the newly formed "STRIP" Committee, which essentially is tasked with reducing inefficiency in Procurement; which is a local version of the federal DOGE program. He emphasized that the purpose is to streamline the County's procurement process. One of the challenges is that it might marginalize minority participation.

Education: Ms. Thomas re-emphasized that some \$5.8 million dollars have been allocated for workforce education which focuses on technology, engineering, HVAC and technical programs and that we should make our community aware. Also, the George Baker Aviation School now has a program that trains students in the aviation field in one of the high schools. We should emphasize that when we meet with the Superintendent. She also mentioned that Dr. Marvin Dunn is pursuing a civil suit against Miami Dade College for its conveying land for the Trump Presidential Library without public input.

Social Media & Marketing: Mr. Bartley and Mr. Fabien have been posting BAAB events both online and on Facebook consistently. Mr. Bartley asked that when board members attend community events that they send them to him or Mr. Fabien so that they can be posted.

IX. Additional Community Concerns

Mr. Williams and former State Representative Hardemon reiterated their frustration regarding limited engagement from the county and insufficient representation of Black voices in decision-making. The Board discussed strategies to improve transparency, accountability, and communication with residents. Emphasis was placed on leveraging community partnerships and promoting proactive advocacy.

X. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

The Chair and members of the community, including Mr. Harewood, Mr. Hardemon and Mr. Williams underscored the need for consistent community engagement and documentation of board members' contributions. The board will continue utilizing social media and public events to expand visibility and outreach.

Announcements: The board wished Ms. Ellison a 'happy birthday; Ms. Fowlkes invited members and the audience to "Meditation Mondays" at the Police Precinct; Ms. Boone-Fye reminded members and the audience of the Domestic Violence Oversight Board's film screening on October 8th and 9th.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Rashid, seconded by Ms. Simpkins and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.