

JUNE 5TH, 2019
GENERAL MEETING
BERKSHIRE COUNTY BRANCH, NAACP

NAACP OFFICE 730 TYLER STREET

AGENDA:

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

- a. Dennis Powell called the meeting called to order.

2. OPENING SILENCE

3. APPROVAL OF TREASURER REPORT

- a. A few tweaks to the layout for transparency.
- b. Bulk of money (restricted funds) spent on D.C. trip
- c. Inflow of money for dues.
- d. Low rent rate for office at 730 Tyler Street.
- e. Annual assessment overpayment to National– incorrect assessment of restricted funds.
 - i. Certified letters sent to National
 - ii. These letters have been received
 - iii. Branch leadership will follow up with the individuals at National.
 - iv. Plan to have operating budget in the future.
- f. Treasurer's Report:
 - i. Barb Roberts move to approve.
 - ii. Will Singleton seconded.
 - iii. Approved unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 6:20pm

- a. Myrtle made a motion
- b. Barbra seconded
- c. Approved

5. PRESENTATION

- a. Victim's Rights- Barbara A. Bizzi
 - i. Leah introduced Barbara Bizzi
 - ii. Barbara presented her own personal story with murder.
 - iii. DA's Office has a victim's advocate.
 - iv. She provided a Victim Bill of Rights sheet and offered help in future
- b. Transportation for elderly and differently abled – Merle Ferber
 - i. Medicare used to pay for 90% of round trips.
 - ii. Myrtle appealed 2x in order to get it.
 - iii. Wants public to be aware of the right of Medicare patients and the appeals process.
 - iv. She will be contacting Sen. Warren

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

6. **Finance & Freedom Fund** - Will Singleton Marlena Willis
 - a. Search for the emcee
 - b. Entertainment is being worked on
 - c. Rep Krestly cannot make the dinner.so there is a push for new keynote speaker. Possibly Ayanna Pressley.
 - d. Awards to be handed out at the dinner:
 - i. Rev. Dozier and Elaine Gunn to receive the Racheal Fletcher award posthumously
 - ii. Dennis Powell sending out letters to awardees this week.
7. **Facebook** - Leah Reed
 - a. Helen Moon: Berkshire Women's Political Caucus is having an election training session at BCC.
8. **Education Committee Leah Reed**
 - a. Met June 1 to discuss an approach on how to work the school system and youth
 - b. Program selected called Calmer Choice, a success from Cape Cod
 - i. Just for Pittsfield Public Schools
 - ii. Program involving mindfulness to navigate feelings
 - iii. Replaces the 'zero tolerance' policy in place which does not work.
 - iv. Proven success approach – puts onus of control onto the individual.
 - c. Hugh Guilderson called Cape Cod program and they will answer questions from the Ed Committee
9. **PR Media** Megan Whilden
 - a. Not present
 - b. Al Blake suggested to get meetings listed in Berkshire Eagle
10. **Membership & Life Membership** Chad Robertson
 - a. Sign up for membership online
 - b. New system for membership coming in the fall
 - c. People will be notified for when their membership is due
11. **RACE RELATIONS** Shirley Edgerton & Joel Priest
 - a. Received money from the state: 40K for an internship program
 - b. Contacted an HBCU for interns
 - c. 30-35 inquiries for 8 spots
 - d. 2 spots filled already
 - e. Educator of color contacted Shirley and they will be followed up by superintendent.
 - f. Current history classes will integrate black history
 - g. June event at MCLA – Shirley will be the moderator
12. **Economic & Environmental Justice** Al Blake, Chad Roberson
 - a. Two environmental justice bills are being heard in environmental committee
 - i. Al met with Rep. Smitty Pignatelli who supports bill
 - ii. Department of Energy and Conservation is having hearings around the state – one is Springfield.
 1. Biomass is not a fossil fuel.
 2. Protest in Springfield

- b. Dark Money movie in Housatonic Friday Unitarian Church 7:30pm
- c. New Green Deal watch party to make climate change front.
- 13. **Social Justice Action Committee** - Drew Herzig & Rebecca Thompson
 - a. Positive note on restorative justice.
 - i. Used experience in North Adams as an example.
 - ii. Started in South Africa to heal wounds from apartheid.
 - iii. Evidence based practice
 - iv. Legislated as part of youth diversion
 - b. Police Advisory Review Board – Reverend Sloan Letman IV
 - i. A steep learning curve.
 - ii. Setting up committee officers and delegating duties.
 - iii. Working on hard getting everything up and running.
 - iv. Board’s job to educate public on the process and results
 - v. Education going both ways
 - c. Working with Downtown Pittsfield on issues related to diversity.
 - d. Arlene Kirsch: Talking with Chief Winn and Mayor Tyer about Civil Service Exam
 - i. The current system is an obstacle to diversifying
 - ii. Should the NAACP start a scholarship for civil service exam?
 - iii. Received info on how North Adams dropped its Civil Service requirements.
 - 1. Civil Service is broken
 - 2. Commonwealth used to have 300 people staffing the system; now only 5 because the State wants to do away with it.
 - iv. Encourage everyone to do a ride-along with PPD
 - v. The Committee would like to have a Sept meeting with North Adams Mayor and PD Chief
 - vi. Shirley asked about how to deal with the Chief’s opening sealed juvenile records
 - 1. Looking into whether this is the Police Chief’s or State policy
 - 2. Juvenile court record impacts career in law enforcement
 - 3. The Committee will look into this.
 - vii. Veterans move to the top of the hiring list
 - viii. Al asked for a separate meeting dedicated to discussing the broken Civil Service system.

BUSINESS:

- 14. **Co-Chairs of the Redress Committee** - Christina Daignault & Doug Mishkin
 - a. Jeff moved to appoint them
 - b. Multiple seconds
 - c. Passed unanimously
- 15. **New Brochure – Berkshire County Branch NAACP – OFFER**
 - a. Christina’s friend agreed to draft a brochure.
 - b. Accepted
- 16. ~~Peg Kern Request of Support~~ Tabled

- 17. Anthony Delgado Event** – Event has been postponed.
- 18. Berkshire County Complete Count Committee (Official NAACP REP)**
- a. Drew Herzig our rep
 - b. Merle Ferber moved to pass
 - c. Multiple seconds
 - d. Passed
- 19. 4th of July Parade**
- a. Parade is happening
 - b. Looking for walkers
 - c. Have youth involved
- 20. 46th, Gather-In Committee**
- a. July 27th
 - b. Entertainment Committee Meeting on June 6th 3pm
 - c. Need to secure a bouncy house – Kate Luzon may know.
 - d. Sound system is set.
 - e. New bathrooms at Durant Park
 - f. Committees needed
 - i. Children’s activity
 - ii. Basketball Tournament – Jerome and Lance
 - iii. Food vendors
 - iv. Morning set up (8am) and clean up
 - v. Reach out to Leah for tabling

NEW BUSINESS

- 21. WAM’s BENEFICIARY** – Kristen van Ginhoven WAM Artistic Director
- a. Invitation to write a grant to be a beneficiary for WAM events
 - b. July 10th deadline
- 22. TRIP OF A LIFETIME JAMESTOWN, VA TO JAMESTOWN, ACCRA – GHANA 2019**
- a. 18th of august to 25th Aug
 - b. Starts in DC end to Accra
 - c. Meghan has agreed to head a committee to raise funds
 - d. Close to \$6000 for program
 - e. Shirley spoke of the castle where this happened
 - f. Ask if people are in favor
 - i. Shirley Edgerton makes a motion to pursue.
 - ii. Lenny Kates seconded.
 - iii. Passed
- 23. Mayoral Debate**
- a. We will have a debate
 - b. Need to pay attention to Ward 7 candidate for council
 - c. PPTV will cover the debate
 - d. Need to educate public on the responsibilities of a city councilor

24. 2019 Annual Convention

- a. We will not be attending the national convention
- b. 2020 it will be in Boston

25. Announcements

- a. Movie at Unitarian Church on Holocaust
- b. Gun violence in Pittsfield is a live issue in Pittsfield
- c. Concern with the specifics of changes involved with youth program with DA office
- d. DA to speak at July 22 at Conte School
- e. Lt. Gov, DA, and Mayor will have round table meeting with local youth
- f. June 18th BRIDGE will come to Cheshire 669 Sandhill Road Night Owl Farms to let people know of services
- g. Possibly table at Farmers Market
- h. Tommie Hutto-Blake presented the pictures from Multicultural Bridge as gifts to the NAACP.
- i. Christina Daignault told the branch about a town hall opportunity June 18th that Multicultural Bridge is doing in Cheshire MA to address a spike in racist incidence in Northern Berkshire County.

26. ADJOURNMENT