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 Daignualt & 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