AUGUST 7TH, 2019
GENERAL MEETING
BERKSHIRE COUNTY BRANCH, NAACP

NAACP OFFICE 730 TYLER STREET

Attendees
See Addendum

AGENDA:

1. Meeting Called to Order 6:09pm
2. Opening Silence
3. Review of Treasurer’s Report
   a. Membership approved using some restricted funds for an operation budget for the Branch.
   b. Marge Cohan made a motion to accept operating budget and Treasure’s report.
   c. Tommie Hutto-Blake seconded.
   d. Accepted.
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
   a. Tommie Hutto-Blake made a motion to approve.
   b. James Pope second.
   c. Approved.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

1. Finance & Freedom Fund - Will Singleton
   a. Leah Reed updates gave updates on the Freedom Fund
   b. August 10th meeting held discussing the dinner.
   c. We are on/ahead of schedule.
   d. Save the dates will be sent out soon with all the information

2. Face Book - Leah Reed
   a. Let Leah know if an event needs to be posted.
   b. Share pictures
   c. Question about Berkshire Cultural Assets Association

3. Education Committee - Leah Reed
   a. Met on Aug 2
   b. Working on mindfulness program for school system.
      i. Program has funding issues so will not be launching.
      ii. Will have program leader still give advice on how to still achieve goals of the program.
   c. BIO discussion with Jack McCandless on Aug 15th. Membership is encouraged to participate.
d. HBCU student teacher program went well.
   i. Shirley Edgerton did an excellent job.
   ii. Will be used as a model for the State.
   iii. Collaborative effort with local institutions.
   iv. Toured local history of African American sites including DuBois homestead.
   v. Next year students want to be the teachers in the programs.
   vi. Councilor Pete White complimented the program.
   vii. Membership would like to interact more with the students next year.

4. PR Media - Megan Whilden
   a. Not present.

5. Membership & Life Membership - Chad Roberson

6. Race Relations - Shirley Edgerton & Joel Priest
   a. Not present

7. Economic & Environmental Justice - Al Blake, Chad Roberson
   a. Report submitted
   b. Aug 17 Barrington Stage Panel Discussion on Climate Change
   c. Aug 17 Extinction Rebellion
   d. Sept 16th Climate change meeting with Adam Hinds 2pm his office
   e. Oct 7th Russ Vernon Jones Speaking
   f. Good idea to talk to your Representatives during summer break.
   g. BNRC having hikes for people who do not have access to transportation.

8. Thompson Social Justice Action Committee - Drew Herzig & Rebecca
   a. Report Submitted

9. Redress Committee - Christina Daignualt & Doug Mishkin
   a. Report Submitted
   b. Series of increasingly racists events in North County
      i. Suggestion we respond in writing to instance in North County
   c. Having the October Meeting in North Adams
   d. Have a stand out in North Adams
   e. March in the Fall foliage parade

**BUSINESS:**

10. July 4th Parade
    a. A good day for the Branch to show their presence in the community.
    b. Community was supportive
    c. Thank you to all who participated.

11. 46th Gather-In Committee
    a. Gather in was a success
    b. Thank you to all who participated.
    c. Our Treasurer created a new Gather In Financial Report
d. Suggestion that scholarships students talk at Freedom Fund

12. **Christopher Esperanza’s Trial** – Tommie Hutto-Blake
   a. Not guilty verdict on Chris trial
   b. Corello was arresting officer and is now on the force of Sheffield. (he proudly said on the witness stand this was due to more pay).
   c. Perhaps we should warn folks where he is today and he killed a mentally ill citizen in October 2017 via 7 shots to the victim - in a neighborhood in Pittsfield. This was not the first time he had used his service revolver against a citizen. One of the things we learned in this case is there is law allowing a citizen to have 'self-defense' against law enforcement when they are being harmed. In this case it was 3 cops against one teenager in his own home.
   d. A collection in the amount of $400 dollars was hand delivered to J. Knight.
   e. Tommie did not hear this 'no process' in MA to de-license a cop. The civil service process that Pittsfield uses makes it very difficult to remove. What will be informative is the North Adams new process without the civil service system.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

13. Agenda
   a. Agenda is put together from input from membership.
   b. Send Secretary items they want to put on the Agenda

14. Thursday August 15TH, Impeach Trump Rally
   a. National NAACP passed a motion for impeaching the President.
   b. Indivisible Pittsfield will be hosting a Impeach Trump Rally
   c. Permit for protest at Park Square.
   d. Do not have a permit to protest a Rep Neal Office. Suggest we contact him.

15. Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee
   a. Brian House Community Engagement Director from District Attorney’s Office
   b. Have community stakeholders advise on issues facing youth
   c. Starting in September
   d. Will be a feeder for information on community needs

16. NEAC Annual Meeting 2019
   a. Tommie Hutto Blake made a motion that we pay for trip to NEAC
   b. Marge Cohan seconded.
   c. Passed Unanimously

17. Brochure Draft
   a. Bill Yehle new brochure shown to Branch
   b. Ask for photos from membership
   c. Executive Committee will take a group photo.
   d. Ask for feedback on brochure

18. September Guest Speakers
   a. Mayor of North Adams and Police Chief coming to meeting to discuss Civil Service Exam
b. Educate Pittsfield on how to do this.

19. October Guest Speaker
   a. Meeting will held in North Adams
   b. District Attorney Andrea Harrington to speak

20. Debate Schedule
   a. When do we want to have debate for Pittsfield elections?
   b. Have the debate in October
   c. Will be held at Conte School

21. Berkshire Citizens for Peace and Justice
   a. Membership went to local businesses and got them to stop selling gun magazines.
   b. This is an NAACP subcommittee formed during a 2017 Branch meeting based on what Don & Merry seen at a local Pittsfield grocery store. A working group was established filled via volunteers - Don, Merry, Lenny, Marlena & Tommie.
   c. Expanding search to other towns.
   d. Will provide letter and process membership

22. Jamestown, VA to Jamestown, Ghana
   a. Dennis will leave on August 17th for Trip
   b. Dennis got soil and water from Dubois property and will bring to Ghana
   c. Will bring back water and soil from Ghana.
   d. Dennis working with someone writing a story with him. Will share with community.

23. W.E.B. DuBois legacy committee looking to be sister city with a city in Ghana.

24. Summer Soldier Williamstown Theater Festival
   a. Dennis in Summer Soldier at Williams Town Theater Festival

25. ADJOURNMENT  8:03 PM
   a. Jeff Turner made a motion to adjourn
   b. Barbara Dean to second.
   c. Passed.