

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
 - a. Report submitted.
- 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 Daignault & Doug Mishkin
 - a. Report Submitted
 - b. Series of increasingly racist 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 trail
 - 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.