

**NAACP Branch Meeting  
February 2nd, 2022**

**6:00 pm** Chat sent to all informing us that this meeting is being recorded.

**6:06 pm** President Dennis Powell (DP) starts meeting: "Let's call the meeting to a start. Thank you everyone for being here. We have a really exciting evening. I'm going to start with a moment of silence. We always want to remember whose land we occupy. And also, let's try and pray for what's wrong in our country and be grateful for what's right. There's a lot to unpack there."

**6:07 pm** DP: "I'm going to ask that everyone mute themselves please."  
"Everyone is aware that we cannot endorse political candidates but we have a responsibility to our community and members to introduce any candidate and give them the opportunity to speak with our community. I'm really pleased that tonight, thanks to our new chair of our political action committee, Helen Moon, she will be bringing Sonya Chang Diaz to talk to us this evening and we're really excited about this. Helen will handle the Q and A."

**6:09 pm**

Helen Moon: "I'm nervous to be here. I don't see her here. In the meantime I'll tell you about the political action committee. We have a meeting coming up in 2 weeks so if you'd like to join please feel free. We did a questionnaire for municipal candidates. We would like to keep the candidates accountable and structurize some of this  
Here is my email: [Helen.moon@gmail.com](mailto:Helen.moon@gmail.com)"

**6:13 pm**

Shirley: "I'm the co chair for the race relations committee. We've been busy given the climate that we are living in nationally and locally. The issues are microcosms of what is happening nationally. We have been trying to support these issues of discrimination. There is a training session in March. We will send the dates out. Local DEI practitioners will be joining forces to have a conversation about language- specifically about traumatic language like using the N words. We are going to talk about the impact of using certain language. There's a 90 minute event. This training is in response to some of the issues that are going on in the community."

**6:15 pm**

DP: "Thank you Shirley, I'm really troubled by the existence of the N word and how it's coming from our educators. I think this is a major and important step. Language is really important. Pardon everyone involved in January 6th. It'll be a tough year. I spoke about the isms at our freedom fund event so we need to call them out. DuBois said the problem was the color line."

**6:17 pm**

Shirley: "In response to Ericka's question (in the chat)- yes the community is encouraged to attend. It will be 6 pm in the evening."

**6:18 pm**

Tommie: "The Freedom fund made me so proud. Everybody did such a stellar job so that was so uplifting."

DP: "We are at \$55,000 - with one sponsor that we're waiting on we'll be over 60 grand. My thanks goes out to everyone involved. So inspired by the young people and can't say enough about Shirley's mentors in rope. They are our future and I see a future in them. And our job is just to continue to lift them up. I can't say enough about our VP's opening remarks and they were full of compassion and strength and truth to power and really pleased that Sabrina accepted that challenge. How we doing Helen? (on our guest's arrival)"

**6:21 pm**

Helen: "Sonya is here. I will do an intro. Senator Chang Diaz will speak. I will ask pre selected questions and then we can do an open Q&A. Please use raise hand feature.

Her video is a great way to introduce her. She is the first Latina and Asian america to be elected to the legislative body to the state of Massachusetts. Which is amazing and long overdue.

Sam Hyun, the political Director for the state Senator's campaign dropped this in the chat:

<https://www.soniachangdiaz.com/>

Kelan spent a few minutes trying get the video up.

**6:24 pm - 6:30 pm** video shown

**6:30 pm**

HM: "I am happy to welcome Senator Sonya Chang Diaz"

SCD: "Give it up for Kelan and Helen. Thank you for putting that up.

I still get a little emotional when I see that video.

I come to this work as a mom. As a former public school teacher in Lynne, MA

Leaders on Federal Hill have been asking working families to wait. We need to raise our voices together. Too much space within the haves and have nots. We still have too many people in our government - leaders in both parties- who are more concerned about holding on to power than to making change. Good change making can't happen alone. I hope you'll ask me your toughest questions and your heart's questions.

**6:39 pm**

HM: "Thank you. Please describe 2 pieces of your priority legislation and be as specific as possible"

SCD: "I love to geek out in the weeds

- 1) Education - early education and higher end spectrum. Both ends are becoming catering to the privilege. Universal early education access.
- 2) Green New Deal -

Specific legislation to address racial inequity- education is ground zero for where inequity takes root . . . .Cannabis social equity bill . . . . A lot of work in criminal justice system

**6:44 pm**

HM: "What amendments would you make to the recently passed police reform bill?"

**6:45 pm**

SCD: "We in the senate fought hard for qualified immunity - and it was hard to lose so that would be my first. . . . Right now you can't sue for a violation of civil rights. . . . Recidivism rates in the Black community. . . "

**6:47 pm**

SCD: "To make sure there will be mechanisms in the law so that as we see the population go down, the trend line for how much money we are spending is going in the opposite direction. We need to pull those savings out of the carceral system and reinvest them into those communities that are getting over policed and get it back into a virtuous cycle.

There's no one silver bullet here. We have to expand supply. We need more steady funding stream. The Hero Act - which would increase the deeds excise transfer tax. Split between housing and climate. . . Transportation policy has to be a huge piece of the puzzle. We can't solve housing without transit."

**6:50 pm**

HM: We have ten minutes so it's' going to be Rapid fire

Michelle Lopez: "Will you plan to pass the act to allow immigrant to get drivers license no matter status?"

SCD: "Hell yes."

**6:51 pm**

Cheryl and or Henry Rose:

"How to confront the power you mention?"

**6:53 pm**

SCD: "I wouldn't be running if I didn't think that it was an answer. A lot of what we need in Beacon Hill is culture change. One more thing- its not just one person- its about deep coalition building."

**6:54 pm**

Al Blake: "What's your position on the fair share amendment?"

**6:55 pm**

SCD: "Support it. Stomping for it. We need to do a constitutional amendment in order to change tax rates."

**6:56 pm**

Kelan: "Hi Senator. So I think that all of us here know that Massachusetts loves our record on things. LGBTQ- what's your commitment to this?"

**6:57 pm**

SCD: "I cut my teeth on wheat looking for marriage equality. Thank you for calling this up I'm proud to lead on transgender equal rights. . This was not a forgone conclusion back in 2011. We still couldn't get it in public accommodations- it took another 5 years.

**6:58 pm**

Frank Farkas:

“Do you support the solution as Medicare for all to Massachusetts?”

**6:59 pm**

SCD: “I do.”

HM:

Thank you so much for being here.

<https://act.soniachangdiaz.com/a/delegate>

Email us at [hello@soniachangdiaz.com](mailto:hello@soniachangdiaz.com)

**7:00 pm**

DP: Thank you Helen that was wonderful

**7:01 pm**

Treasurer’s Report from Marcus please

**7:01 pm**

Marcus shared screen

1/27/2022 EC

As of today, we have \$55,000 and change - with one big donation outstanding  
Execute freedom awards.

**7:06 pm**

EC we accepted the treasurer’s report at this meeting.

Thank you Marcus

Jeff turner shared this in the chat:

The Pittsfield Democratic caucus will be Sunday, February 27 at 1 pm.

**7:06 pm**

Communications Chair Darcie and Kate

**7:07 pm**

Kate Hocker: please reach out if you have a story, event or information to share

We are meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. Anyone is welcome to join us

We are also refreshing the bimonthly newsletter.

**7:09 pm**

Darcie- I’m refreshing a survey- explaining what some of our committees do.

**7:10 pm**

Education chair: Frances

**7:11 pm**

Frances: "We'll be meeting again on the 18th of this month. We had a guest speaker from Reid middle school- a teacher who is 1 of 40 teachers in the US. who is looking at the 1619 program. We thought that we would ask each school district what they are doing with DEI or with their curriculums. This month WEB DuBois middle school principal will be presenting to us."

**7:13 pm**

DP: AJ not present

Ericka

Caroline Kelley put this in the chat.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Us3Vv-C-HxU>

**7:16 pm**

Rebecca: "Hopes to put Freedom fund on website"

**7:17 pm**

Kamaar: housing chair

Not much on updates. But as a committee we are going to try to give our branch more of a time to respond to calls to action

Has been working under the leadership of Dr. Jones Sneed. Case study of redlining in the West Side. There was a homeowners loan corporation office est. 1930s. There was a pattern of single family home owners utilizing that status to essentially enforce exclusionary zoning. We came to the conclusion that the west side area was redline. We have to look into more detail

**7:23 pm**

Frances: "Thanks to Kamaar for mentioning the study. We can provide our link to the primer on our naacp website"

**7:25 pm**

DP: Environmental committee still needs a co-chair

**7:27 pm**

Thasia:

"February also means birthday of WEB DuBois. Towns legacy festival is organizing its 5th annual 21-23 . The sacred journeying of Dr. WEB DuBois- native son and global intellectual . Lots of events to look out for.

10x 10 taking place in Pittsfield that same time frame.

Jacob's Pillow is hosting a West African dance and drum workshop, all are invited."

**7:30 pm**

DP: as we celebrate it would be nice for you to participate in all that you can. We are really looking forward to this.

Dr. Frances Jones Sneed gave a presentation on Elizabeth Freeman on the same night as our EC meeting. But that's still available. And I really encourage everyone to check it out. It is absolutely wonderful.

**7:32 pm**

New Business;

They are doing a parade- we need to decide if we are going to participate. Also there is a grant that they just sent out for people who want to do the reading of Frederick Douglas. The EC decided that we are going to be writing an op ed regarding the Elizabeth Freeman project.

**7:36 pm**

Tricia Farley Bouvier- to support the Work and Family Mobility Act

**7:38 pm**

Erica: Has anyone an update on JFS?

Al Blake: "2 kids are at Morningside school and are doing well"

**7:42 pm**

Erica motion to adjourn

Linda second

All in favor

\*As recorded by Marisa Massery