

African American Advisory Council Minutes

Tracy Marshall, Chairperson
Keith Smith, Vice-Chairperson
August 30, 2019

ATTENDEES:

Robin Albritton
James Bracey
Tanya Carriere
Fayette Coleman-Gill
Angela Hassell
Renee Heard
Tracy Marshall
Keith D. Smith
Lori Welcher-Evans

Phone Participant

Carole Freeman

Excused Members

Shirley Barsh
Jacque Johnson
Veronica Mattison
Jere Murry

The meeting was officially called to order by Chairperson, Tracy Marshall at 9:15am.

ORDER OF MEETING:

REVIEW OF MINUTES:

The minutes for May were reviewed. It was moved by Robin and second by Fayette that the minutes be accepted pending corrections made. There was one abstention.

CHAIRPERSON REPORT:

Tracy Marshall gave the Chairperson's report and stated the following:

- Council members downstate and/or outside of Cook County can't travel or aren't willing to travel to meetings so it was proposed that members outside of Cook commit to traveling at least quarterly. Tracy also proposed to move the meeting up to begin an hour early, at 9:00am and a discussion was held.

- Angela Hassell stated that it would be difficult to make it to a 9:00am meeting when traveling from downstate. Tracy discussed that there has been very low participation as it relates to attending council meetings from members. After much discussion, it was determined that future meetings will remain at 10:00am.
- The by-laws may be changed to reflect that council members outside of Cook will attend meetings on a quarterly basis.
- There was a conversation with Robin regarding 3 vacant slots on the council. It is being proposed that the council do some outreach where we go around to recruit new members. Membership or a subcommittee under membership is needed to pull together council documents and rally and speak with staff about the purpose and the mission of the council. Fayette suggested that the AAAC should have a table during the resource fairs that are held throughout the various sites and market the council to recruit members. Angela suggested a video/commercial that would show the mission, as well as recruit; and action teams and transformation teams can be included.
- The council is trying to be more innovative. Carole suggested listing facts about the AAAC on the Dnet. Angela volunteered to list facts during the month of February which is Black History month, as she has an idea on how to move this forward.

NEWSLETTER:

Tracy will reach out to Michelle to ascertain if she would like to remain the chair of this committee considering her current position in DCP. Tracy commended Quincy on doing a good job with securing the write-ups from this year's conference and how someone is needed to type the notes. Employee, Patruska Thigpen was suggested as a person who would like to take on a more active role with the Department. It was suggested that she can assist/work on the newsletter, and can write very well. The council will also reach out to Patricia Morris at the Emerald office. The council will also reach out to Donna Gordon. Keith agreed to step up and chair the newsletter committee if Michelle is unable to continue as the chair. Tracy emphasized that she would like for the committee to get a newsletter out within the next 30 days. It was also emphasized that anyone on the council can submit articles for the newsletter.

AFRICAN AMERICAN SERVICES:

Shawn Eddings is the council's new Chief of African American Services. Tracy and Shawn met briefly. Shawn was unavailable to attend today's meeting; however, she has been given a schedule of all future council meetings.

TRAINING COMMITTEE:

No report.

STATUS REPORT-HOST FAMILIES/CARE PACKAGES:

The student that is supported by the council continues to attend Tennessee State University. The student stated that her summer could have been better. She didn't get the internship that she wanted. This is supposed to be the student's last year. The student was expected to follow-up with some dental work, however, she has not followed-up with dental or medical because she didn't have a medical card in her possession. Carole is awaiting the student's updated address. Council members names were mentioned during the meeting in terms of who was expected to provide support over the next 3 months

MEMBERSHIP:

Robin reported that community outreach will be done within all 4 regions to recruit new council members. Robin further related that lots of inquiries have been received, but there has been a lack of follow-up once those individuals receive what the expectations are. Robin stated that there are no new inquiries at this point and the committee will meet the week after the Holiday to finalize the by-laws.

LEGISLATIVE:

No report. This agenda item was tabled.

REAL TALK:

Carole reported that the council partnered with both Central and Cook regions for their Youth Summits. Staff and youth were very receptive, and both speakers presented very well. Carole suggested that the council wait to see if we will proceed next year due to the changes that are going on within the Department. Carole proposed that the committee begin in September discussing the Real Talk event, and suggested that there be a sub-committee in each region. Tracy proposed that the council partner with both Northern and Southern region next year. Keith agreed to take the lead for the Northern region. Carole submitted an article on the Real Talk event. It was suggested that the council check into recruiting other staff in regions to help the council with the event. Tracy gave kudos to Carole for all her hard work on the partnership with the Youth Summits.

JOINT COUNCIL REPORT:

The joint council meeting will take place today at 12:00pm at 1911 S. Indiana in conference room 1015/1016. The Asian American Council is hosting the meeting. The African American Council is responsible for recording the minutes during the meeting.

CONFERENCE:

- The conference was great and very informational and Quincy sent a text and said that he is doing good. Quincy was serious about his job and wanted things to flow.
- Tracy is getting a lot of calls regarding the books.
- Tracy will send an email to Brooke regarding feedback that was received.
- Ushers are for the conference in the future to assist with giving directions regarding the workshop (Floater).
- The venue where the conference was held will be charging the council for the conference.
- The council will be looking for other space to hold the conference. The council does not have a location for next year's conference.
- Look at the Dnet for the agreement between city colleges of Chicago for facility rentals.
- Everything ran smooth, and there may be about 226 people that will receive a book. It should be noted that several people were just sitting around and not attending any workshops.
- Hospitality Committee was thanked for their hard work and for doing a wonderful job with the vendors.

BUSINESS UPDATES:

NEW BUSINESS:

- Lori convened the Sub-Committee Disrupted Placement/Youth in Office meeting on 5-17-19 and 8-14-19. The goal of this Sub-Committee was to put together a position paper with a primary focus on youth who are displaced, and how the Department can better manage the youth while caseworkers are looking for a placement. James was placed on a committee by the Regional Administrator whereby similar work is being done. The placement workgroup that James is currently a member of, meets every Monday from 11:00am until 12:00pm. Tanya reported that the placement workgroup is attempting to figure out how many youths are sleeping overnight in the office when placement is needed.
- It was recommended that every office should be challenged to develop a safe space while workers are searching for placements.

- It was also recommended proposing a transition plan for the Department, as people are coming and going and no one knows who does what.

The meeting was officially adjourned at 12:10pm.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place September 19, 2019 in Central region.

Submitted by:

Lori Welcher-Evans, Secretary