

District of Columbia Commission on African-American Affairs

October 28, 2013 – 4:00pm
1100 4th Street SW, Room 4302
Meeting Notes

Commissioners in Attendance

Name	Designation	Name	Designation
Lydia Sermons	Voting Member	Rev. Anthony Motley	Voting Member
Kelly Navies	Voting Member	Charles Evans	Voting Member
Dr. Ka'mal Mcclarin	Voting Member	Charles Hicks	Voting Member
Absalom Jordan	Voting Member	Dr. Clarence Lusane	Voting Member
Dianne Dale	Voting Member	Nikol Nabors-Jackson	Ex Officio Member
Dr. Maurice Jackson	Chair/Voting Member	Rabbiah Sabbakhan	Ex Officio Member
Dr. Jesse Bemley	Voting Member	Burnell Holland III	Ex Officio Member
Patsy Fletcher	Voting Member		

There were 15 total members in attendance (12 voting members & 3 ex officio members)

Commissioners Absent from the Meeting

Name	Designation	Name	Designation
Rev Raymond Massenburg	Voting Member	Chief Kenneth Ellerbe	Ex Officio Member
Brian Roberts	Voting Member	Jesus Aguirre	Ex Officio Member
Carlton Terry	Voting Member	Michael Kelly	Ex Officio Member
Dr. John Franklin	Voting Member	Rahsaan Coefield	Ex Officio Member
William Howland	Ex Officio Member	Inspector David Taylor	Ex Officio Member
Dr. Saul Levin	Ex Officio Member		

The meeting was called to order at 4:18pm.

Chairman Jackson Proposed a Rough Agenda for the Meeting:

1. Review of the minutes from the first Commission meeting held on September 23, 2013.
2. Briefing of Chairman Jackson's attendance at the meeting with all other District of Columbia Commission Chairs
3. Review Proposal of Committee Structures & Discussion
4. Conversation about the name of the Washington Redskins
5. Agenda setting for the next meeting and Wrap Up

*A member proposed also including a conversation about rule making and general commission protocol.

1. Review of the minutes from the first Commission meeting held on September 23, 2013.

- Chairman Jackson read from meeting notes and reviewed some of the main topics of discussion that were covered during the last meeting. The topics include:
 - The limited resources available to the Commission. Specifically, that there is no staff and no budget; and
 - We will have to creatively work together to taking care of all of our deliverables, projects, reports, etc.
 - Discussion of possible committee structures; and
 - All members were urged to re-reread the legislation that formed the committee.
- There was a motion at 4:31pm to adopt the agenda from the last meeting. The motion was seconded and subsequently passed.

4:32pm Chairman Jackson asked for volunteers to serve as secretary for the meeting. Mr. Holland agreed to take notes.

2. Briefing of Chairman Jackson's attendance at the meeting with all other District of Columbia Commission Chairs. The meeting included:

- An overview of Roberts Rules of Order
- General protocol for taking meeting notes
- Overall expectations for commission and associated staff
- Additional context or information is available from Chairman Jackson upon request

3. Review Proposal of Committee Structures & Discussion

- Dr. Clarence Lusane presented a proposal titled, DC 2025, modeled after the United National Millennium Development Goals. The plan identified six major economic and social areas (and affiliated sub-categories) that the Commission could research and then set desired targets to reach by the year 2025.
- The six areas identified were Education, Criminal Justice, Poverty Reduction, Health Care, Housing, and Employment; there was also brief discussion about the a possible one-day seminar/symposium that would allow for the discussion on the progress of these items
- Dr. Lusane provided copies of his proposal to each member of the commission (a scanned copy will also be provided as an attachment to these meeting notes).

4:38pm – Motion to propose discussion Dr. Lusane’s memo as the committee structure (with a provision for edits). Seconded and passed.

Discussion of the Proposal

- Member question: What do you define as cultural issues?
 - There were concerns about the body getting too wrapped up in items that involve cultural issues.
 - Doesn’t want us to simply collect data that identifies where black people are. We need to discuss possible root causes of issues as well.
 - There was also a concern to make sure the Commission confronted the issue of racism as well
 - Chairman Jackson encouraged that those types of conversation will not be excluded, that we will get to the point where we are making statements.

- The group continued the discussion about committee structure. Some of the suggestions included the following:
 - History and Culture
 - Faith
 - Community/Religious
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Gentrification
 - Housing
 - Poverty Reduction
 - Health Care
 - Criminal Justice

- There was also discussion around:
 - Incorporating poverty reduction and employment into the same committee
 - A way to incorporate challenges facing the faith community
 - Decline of the African American Community as an individual committee
 - Members contended that the “Decline of African American Community” should be an overarching topic in all subcommittee work insofar as it is included in the legislation that established the Commission.

- Member suggestion: The Commission should focus two overarching objectives:
 - a. Address present day conditions, and make recommendations to stave off these issues/problems
 - b. Seriously analyze the removal of our people from the community. We must look at the reasons for the decline.

- There was concern about the ability of the Commission to function properly with an abundance of committees and the need to consolidate some of them.
- Two members suggested that the four committees that were included in the minutes from the first meeting could fulfill the needs of the committee.
- The Chair proposed utilize five committees as follows: Education, Criminal Justice, Health Care, Housing/Gentrification, and Poverty Reduction/Employment/Economic Development.

After gaining consensus around these five committees, members sign up accordingly:

Education	Criminal Justice	Health Care
Kelly Navies Dianne Dale Jesse Bemley Rev. Anthony Motley Charles Evans Burnell Holland III Charles Hicks	Clarence Lusane Absalom Jordan Ka'mal McClarin	Kenneth Ellerbe Burnell Holland III Charles Hicks

Housing and Gentrification (Shall also include examination of issues related to the faith community)	Poverty Reduction / Employment Economic Development
Patsy Fletcher Rabbiah Sabbakhan Rev. Motley Ka'mal McClarin	Maurice Jackson Absalom Jordan Nikol Nabors -Jackson Clarence Lusane

Members who are not present will be given an opportunity to join the established committees. If they do not express preference they will be assigned to fill the greatest need.

4. Conversation about the name of the Washington Redskins

- Chairman Jackson proposed a discussion around the idea of issuing a statement condemning the name of the Washington Redskins and members reflected on the impact of such an action.
- There were arguments both for and against issuing such a statement but there was also concern that it might not be the best course of action for the Commissions first order of business.

- One member inquired as whether the Commission has the authority to issues that kind of statement given our respective charge (Chairman Jackson agreed to do some further research).
- Another member stated that the Commission is charged with responsibility of examining the African American community but we also need to right wrongs. The first thing we discuss should be our committee structure and our charge that we've set forth for ourselves. The second point should be that racism, against any and all people, is unacceptable and should be eliminated wherever possible.

5:52pm – There was a motion to table the discussion on the Washington Redskins name. The motion was seconded and passed.

5. Agenda Setting for the Next Meeting and Wrap Up

- Chairman Jackson called for members to suggest items for the next agenda. There was consensus around the following items as the working agenda for the next meeting
 1. Mission Statement (What is our primary objective/"elevator pitch"?)
 2. Review of Rules and Related Documents from other City Commissions
 3. Begin Strategic Plan/Timeline Discussion (What will we do and when? – Annual Summits? Bi-Annual Hearings? Annual Written Reports?)
 4. How we will announce ourselves to the public? When?
- **The next meeting will be held on Monday, November 25, 2013** at the Martin Luther King Library (901 G St NW,). The meeting will begin at 4pm.

6:02pm – Meeting adjourned

Follow Up/Action Items:

1. Secure Rules and Related Documents from other Committees
2. Determine whether we can we raise money?
3. Begin to explore possible letterhead/communications options
4. Further research to be conducted on the types of statements and proclamations that the Commission is authorized to issue.

Commission on African American Affairs Meeting

December 16, 2013

Meeting called to order at 4:15 PM (18 present and counting)

1. Adoption of minutes from last meeting
2. Review of agenda for this meeting

3. Discussion of Rules that we will accept/discussion of election of Secretary
Schedule –meet once a month
Quorum : at least 9 is a third for meeting, for voting we need a majority of voting members
We will adopt the same basic rules as in the Asian Pacific example
Meeting structure

4. 2025 Plan revised
Overview by Lusane of Timetable
Link to neighborhoodinfodc and other link in Maurice Jackson email for information
Discussion: Where is Racism? In this proposed structure....
2025 is arbitrary year
Mission statement of commission and sub-committees would address racism
Mayor said project goes to 2030

Addition of Election Forum in March to Timetable (invite mayoral candidates)

[side discussion of forum, suggested that we bring questions to forum for candidates to address, each committee would raise issues of concern-possibly in the Great Hall of MLK]

Voters Guide-reflecting African American concerns

Perhaps have it covered by African American Press rather than published by us

Aired by WPFW or print sponsor, DCTV, or some other media forum,

Is this the best way to introduce ourselves to the Public?

It was moved and seconded to move ahead with Forum

Discussion followed (structure

How do we get a weblink through dc.gov for the Commission? (Octo)

We need data to support our mission?

The forum does not have to be the only way we are introduced to public

Vote: Affirmed that we will move forward with Forum Proposal to have an electoral forum in March, one abstention, with caveat that committee will report back with details

John Franklin

Solomon Northrop held , no historical markers, on FAA land 7th and Maryland,

Raising the issue for commission to consider

Lack of historical signage throughout city related to Af Americans

Clarify who controls the space used to display signs

Franklin, Hicks, and Fletcher will explore this issue further and report back to commission in January

(no markers on White House, although there are markers on Capitol Building-White House visitors center?)

Move to meet in subcommittees

5:15

Clarification of subcommittees

Monthly Meeting Notes

Monday, January 27, 2014 - 4:00pm

MLK Library, 901 G St NW

Commissioners/Guest Speakers in Attendance

Name	Designation	Name	Designation
Dr. Maurice Jackson	Chair/Voting Member	Burnell Holland III	Ex Officio Member
Kelly Navies	Voting Member	Chief Kenneth Ellerbe	Ex Officio Member
Rev. Raymond Massenburg	Voting Member	Rabbiah Sabbakhan	Ex Officio Member
Carlton Terry	Voting Member	Patsy Fletcher	Voting Member
Dianne Dale	Voting Member	Dr. John Franklin	Voting Member
Lydia Sermons	Voting Member	Charles Evans	Voting Member
Charles Hicks	Voting Member	Rev. Anthony Motley	Voting Member
Dr. Clarence Lusane	Voting Member	Darryl Gorman	Guest -Bd of Comm

There were 15 total members in attendance (12 voting members & 3 ex officio members)

Commissioners Absent from the Meeting

Name	Designation	Name	Designation
Michael Kelly	Ex Officio Member	Rahsaan Coefield	Ex Officio Member
Brian Roberts	Voting Member	Jesus Aguirre	Ex Officio Member
William Howland	Ex Officio Member	Inspector David Taylor	Ex Officio Member
Dr. Saul Levin	Ex Officio Member	Nikol Nabors-Jackson	Ex Officio Member

Dr. Ka'mal McClarin	Voting Member	Dr. Jesse Bemley	Voting Member
Absalom Jordan	Voting Member		

The meeting was called to order 4:19pm

Commission Meeting Agenda

1. Adoption of Minutes (attached)
2. Mayoral Forum Committee Report
3. Housing and Gentrification Committee Report
4. Discussion on Mission Statement (attached)
5. Initial Discussion of Rules (**Draft was mailed in December**).

1. Adoption of Minutes (attached)

- There was no discussion on the item
- Minutes of the December 16, 2013 meeting were adopted at 4:21pm

2. Mayoral Forum Committee Report & Guest Speaker (Darryl Gorman)

- Dr. Jackson introduced the item and informed the Commission that Darryl Gorman, Director of the Mayor's Office of Boards and Commissions, was invited to come to the meeting .
- Mr. Gorman spoke with the Commission in reference to the proposed plan to host a mayoral candidate forum.
 - Expressed concerns about whether the planning of a Mayoral candidate forum brings questions about the statutory focus of the Commission.
 - Also informed the Commission that members are essentially equivalent to District Government Employees.
 - He also shared some guidance and reference materials on the DC Hatch Act, a local law that outlines permitted and prohibited political activities for D.C. Government Employees. (Handout Attached)
 - Believes we are safer sticking directly to the statute that formed the Commission.
 - Suggested contacting the Board of Ethics and Government Accountability to get a formal answer on whether conducting the forum would be legal
- *Discussion*
 - Commissioners provided Mr. Gorman with an overview of the vision for the forum as being one that is strictly informational and focused on the wellbeing of African American's in Washington, DC.
 - Commission also stressed that the scope of the event never included an attempt to endorse or support a particular candidate - only to spread information.
 - The forum was established to hear what candidates and those seeking high office planned to do to address some of the items in the Commission Charter
 - Commissioners stressed the need to make sure we have a balance of opinions and information that will help us craft substantive advice for the Mayor

and/or DC Council. The Mayoral forum was seen as a way to address that need.

- Mr. Gorman referenced the Mayor’s willingness to attend a meeting and wants to make sure that the outcome of this Commission be something of substance.
- There was also guidance provided on the Open Meetings Act – we need to announce meetings and there should be space for public attendances and comments.
- **Additional Questions**
 - What have other Commissions with similar charters have done?
 - There haven’t been many reports issued from Commissions like ours that were of specific acclaim
 - How much have other Commission’s asked for?
 - Mr. Gorman directed us to the OCFO for reference
 - Are there restrictions on the Commission inviting staff & experts to our meetings?
 - No. In fact, it is encouraged.

3. Housing and Gentrification and the Faith Community Committee Report

- The Housing and Gentrification Committee provided a detailed report for the group (file attached to this message)
- There have requesting additional information on specific housing programs (broken down by race)
- Their research will be guided by a series of questions and topics including, but not limited to: What are the reasons for the departure of higher income African Americans? What’s the source of the proliferation of subprime mortgages in DC?
- There was also discussion and questions about how to analyze the challenges associated with keeping African American renters as well as individuals who do not own a home in the District of Columbia.
- Commission members also briefly discussed the importance of making sure faith community references and research was inclusive of all religions.

Agenda items pushed to next meeting (given the remaining time allotted)

- 4. Discussion of Mission Statement (Attached) and mailed in December.**
- 5. Initial Discussion of Rules (Draft was mailed in December).**

Other Items

New Subcommittee Sign Ups	Action Items for February Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lydia Sermons – Health Committee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request the Mayor’s presence on February 24th 2. Send a letter to the Mayor’s budget director requesting funding in FY15 (signage, operating budget request, staff) 3. Reach out to Tracy Hughes to learn more about Open Government requirements

Proposed Agenda for February Meeting:

- Discussion of the Mission Statement (proposed by Chairman Jackson)
- Initial Discussion of the Rules (Draft was mailed to the Commission)
- Report back from the Mayor's Office on the questions raised on budget, etc.
- Education Committee Report

6:16pm - Meeting Adjourned