



COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS (COAAA)

DECEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: December 18, 2019

Meeting Location: Frank D. Reeves Municipal Center
2000 14th Street NW, 2nd Floor Community Room

1. **Call to Order:** Commissioner Spencer Gopaul called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. Quorum was established. Quorum is established when there is a presence of one third of the Commissioners (voting and non-voting ex officio).

2. **Roll Call:**

Commissioners Present:

- Vivian Derryck, Public Member, Ward 4
- Spencer Gopaul, Public Member, Ward 5
- Delano Hunter, Ex-officio member, DPR, Ward 5
- Charles Jones, Ex-officio member, DOES, Ward 2
- Ryan Jones, Public Member, Ward 4
- Ronald King, Ex-officio member, DC Health, Ward 7
- Prentice Parrish, Public Member, Ward 5
- Kristin Shymoniak, Public Member, Ward 8
- Lauren Vaughan, Public Member, Ward 6

Commissioners Absent:

- Kimberly Jeffries Leonard, Public Member, Ward 4 (Chair)
- Salim Adofo, Public Member, Ward 8
- Niambi Carter, Public Member, Ward 5
- Akela Crawford, Public Member, Ward 7
- Anthony Diallo Ex-officio member, DCRA, Ward 7
- Kimberly Dickerson Ex-officio member, MPD, Ward 7
- Latasha Gunnels, Public Member, Ward 8
- Antwan Jones, Public Member, Ward 1
- Sondra Phillips Gilbert, Public Member, Ward 6
- Dorjan Short, Public Member, Ward 8
- Lolita Ratchford, Public Member, Ward 1

3. **Introductions:**

- Commission on African American Affairs (public members and government representatives)
- Mayor's Office on African American Affairs (Ashley Emerson, Executive Director and Lionell Gaines, Associate Director)

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4. **Review of November Meeting Minutes:** Commissioner Gopaul discussed these items:
 - Financially Fit DC Series Workshops
 - Communicating Across Cultures
 - MOAAA African American Community Grant
 - Black History Month / Kwanzaa
 - B23-0341, Perinatal Health Worker Training Access Act of 2019
 - Mayor Bowser's Housing Equity Report

5. **Office Update:** Executive Director Ashley Emerson discussed the following items
 - MOAAA closed out the Financially Fit DC Series Workshops for Fall 2019. The series will kick-off in February 2020 in Ward 4
 - FY 2020 African American Community Grant
 - Mayor Bowser's Housing Equity Report and the Comprehensive Plan Upcoming Engagement Initiatives
 - Black History Month 2020 Planning
 - Mayor Bowser's Holiday Celebration at the Wilson Building: the Kwanzaa Celebration was led by Baba Melvin Deal
 - #KwanzaaDC Social Media Campaign and Events

6. **Commission New Business:** The Commission made the following recommendations
 - Commissioner Kristin Shymoniak proposed that MOAAA and the Commission educate the African American community about Cervical Cancer Awareness Month and have screenings for residents
 - ACTION ITEM: Cervical Cancer Awareness Month; provide screenings, educational workshop, and mobile van for residents during MLK Day Parade

 - Commissioner Ronald King: spoke about issues with housing specifically with seniors; during November meeting the topic was brought up about residents being harassed. He went to check the DC Legislative Information Management System for the legislation that dealt with the solicitation of residents
 - ACTION ITEM: The Commission recommended was that Mayor Bowser draft legislation to the DC Council to prevent the harassment of vulnerable seniors and property ownership

7. **Open Discussion:** Residents raised the following issues and discussed the following items:
 - DCPS test scores, national and local standards
 - What is the truancy rate for DCPS?
 - ACTION ITEM: MOAAA will ask DCPS for the truancy rate and provide at next commission meeting.

 - What is being done to incentivize or recruit Black male teachers?

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- Youth voter engagement / career development. Encouraging youth to get engaged in the political process, engage voters, and have an understanding the process / impeachment process
 - Residents suggested tours of the John A. Wilson Building for youth and DC residents
 - Residents asked to promote meetings and events on DC channels and the District Knowledge Network, especially for seniors
 - There were affordable housing concerns, housing policy questions, and concerns with how AMI requirements are set
 - Residents spoke about housing violation concerns and issues with property management companies
 - Landlord Tenant Court; residents need representation and understanding of housing laws
 - Director Emerson spoke about the Office of the Tenant Advocate and the resources that are available to residents experiencing housing issues
 - ACTION ITEM: MOAAA can coordinate housing workshops and provide information that helps residents with housing concerns
 - Residents should be provided information with housing advocate organizations, Landlord Tenant Court, Rapid Rehousing
 - Don't Mute DC, gentrification concerns, and affordable housing concerns
 - Go-Go becoming the official music of the District of Columbia
8. **Adjournment:** Commissioner Gopaul adjourned the meeting at 8:22 pm.