

# MICHIGAN CITY COMMISSION ON THE SOCIAL STATUS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES

JUNE 14<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 MEETING MINUTES - **REVISED**

PRESENT: Kenny Fly, Sr., Rodney McCormick, Stasi Benning, Linda Conley, Pastor Dennis Carroll, Walter “Tony” Cox, Pastor Dwayne Hurt, Pastor Robert Johnson, Mike “Anthony” Jones, Willie Milsap, W. Faye Moore

ABSENT: Sean Fitzpatrick

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fly at 12 pm.

Roll Call: Roll call was conducted. Attendance as above.

Reciting of pledge conducted.

Reading of Mission Statement: Stasi Benning

Approval of minutes. It was moved and seconded for approval by Commissioner McCormick and Commissioner Cox. Minutes approved.

Treasurer’s report. Motion to approve by Commissioner McCormick and seconded by Commissioner Cox. Report approved.

**New Business: It was moved by Commissioner McCormick to send notice to the controller’s office to pay out \$1000.00 to Cornell Branch IV, winner of the**

**Rev Bill Ashley Scholarship. Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Fly. Voted taken and passed. \$1000.00 to be awarded to Cornell Branch IV.**

Old Business: Face Book. Commissioner Fly reported that he had spoken with past Chairman Marty Corley regarding the password related to the Face Book account. Mr. Corley did not have the password. For the current board to have access and control of the Face Book page/account, it was moved by Commissioner Cox that the current page be deleted and create a new page.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Johnson.

Commissioner Fly will contact Mr. Corley. Commissioner McCormick motioned that a committee of 3-4 members is formed to create a new Face Book page and Commissioner Moore to head. Motion passed.

Commissioners Hurt, McCormick, and Fly to work on the committee.

Committee Milsap inquired about an "ask letter" sent to the committee requesting contributions to the Commission. Commissioner McCormick volunteered to put the letter together with Commissioners Benning and Conley.

Commissioner McCormick moved to temporarily suspend the Rev Bill Scholarship due to a lack of finances. He explained that Social Status had been giving the scholarship since 2015 without reimbursement. The

motion was pulled due to the appearance of Rev David Ashley. Rev Ashley was invited by Commissioner Conley to explain how the scholarship funding was established. Rev Ashley explained that the Social Status in conjunction with the NAACP, it was noted that the state of the Black youth in Laporte County was lacking and was 3<sup>rd</sup> from the bottom of the 92 counties. His church was not to fully fund the scholarship but would help in providing funding. The church did not start the fund. Commissioner Moore explained the scholarship fund was started by Social Status in 2015 and not the Northwest Ministerial. Commissioner Fly suggested Rev Ashley's church fully fund the scholarship. Rev Ashley replied that he would need to present the request to his church board. In the meantime, Social Status should suspend awarding the scholarship for 2023. Commissioner McCormick stated that he had spoken with Supt McCollum and no applications were issued. Commissioner McCormick moved to table the issue of the Rev Bill Ashley until Pastor Ashley get back with an update. Seconded by Commissioner Fly. All voted and the motion passed.

Sub-committee report update was presented by Social Factors Chairman Moore who submitted minutes from the committee meeting to each commissioner for review.

Commissioner Moore informed the Commission that the Social Status had sponsored an "African Garden" section at Friendship Gardens in 2015. She will contact the Garden board for an update on the project.

Employment Chairman Commissioner Milsap will attempt to reach out to Monique Thomas from LaPorte County Human Resource Dept to revisit and provide an update on hiring/jobs in the county.

Criminal Justice/Education Chairmen McCormick and Benning provided updates regarding the scholarship fund (see above notes) and the DuSable Museum field trip. Commissioner Benning reported that the trip is set to go. She will request money from the controller's office. Date is July 8<sup>th</sup> or July 15<sup>th</sup>. **Commissioner Cox made a motion for Commission Treasurer Benning to request \$2500.00 for field trip expenses for 20-25 youths. Motion seconded by Commissioner Fly. Motion passed. Commissioner Benning will request \$2500.00 from the controller for trip into Chicago.**

Commissioner Rev Robert Johnson will reach out to Ms Nila Williams of Franciscan Health to set up a diabetes workshop pertaining to African Americans.

Chairman Fly requested an agenda change allowing Public Comment and then Good of the Order. Moved by Commissioner McCormick and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Pastor Carroll. Motion approved and passed.

Tommy K of the community offered congrats to MCHS track members who qualified at the state track meet in Indianapolis. Congrats to high school and adult school graduates and happy holidays to all.

Good of the order: Commissioner Jones and Carroll offered prayers for the violence in the country, especially to the Florida children who lost their mother.

Commissioner Fly gave an update on Fly High Youth 3 on 3 will be at 11 am on 6/17 at Washington Park.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner McCormick, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Carroll. Passed. Meeting adjourned.

The next meeting is Wednesday, July 12, 2023, at 12 pm