

MICHIGAN CITY COMMISSION ON THE SOCIAL STATUS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES

JULY 12, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Call To Order: The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Rodney McCormick

Roll Call: Present: Rodney McCormick, Linda Conley, Stasi Benning, Walter Cox, Pastor Carroll, Pastor Dwayne Hurt, Willie Milsap, Faye Moore

Absent: Kenny Fly, Sr., Sean Fitzpatrick, Pastor Robert Johnson

Pledge

Mission Statement read by Commissioner Benning

Approval of June 13, 2023, minutes. Moved, seconded, and passed with the stipulation that correction be made regarding Rev BJ Ashley Scholarship in the amount of \$ 2000.00 be corrected to \$1000.00.

Treasurer Report: Moved, seconded, and passed to accept as there were no reported changes in balance. Commissioner Benning gave a fyi regarding that she was informed by the controller that the outstanding donation of \$250.00 to the Black History Month Committee had yet to be paid due to backlog in the department. Commissioner Benning stated that the delay in payment had no bearing on the balance as payment was previously deducted.

New Business: Motion by Commissioner McCormick to add Mission Statement to agenda to have readily available for reading. Motion seconded and carried.

Commissioner Fly stepped down as Commission Chair. Leaving a vacancy. Commissioner McCormick stated that per the commission's by-laws, the new chairman would be required to finish out the remaining term of the past chair. It was motioned, seconded, and passed that Commissioner McCormick would be the new chair. It was motioned by Commissioner Benning that the co-chair vacancy be filled by Commissioner Milsap. No other nominations. Motion seconded by Commissioner McCormick. Motion passed. Commissioner Willie Milsap was elected to the position of Vice Chair.

Old Business: Update on Facebook status. As passed in the last meeting, a new Facebook page was created. A group photo for the new page was taken by Kevin Harmon
Commissioner Benning gave an update regarding the field trip to DuSable Museum. The trip has been finalized and will take place on Saturday, July 15, 2023, with 5 chaperones and about 20-25 youths.

Sub-committees: Education: Chairman Hurt deferred to field trip report given by Commissioner Benning.

Health: No report

Employment: Chairman Milshap requested to have Monique Taylor, LaPorte County Human Resource speak at August meeting.

Criminal Justice: No report

Social Factor: Chairman Moore suggested that future guest speakers present early in sessions to avoid having to sit through entire meeting. Social Factor presented

guest speaker Dr. Rima Binder from Friendship Gardens. Dr. Binder spoke on the creation of the African Garden. The African Garden was the idea of former Commissioner Arthur Payne with the assistance of Commissioner Moore. Dr. Binder presented via slide show, the various plants and artwork in the garden. She informed the Commission that there was no official signage for the African Garden. Volunteers are needed to care for the garden, primarily watering. She would be willing to train community youths in the care of the garden. Commissioner McCormick suggested that the board be trained first and the board train youth volunteers. Dr. Binder stated that she would like to have next year's Juneteenth celebration held in the garden. Regarding the cost of the signs, Dr. Binder stated that the approximate cost is \$700.00 and the signs would have to comply with the current garden signs in place.

Public Comment: Tommy Kulavik spoke on looking forward to the field trip and upcoming 5th-year anniversary of the Pullman Carshop on July 13, 2023.

The car shop was located on what is now the site of the Lighthouse Outlet Mall. He thanked Commissioner McCormick for his work on maintaining the 15% standard in compliance with the 1978 ordinance pertaining to MCFD.

Commissioner Round Table: Commissioner Milsap thanked Chairman Fly for his work as Commissioner Chair.

Commissioner Moore remained all of the city-wide back-to-school rally on Saturday, July 29, 2023 and the need for volunteers. Commissioner McCormick suggested that all commissioners go to the International Friendship Garden in August. He also suggested that the commission support projects started by the commission. Commissioner Conley reported that Commissioner Fly had a fire at his home and was having health

problems and to keep him in prayer and reach out to be of any assistance.

Adjournment: Moved and seconded. Next meeting August 9th, 2023 at 12pm.