

SOUTH ORANGE/MAPLEWOOD COMMUNITY COALITION ON RACE
October 24, 2018 Meeting

Call to Order: Chair Robert A. Marchman called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM

Present: Carol Barry-Austin, Lee Boswell May, Abigail Cotler, Catherine Cronin, Tegan Culler, Deborah Davis Ford, Nancy Gagnier, Leila Gonzalez Sullivan, David Harris, Robert A. Marchman, and Rhea Mokund-Beck, Fred R. Profeta Jr., George Robinson, Audrey Rowe, Erin Scherzer, and Reynaldo Tapia.

Absent: Nina Essel, Stephanie Lawson-Muhammad,

Excused: Colleen Breslin, Walter Clarke, Dean Dafis, Kelly Quirk, Barbara Velazquez, and Meredith Sue Willis.

Minutes Approval: Fred Profeta Jr. raised the question of wording for Initiative I as adopted in the September Minutes and there was unanimous agreement that the phrase “value of inclusiveness to the well-being of the community” should be amended to read “value of inclusiveness as essential to the well-being of the community. Also, Erin Scherzer should be corrected as absent for September. Minutes were approved with one abstention.

Chair Report:

- Chairs offered kudos to the Schools Committee for a well-attended and well-run BOE Forum.
- Congratulations were also offered the Annual Dinner/Auction Committee for re-tooling and improving the product resulting in an overall good effort.
- Comments about what is ahead for us
 - Next year, the EC will focus on governance including meeting attendance, By Laws adherence and trustee responsibilities and accountability. Overall effort by trustees this year was much appreciated.
 - Continuing concern for where the nation is heading with violence and injustice on many fronts. We must be candid in calling out racism and support consequences for actions.
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Executive Director Report:

- Monthly financials were sent to trustees in advance and the floor was opened for questions. No questions were asked.
- ED also offered congratulations to the Schools Committee for well-crafted questions that spoke to the issues relevant in our community. We received 1000 engagements on Facebook to view the video of our event. We will be purchasing a tripod for future live streaming.
- She also thanked the annual dinner Committee and reported the following outcomes:
 - Current intake is \$36K with \$5K additional expected for total of \$41K compared to \$36K last year.
 - Expenses at \$10K are expected to be less than \$11K last year
 - Ticket sales and reservations were about the same as LY, and donations were down, but offset by an increase in table hosts/sponsorships.
 - Auction total was down \$900 with elimination of the silent auction.
 - All extra wine was purchased by trustees and friends of the Coalition.

- The gift card tree did not sell and cards are being held for next year or other options beneficial to the organization.
- Other comments from trustees included a request to hold the event later in the month of October next year, using Seton Hall as the venue and the continuing challenges with parking at the Woodland.
- The Coalition Annual Appeal list needs purging for residents no longer here and additions from new trustee. The Coalition has participated I Giving Tuesday in the past and will again this year.
- The Coalition's scheduled segment on *Here & Now* was pre-empted and will air this month with a 36 hr. notice to us from ABC.
- Budgets requests for both towns are under development. Service Level Agreement is drafted for Maplewood and final budget requests for 4th Q has been made to both towns.
- The provisional budgets that we are submitting reflect a 3% increase for general expense increase.

Program Director's Report:

- Trustees were directed to the full Program Highlights distributed earlier in the Trustee Packet with a reminder that details would be shared directly from the committees during Updates tonight.

2019 Committee Objectives & Updates

- *Schools Committee* Carol Barry-Austin
 - BOE Forum a success with surprising turnout. Some candidates were inconsistent from earlier positions and audience was pleased with having more time for questions. Trustees were reminded of the forum tomorrow at Seth Boyden with Integration consultant hired by the District. Question of whether the Coalition should challenge the candidates more and there was agreement that we should remind candidates to challenge each other.
 - Goals for 2019 carry over from 2018 are in strong alignment with the two initiatives.
- *Residential* Erin Scherzer
 - Minimal focus on 2019 to date, given challenges over the past 6-8 weeks with personal matters and the need for additional support of committee members and a co-chair.
 - Accomplishments include the Neighborhood Summit and Realtor Update with Dr. Ficarra.
 - Ideas for 2019 include Anti-Bias training for local businesses. Strategy would be to use ‘carrot’ and a “stick” approach giving recognition to participating businesses. A *Meet & Greet* with businesses would be a good way to kick this relationship off.
 - The business alliances and chambers are possible partners for these efforts.
 - Work with neighborhoods and community policing will continue with focus on the initiatives.
 - There was discussion on whether the business focus is best handled under Residential and Community Engagement with varying points of view expressed. There was agreement however that business does need to be a focus.

- *Marketing* Catherine Cronin
 - 2019 Marketing Research will continue with a quantitative focus on Initiative II by identifying factors that influence the trend of fewer Black in-movers locating in Maplewood and South Orange.
 - Goal is to collect actionable data to drive our marketing strategy. Marketing will also work with MERT and their demographic analysis.
 - Question was raised whether we should use academics and organizations like the Bloustein School at Rutgers University to guide our work. The ED commented that in conversations with researcher Myron Orfield, he noted that population growth patterns in SOMA are an anomaly, so there may not be additional information available.
 - It is possible to conduct both the academic (secondary research) and also use the primary research to guide our efforts.
- *Community Engagement* David Harris & Barbara Velazquez (excused)
 - 2019 Coffee House Conversations will continue focus on affinity groups including Asian residents, the School community and, SOMA Caribbean and SOMA youth.
 - 2019 MLK service will feature Lt. Governor, Sheila Oliver
 - Conversations on Race planning is still underway but will focus on the Initiatives.
 - Trustee Velazquez submitted 2019 Objectives and Budget for Civic Engagement Institute, MLK and Integration through the Arts (ITA).
 - Given the low participation for POC in local social action and other civic groups. 2019 will be a year of focus groups among the Black community to uncover barriers and develop plans to remove them
 - Similarly, developing plans to increase Black audience for acts productions and increase participation and support for the Black artist community.
 - Trustees Abby Cotler and Lee Boswell May expressed interest in assisting with this effort among Black artist and musicians at 1978 Arts Center and SOPAC.
- *MERT (Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Testing)* Leila Gonzalez Sullivan
 - 2019 Objective for Initiative II –Sustaining Integration will be supported by n update to the 2016 Demographic study and presentation.
 - 2019 Objective for Initiative I will focus on inclusion of POC in the local power structure and utilize data analysis to establish a baseline for current representation, identify gaps and set goals for local committees and governing bodies.
 - It was suggested that this work also include local PTAs and HSAs.
- *Finance and Development* Kelly Quirk (excuse)
 - The ED indicated that 2019 work will continue to focus on fundraising, events,, trustee pledges, grants generated by staff, conferences with potential funders, review of finances and solicitation of local sponsors with a package of opportunities developed early in 2019 (Jan./Feb).

Nominating Committee Report

George Robinson & Carol Barry-Austin

- A total of three candidates are currently in the process.
- Four candidates from South Orange were approached and two declined and a third candidate is from Maplewood.

- Statements of Interest for all candidates have been sent to trustees for review prior to the November vote. Candidates are Chris Mahoney (SO), John Kerner (SO) and Ed Stuart (M) (previous trustee).
- All will be interviewed in the next week or so.

Liaison Reports:

South Orange: Debra Davis Ford

- Kudos for a successful and fun Annual Dinner
Voting machine issues in South Orange and Maplewood will now receive a public hearing with Essex County Freeholders as agreed by the Freeholder President. There is \$10M available to 21 counties for replacement of old machines with certified ones that provide a paper trail. The goal is to have paper trail machines for the 2020 election.
- SO Board of Trustees is already anticipating a municipal tax increase for 2019 in light of the BOE bonding and other municipal needs like 125 year old water mains than require replacement. Governing bodies will be under pressure for financial frugality.

Maplewood

- Liaison excused

New Business/Announcements: NONE

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM

Next Meeting: **Thursday, November 15**, at 7:30 PM at Prospect Presbyterian Church, 646 Prospect St. Maplewood NJ. **WEEK CHANGE**

Submitted By: Audrey Rowe

Secretary: Carol Barry-Austin