

**SOUTH ORANGE/MAPLEWOOD COMMUNITY COALITION ON RACE  
December 20, 2018 Meeting**

**Call to Order:** Chair Robert A. Marchman called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM

**Present:** Carol Barry-Austin, Lee Boswell May, Abigail Cotler, Tegan Culler, Dean Dafis, Nancy Gagnier, Leila Gonzalez Sullivan, David Harris, Stephanie Lawson-Muhammad, Robert A. Marchman, Fred R. Profeta Jr., Kelly Quirk, George Robinson, Barbara Velazquez

**Absent:** Nina Essel, Rhea Mokund-Beck, Reynaldo Tapia

**Excused:** Colleen Breslin, Catherine Cronin, Walter Clarke, Deborah Davis Ford, Audrey Rowe Erin Scherzer, Meredith Sue Willis.

**Chair Welcome:** Robert welcomed the trustees to the Annual Meeting and thanked everyone for the hard work in 2018 through a difficult year. He thanked outgoing Executive Committee members David Harris and Erin Scherzer.

Robert and Nancy offered their heartfelt gratitude to retiring trustee George Robinson. George was a founding member of the Coalition and has worked continuously as a trustee, serving many terms on the Executive Committee. He has been counted on as good governance member, holding the board accountable to its bylaws, protocols, and procedures. George also has been instrumental in conducting research for the MERT Committee and finding innovative ways to assess the state of integration in SOMA. Other members of the board thanked George for his service on the board and his guidance on MERT and on bylaws as well.

Robert further reported that he attended the South Orange trustee meeting to read our statement about the Use of Force Report before the trustees and that he and Nancy will attend the Maplewood town committee meeting to do the same.

**ED Report:** Nancy briefly reviewed the Finance reports. She also reported that the 2018 appeal is complete and that we are awaiting returns in the coming ten days. She asked trustees to share the email blasts and Facebook posts regarding end of the year donations with their social media circles.

She announced that the Coalition is looking to work in partnership with SOMA Action and SOMA Justice to host a community forum on the Use of Force Report that will include a panel of professionals in the field to help us as we work to improve the situation in SOMA.

**Vote on Trustee Calendar:** Vote was moved by Robinson and seconded by Cotler. The 2019 calendar was unanimously approved, with one abstention.

**Vote on 2019 Budget:** Vote was moved by Robinson and seconded by Cotler. Budget was unanimously approved.

Election of Executive Committee for 2019: Carol and George described the committee's process for selecting an executive board. The slate meets the requirements of the bylaws and includes:

Robert A. Marchman, Chair  
Carol Barry-Austin, vice chair  
Catherine Cronin, vice chair  
Kelly Quirk, vice chair  
Ed Stuart, vice chair

The committee distributed ballots which were filled out by each member in attendance and then counted by the committee. The slate was unanimously approved.

**Liaison Reports:**

**Maplewood**

Dean Dafis reported that Maplewood Township would be holding a community forum on the Use of Force report. The focus is to be on youth and the community. They are trying to get the NJ Attorney General to attend.

Dean also reported that the Police Community Board is full except for the youth position. They are actively seeking a member to fill this role. Stephanie Lawson Muhammad suggested that South Orange set up a board like this.

Dean noted that Maplewood has complete its assessment of its affordable housing requirements and understands and will work to meet all of its obligations through 2025. He sent the report to the MERT committee.

**BOE**

Stephanie Lawson Muhammad reported out on the conference hosted by Building One America on segregation on New Jersey schools. They are working with other grassroots organizations to develop best practices, share models, and to follow the lawsuit to force the state to desegregate the schools. She will share the report from the conference. Stephanie noted that through the work of the Coalition, SOMA is considered a model and that we can do more advocacy and to be part of the conversation in other communities as they become more diverse.

**New Business/Announcements:** Carol Barry-Austin announced the SOCO MLK Celebration on Sunday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, at 3 pm. They are honoring Dean Dafis, Diane Grant, and Stacey Borden.

Robert announced former Coalition trustee Clyde Otis' appointment as the judge in Maplewood.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, January 24, at 7:30 PM at Prospect Presbyterian Church, 646 Prospect St. Maplewood NJ.

**Submitted By:** Nancy Gagnier

**Secretary:** Carol Barry-Austin