

**SOUTH ORANGE/MAPLEWOOD COMMUNITY COALITION ON RACE**  
**April 25, 2019 Meeting**

**Call to Order:** Kelly Quirk called the meeting to order at 7:40 PM

**Present:** Carol Barry-Austin, Lee Boswell May Abigail Cotler, Catherine Cronin Tegan Culler, Nancy Gagnier, Leila Gonzalez Sullivan, David Harris, Kristen Mahoney, Ed Stuart, Barbara Velazquez, Reynaldo Tapia, Meredith Sue Willis

**Absent:** Nina Essel, Stephanie Lawson-Muhammad, Rhea Mokund-Beck Colleen Breslin, Dean Dafis, Deborah Davis Ford,

**Excused:** John Kerner, Fred R. Profeta Jr., Robert A. Marchman, Audrey Rowe, Erin Scherzer

**Minutes Approval:**

- Motion to approve the March 2019 Trustee Minutes was made by Leila Gonzalez Sullivan with a second by Meredith Sue Willis. Catherine Cronin abstained; all others approved.

**ED Report:**

- **Financial Review:** all materials submitted to accountant. We are many months ahead of where we were the last 3 years.
- **Financial reports:** we continue to be in a comfortable financial position and are in the red to a smaller degree than in past years at this point in the fiscal year. Nancy will submit requests for municipal funding in May.
- **Donation announcement:** Nancy, with David's permission, announced that he made a generous donation of \$9560 to the Coalition. Many thanks were expressed.
- **Spring Appeal:** letters will go out to about 1000 people. Half are being mailed to newer prospects and lapsed donors by the mail house. The other half are on trustees' lists or are current, active donors who did not donate to the end of the year appeal. Nancy will let trustees know when she needs them to sign those letters.
- **The Demographics Report** update will be presented on June 12<sup>th</sup> at the SO Public Library. Leila Gonzalez Sullivan noted that we would rehearse to keep the presentation tight, given that there are nearly 50 slides. This year's report includes updates to the schools section, a new section on affordable housing, and updates on neighborhood integration. We will invite town and school leaders. After then, the committee will see what other groups would like presentations. C. Barry-Austin suggested presenting the Schools portion to the Supt. and district administrators at one of their weekly meetings.
- **Nationbuilder:** all donor information is now in the system. Lorry is also now entering new contacts from recent events into Nationbuilder. We are working out some issues with volunteer records. Pierre Gagnier has yet to migrate donation information.
- **Meeting with Maplewood Tennis Club:** Nancy met with leaders who are trying to diversify their membership. They were pleased with the conversation and suggestions.
- Nancy asked trustees to take a look at the Transforming White Privilege Training. She will be ordering the training for the trustees to use with the intention of creating a future community series for small groups.
- **Meeting with BOE President Annemarie Maini:** Robert and Nancy met with her to discuss our liaison relationships with the BOE and meeting the new superintendent. Annemarie said that the BOE has discussed ending all their community liaison appointments. She suggested that we continue to work directly with the superintendent and other district admins on our goals, projects, and collaborations. We asked if we could request periodic (possibly quarterly) updates from a BOE member who would attend a trustee meeting. She agreed that this could be a good approach.

- **SOMA Caribbean Festival:** Elsie Bernier has asked for sponsorship of this effort. Festival is June 22<sup>nd</sup>. We agreed to support through promoting and hosting an activity table. Trustees agreed we should do the same for other groups like SOMA Latinos which hosts the Hola Fest, and at the NJ Pride Fest.

### **Committee & Program Updates**

**Marketing:** Catherine Cronin reported that the video project is moving forward and will be used on multiple social media channels to promote the towns to targeted groups. The presentation on the marketing survey will happen at the May board meeting. Members of the team are also working on the history of the Coalition and integration on the towns.

**Schools:** Sue Willis reminded the trustees about the SOMA TV Education Roundtable programs and noted that the one focused on Talking to Children about Race has been rescheduled. Carol Barry-Austin announced that the school district held the Diversity Job Fair that the committee advocated for. The Schools Committee co-chairs are looking forward to meeting with the new superintendent and to sharing information about their work on excellence and equity in the district.

**MERT:** Leila Gonzalez Sullivan said that the trustees' edits were made to the Demographics report.

**Residential:** Leila called the trustees' attention to a Star Ledger editorial on affordable housing and its effect on schools and overcrowding.

**Conversations on Race:** Tegan Culler and David Harris shared information about Dr. Painter. Table questions for the event were developed with Dr. Painter. David noted that there would be both a book signing reception after the event and small reception for Dr. Painter before the event. Seton Hall University through Rev. Pritchett has been an excellent partner: they are sharing the cost for Dr. Painter, providing the space, ordering her books, and providing the shuttle. The team made a request for facilitators. Facilitators will receive training.

**Civic Engagement Institute:** Barbara Velazquez said that the team decided to survey the community to find out how to better serve civic engagement needs in SOMA. The survey results are intended to guide the committee's programming and outreach.

### **Discussion: Letter to the Governor and the NJ Education Commissioner on the NJ School Ethics Commission**

The trustees reviewed the letter and the intent. The general consensus was that the letter is in line with our integration and inclusion mission and that the few local voices that questioned the letter did not present credible points. David Harris noted that there should be some follow up with the governor. We should maintain our position against the Ethics Commission as currently constituted.

**Liaison Reports:** No liaisons were in attendance.

### **New Business/Announcements:**

- Kelly Quirk announced that SOMA Action published responses from South Orange candidates for office on their Facebook page. There is an extensive list of topics and answers for those looking to learn more about the candidates.

**Adjournment:** Move to adjourn by David Harris and seconded by Barbara Velazquez. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM

**Next Meeting:** Thurs. May 23rd, 7:30 PM, Prospect Church, 646 Prospect St. Maplewood NJ.

**Submitted By:** Nancy Gagnier

**Secretary:** Carol Barry-Austin