

SOUTH ORANGE/MAPLEWOOD COMMUNITY COALITION ON RACE
September 26, 2019 Meeting

Call to Order: Vice Chair Kelly Quirk called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM

Present: Carol Barry-Austin, Lee Boswell May, Abigail Cotler, Catherine Cronin, Tegan Culler, Nancy Gagnier, Leila Gonzalez Sullivan, Summer Jones, John Kerner, Kristin Mahoney, Robert A. Marchman (By phone), Kelly Quirk, Audrey Rowe, Ed Stuart, and Barbara Velazquez

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

Excused: Colleen Breslin, Dean Dafis, David Harris, Fred R. Profeta Jr., and Sue Willis

Minutes Approval:

- Motion to approve the August 2019 Trustee Minutes was made by Leila Gonzalez Sullivan with a second by Lee Boswell May. Minutes were approved with four abstentions.

Chair Report: Chair Marchman was in transit and joined the meeting later by phone.

ED Report:

Financials: The ED directed trustees to the September financial reports sent earlier and indicated that the organization is in good position.

Other

- The ED thanked the Coffee House Discussion planners, trustees who attended and the representatives from Maplewood and South Orange police departments for a constructive session on “*When Should I Call the Police?*”
- Thanks to publicist Nubia DuVall Wilson, ED Gagnier and Chairman Marchman completed a taping with ABC’s *Here & Now* earlier this week. The interview focused mainly on the issue of busing in SOMA schools and should air in the next 2 - 3 weeks.
- 2020 Budgets and Goals & Objectives should be submitted to the office before the October 2019 Trustee meeting using the same Initiatives from 2018.

Program Director Report

- Trustees were directed to the Program Highlights sent earlier in the Trustee Packet.
- Volunteer and Honoree Patricia Canning is organizing a walk of remembrance to acknowledge the 1619 Jamestown arrival of Africans as slaves in Virginia and SOMA resident Tina Kelly has offered to organize a “year of learning” based on readings and podcasts from the NYTs 1619 Jamestown Project.
- Talking to Children about Race: *Language Matters* will be held at SOMS Library October 3rd and CHS MAC Scholars will participate. Question was raised about the Amistad curriculum in SOM School District with a response that the curriculum is being launched; however, emphasis varies from teacher to teacher.
- The Coalition’s Schools Committee participated in the fall 2019 SOMSD New Teacher Orientation with ED Gagnier presenting excerpts from the 2019 Updated Demographics Report. There was a good response by that audience to the new Coalition promotional folder that was recently re-designed by the Marketing Committee.
- Question was raised about the impact of the Districts expanded preschool offering on the Coalition’s Preschool Open House for private agencies. Agreement followed to establish closer connection with the district program to assist in assessing our direction.
- Maplewood Township’s Volunteer Appreciation Dinner will be October 23rd at the Woodland from 6-8 pm. The Coalition and all of its volunteers and their families are invited. Please RSVP by

October 18 with your name, organization and number of adults and children attending to twpcclerk@twp.maplewood.nj.us.

- Assistance is needed to assemble favors for the Coalition Annual Dinner. Please sign the sheet that is circulating, if you can help.
- Our Integration through the Arts partner, Progressive Theater, Inc., is holding their first fundraiser, *Black & Blue Ball* on November 22 at the Woodland and is asking the Coalition to support them by filling a table at the discounted rate of \$38/person for a table of 8. Please call the office if you are interested.

Nominating Committee:

- Current Nominating Committee includes Kristin Mahoney, Carol Barry-Austin, Catherine Cronin and Abbey Cotler
- We have three candidates who will receive a packet and a request for their Statement of Interest which will be circulated to the Board at the October meeting.
- The board will vote on the trustee candidates at the November meeting and for Executive Committee Members at the December meeting.
- Names of prospective candidates are requested no later than next week
- Currently, our Board is evenly represented by town and race.

Coffee House Discussion:

- Four tables of residents and Chief DeVaul and Lieutenant Mahoney from Maplewood and Sergeant Acevedo from South Orange Police Departments participated
- Various points of view on “see something-say something” were discussed without reaching consensus. South Orange police recommended remaining diligent while Maplewood supported using neighborly discretion. Maplewood’s tempered response may be “no response”.
- A major highlight from the tables recommended that before deciding to call the police, the person should clearly identify the behavior or observed crime and not call based on appearance, i.e., race, gender, age, dress, or other external feature of the person.
- Other table comments included
 - The importance of knowing your rights, if stopped by the police
 - If the situation allows you time to post on social media, it’s probably not an emergency that requires the police.
 - **NOTE: The Coalition should instruct press representatives to refrain from publishing quotes or names of participants in our Coffee House Discussions or Conversations on Race to honor our commitment for a “safe space”.**
- **Trustee Comments included:**
 - A suggestions was made to hold multiple sessions or a series for important topics such as *Should I Call the Police* to allow deeper discussion and
 - Consider forming racial affinity groups (Black, White, Asian, and Hispanic) for one session of the discussion series to allow groups to candidly examine their perspectives before engaging across race on the same topic(s).
- Leverage the tips generated by discussion groups by posting them on our Coalition social media and other media sources and by creating and posting graphic mimes.
- Marketing Committee can assist in spreading the word to non-attendees by developing post event press kits and media friendly assets.

Annual Dinner Planning: Committee Chair Kelly Quirk

- Any additional ads for the journal should be sent to Kelly Quirk
- Our goal for ads this year is \$5K and we are currently near \$4K.
- Trustee-purchased tables are very helpful. Please ask your guests to match the cost of the ticket with a Coalition donation or auction purchase.

- Once a yet, send a note to friends and neighbors to stimulate attendance at Coalition events and donations throughout the year.
- Format for the evening was reviewed, including Mayor Vic DeLuca and President Sheena Collum serving as co-auctioneers and the addition of new Fund-a-Need bidding.

Liaison Reports:

Maplewood: Reps at Democratic Conference

South Orange: Per Summer Jones

- Seton Village/Irvington Ave. corridor organizing Neighborhood Watch. Area is very dark and money from the \$3M joint Maplewood- South Orange grant will be used to improve this are.
- The grant covers three neighborhood associations including Tichenor/Briggs.

New Business: None

Adjournment:

Move to adjourn was made by Kristin Mahoney and by Abby Cotler. Meeting adjourned at 9:33 PM

Next Meeting: Thurs. October 24, 7:30 PM, Prospect Church, 646 Prospect St. Maplewood NJ.

Submitted By: Audrey Rowe

Secretary: Carol Barry-Austin