

**SOUTH ORANGE/MAPLEWOOD COMMUNITY COALITION ON RACE**  
**January 26, 2017 Trustee Meeting**

**Call to Order:** Chair Robert A. Marchman convened the meeting at 7:30. PM.

**Present:** Carol Barry-Austin, Lee Boswell May, Victoria Calle, Walter Clarke, Abigail Cotler, Dean Dafis, Nina Essel, Nancy Gagnier, Leila Gonzalez Sullivan, Len Grossman, Amy Harris, David Harris, Robert A. Marchman, Frank McGehee, Fred R. Profeta Jr., George Robinson, Audrey Rowe, Indira Singh, Erin Scherzer, Peri Smilow, Keli Tianga, Diane Thomson, Barbara Velazquez and Meredith Sue Willis.

**Excused:** Deborah Davis Ford, Omari Frazier, Joel Herbert, Stephanie Lawson-Muhammad, Nora Locke and Chris Stetson

**Minutes Approval:** Len Grossman moved that December Minutes be accepted with a second by Abby Cotler. Minutes were approved with 2 abstentions.

**Chair Report:**

- Chair Marchman welcomed everyone and thanked them for providing feedback to his questions regarding Trustee meetings.
- Chair shared that he has been meeting with clergy and other leaders and received feedback that the Coalition should be more proactive and visible.
- Transparency in trustees to knowing what is going on within our organization will be a priority.

**Executive Director's Report:**

- After losing our Admin Support in June and another in November, our current Admin Support has now quit creating additional challenges for staff in the office. Trustees are asked to refer prospects and share the job description on our web site.
- Financials at the end of December indicate that we are approximately \$700 ahead of budget YTD.
- The Luminary Project generated over \$6K against a budget of \$3.5K
- MLK Free Will donation raised \$1500 and the end-of-year Annual Appeal was strong bringing in \$22K (\$16K in 2016 and \$6K in 2017).
- Coalition received a request from Seth Boyden PTA to present the 2016 Demographics Report. Date is pending and trustees are invited to contact the office if they are willing to learn how to deliver this presentation.
- Interact Theatre has offered to donate a % of the ticket price for all who attend *Rasheeda Speaking*. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door and the dates are Feb. 10-12, 2017. The ED will send info to trustees.
- ED and Program Director are meeting with representatives from Union tomorrow, January 27, at their request to share information on the Coalition's formation and programs.
- The *Emerge* organization for developing women to run for political office has approached the Coalition staff about delivering a cultural competence workshop in April 2017 for the NJ chapter.

**Additional Chair Comments**

- As trustees complete the pledge form, they were reminded that amounts may vary based on individual circumstances, but 100% of the Board is expected to donate.
- Trustees are invited to volunteer for the By Law revision discussed in December.

- The EC has discussed giving trustees more financial credit for things they do in support of the Coalition and its mission. Trustees should inform the office of other community involvements and Coalition expenses. NOTE: One trustee cautioned to beware of possible double counting.

### **Program Director's Report**

- Trustees were directed to the January Program Highlights sent as part of the Trustee Packet
- Schools Committee amended dates for Talking to Children about Race to Tuesday March 14 and 21 and Saturday April 1 at the Montrose Preschool in South Orange.
- March 8<sup>th</sup> is the next Coffee House Discussion (CHD) with The Woodland as tentative location.
- Chair stated that the 2017 MLK and Integrated Play Group both represent a great start for the year and foster relationships beyond the single events.
- Trustees expressed interest in having a Coalition organizational identifier – like a pin or tag that might say something like “Ask me about the Coalition on Race”.
- Staff mentioned that Coalition business cards already exist that can be personalized by each trustee. Cards are available in the office.
- One new trustee mentioned the need to further discuss the inclusion issue in the branding and naming of the Coalition.

### **Items for Review**

The following documents were reviewed with the entire Board to ensure a shared foundation for 2017

- 2017 Goal for Mission Function Areas and Committees
- Notes from the 2016 Trustee Retreat
- Communications Protocol & Issuing Coalition Statements

Discussion related to these documents included the following comments

- Goals and focus are needed on Neighborhoods
- Home Maintenance Loan needs a ramp-up to demonstrate legitimate effort
- Civic Engagement needs a broader focus to include equality and power balance across race
- We should work to leverage the outcomes from the last Coalition retreat before investing in another. Amid-year assessment of our accomplishments is in order for 2017. A budget line to fund future retreats should be added.
- Any suggested edits to goals should be given to that committee to address in order to maintain the integrity of the committees' efforts.
- We must always get the facts first before responding publically.
- If no policy exists on an issue, it must come back to the Board first before action is taken.
- Trustees should inform leadership of new issues as they surface.
- Being timely is critical. A *strike force* subset of the Board should be created to deliver an immediate response. The ED, Chair and EC currently perform this function.
- A social media guru is need to maximize our presence with postings, key words, tagging etc.

The Chair indicated that a major focus for the EC is transparency with the entire Board – ensuring that they are informed and included. When immediate responses are required, the Board will be informed ASAP of any statements made on the organization's behalf.

### **Women's March**

- Chair asked trustees who attended to share anecdotes and perceptions
- Seven of the 16 woman in the room attended the march in either DC or NY
- Perceptions varied among attendees, but most felt a sense of solidarity across issues and presence of racial representation

### **Fundamental Issue: Hate/Bias Incident Response and Training**

- **Open Society Grant** has funded a Hate/Bias Incident Response database which can provide the download of an electronic form to report incidents to community organizations
- Training on how to respond to be an “upstander” rather than bystander is available in NYC and is also being developed locally.
- Trustees Scherzer and Essel shared information about their involvement and plans for developing and delivering local training, and Trustee Smilow shared her involvement in related training and suggestions.
- Agreed actions:
  - Gather data on all related activities and training efforts and consolidate them to inform how the Coalition should proceed.
  - Clarify who would see and use the incident form, if it is hosted by the Coalition.
  - EC will reach out to Trustees Scherzer, Essel and Smilow

### **Liaisons’ Report**

- South Orange Village Trustee, Walter Clarke
  - Date conflict on June 17<sup>th</sup> for XRootsFest and the Triathlon in South Orange
  - SO Village Alliance launching “You Belong Here” campaign soon
  - SO resident (Andre Preoteosa) is interested in launching a volunteer effort and has been directed to the Coalition’s CEI team.
- Maplewood Township Committeeman, Frank McGehee
  - SOMA Action Network is a non-partisan local organization providing residents with opportunities to take actions to defend human rights and other issues
  - Maplewood has an ordinance supporting use of “Sales Pending” rather than “Under Contract” because the later notation is perceived by some as being unavailable and this perception differs based on race.
  - Maplewood Township 2017 Budget hearing for the Community Coalition on Race is Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:45 AM in Town Hall beginning at 10:45 AM. Trustees are encouraged to attend in support.
  - Bail Reform effective January 1, 2017 impacts Black youth preventive detention policy

### **Announcement & New Business**

- Civic Engagement Institute is looking for activist organizations to include in its volunteer opportunity offerings. Please send any known organizations and contacts to Diane Thomson.
- New and continuing Trustees need meeting notifications. Many are already listed on the Trustee Calendar and others should be posted as scheduled.
- Trustee Cotler attended the protest at Westfield NJ
- Assemblywoman Mila Jasey will be in Chatham next Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>.

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 PM. Next meeting is Thursday, February 23, Kol Rina Temple, 60 Valley St. (second level behind 7 Eleven) South Orange.

**Recorded by:** Audrey Rowe

**Secretary:** Meredith Sue Willis