



Public Meeting Notes

Date: February 18, 2025

Time: 11:04 AM - 12:05 PM

Attendance

Present:

- Commissioner Post
- Commissioner Sherwood
- Commissioner Strozier
- Commissioner Anderson
- Commissioner Hodge
- Commissioner Glover
- Commissioner Johnson
- Commissioner House
- Commissioner Hart
- Director McPherson
- Ex Officio Harding
- Ex Officio Tanya Hamilton
- Brandy Ervin (Interim Executive Assistant)

Agenda Items

1. Approval of Minutes

- Minutes from December 17, 2024 meeting were approved without discussion.

2. Executive Director's Report (Director McPherson)

- **23rd Annual Legislative Conference Recap:**
 - 465 registered attendees
 - 40 speakers
 - 20 sponsors
 - Nearly \$30,000 raised



ARIZONA COMMISSION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

- Five-day conference featuring 10 different programs
- Events included South Phoenix tour (sponsored by Valley Metro), Capitol fun run, and health/fitness fair
- Note: \$15,000 in potential sponsorships were lost due to late commitments
- **Social Media Engagement:**
 - Instagram: 539 new followers
 - Facebook: 60 new followers
 - LinkedIn: 90 new followers
- **Staffing Updates:**
 - Grayson Taylor has left to join the Brooklyn Nets
 - Brandy Urban hired as interim executive assistant
 - Need identified for full-time staff member to support executive office and Commission
- **Strategic Plan:**
 - Expected to be completed and shared before next committee meeting

3. Pillar Chair Reports

Justice Pillar (Tiffany Thornhill)

- **Recent Activities:**
 - Workshop on preservation of African American families
 - Pillar talk on surveillance and civil rights
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - Three pillar talks scheduled for March, April, and May
 - Consumer protection and fraud awareness event on March 22 (collaboration with Attorney General's office and Commissioner Braham)
- **Focus Areas:**
 - Preservation of African American families
 - Criminal justice reform
 - Re-entry and recidivism challenges

Education Pillar (Tiffany Thornhill)

- **Recent Activities:**
 - Workshops on reinvesting in public education and empowering youth
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - Special pillar talk to continue discussion on public education disinvestment
 - Youth summit planned for May focused on career pathways
- **Ongoing Partnerships:**
 - Planning underway with Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
 - Collaboration with Schoolyard Rap for future events



- **Focus Areas:**
 - Public education disinvestment
 - Empowering youth
 - Career pathways for high school students

4. Discussion Items

Federal Education Memo on DEI

- Commissioner House raised concerns about federal memo requiring universities to remove DEI references within 14 days
- Group decided to monitor the situation and wait for guidance from governor's office and Attorney General
- Noted that ASU has already begun removing diversity references
- Suggestion to revisit commission's protocol for responding to such issues

Information Management

- Proposal to create central repository for commissioners to access information
- Suggestion to use Google spreadsheet to track information from various sources
- Bylaws will include guidance on media relations and handling media requests
- Clarification that Attorney General's office cannot provide legal opinions on executive orders but can inform on lawsuits

5. Announcements

- \$5 million in state funding available for substance abuse education and engagement (grant applications open)
- Upcoming virtual informational forum on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Introduction of Brandy Ervin, interim executive assistant

6. Action Items

- Schedule a special Pillar Talk to continue the discussion from the reinvesting in our future workshop
- Coordinate with Dr. Raquel Armstrong to plan the special Pillar Talk
- Explore hosting a youth summit in May focused on career pathways
- Review the draft MOU between the Commission and the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College
- Explore ways to involve Schoolyard Rap in the 2026 Legislative Conference

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM