

## Minutes of the 7 January 2022 meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson New.

Commissioners in attendance: Elmore, New, Davis, McCormick, Westbrook, Knoell

Chairperson New gave an opening comment thanking everyone for their faithful service during the continued electronic state of our meetings and for continuing to be present to serve the African Americans of the state of Kansas.

There was no public comment and no special guest for this meeting.

Executive Director Knoell gave a brief update where she shared that she is looking into hiring an intern. She informed the commission of a Barbershop initiative funded through the Kansas Health Foundation grant. The program would run through shops to reach underserved communities focusing on health disparities along with a continued effort to raise COVID vaccination rates in the Black community. She also reported the joint efforts with the Kansas Hispanic and Latino Affairs Commission of writing letters to the legislative redistricting committee concerning the Congressional split of Wyandotte County and the negative impacts that would have on the Black and Brown community in that county.

### Old Business:

The Martin Luther King Jr. march and proclamation will take place on Thursday, January 13, 11:45 am, south doors of the Statehouse with the proclamation immediately following in the 1<sup>st</sup>-floor rotunda. And our Martin Luther King, Jr. video presentation will stream on Monday, January 17<sup>th</sup> at noon on the KAAAC Facebook page – please share it around.

### New Business:

Legislative Focus: There was a lively discussion of what the focus should be. In the end, we decided to focus on “Ax the Tax”, the redistricting effort, and Juvenile fees, and agreed to keep an eye on CRT but not make it a primary focus for the commission.

Upcoming events: The Black Legislative Day at the Capitol will be Wednesday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022. It will be a day of education and advocacy. Is anyone available to run point during advocacy meetings with legislators or do you know people who would be willing to serve in that capacity?

Please look around your district for potential sites to hold a future town hall meeting.

Set a meeting time – the statute says once a quarter and to discuss electing officers and terms for serving commissioners. We did not come to an agreement on a set meeting time.

Adjourned:

## Agenda for 7 January 2022

### KAAAC Public Agenda

- I. Call to Order and Welcome
- II. Roll Call [Elmore, New, Davis, McCormick, Westbrook, Knoell](#)
- III. Chairman's Opening Comments [Thanking everyone for faithful service during this continued electronic state and continuing to be present to serve the AA of the state.](#)
- IV. Public Comment
- V. Special Guests: none
- VI. Brief Executive Director Update
  - a. Hiring an intern
  - b. Barbershop initiative with Kansas Health Foundation money [Make sure Courtney Hayden and Garcia are in touch with commissioners in the area of the shops for them to be able to visit.](#)
  - c. Redistricting letters with KHLAAC
- VII. Old Business
  - a. Martin Luther King Jr.
    - i. March and proclamation, Thursday, January 13, 11:45am, south doors of Statehouse with proclamation immediately following in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor rotunda
    - ii. Video program to stream on Monday, January 17<sup>th</sup> at noon on our Facebook page – please share it around
    - iii. [I have arranged with KIFA and St. Mark's in Wichita. Governor's office comms will be involved. PSN Olathe, all commissioners' FB pages, my campaign page, maybe ask TKAAM and Community Voice and all Black legislators](#)
- VIII. New Business
  - a. Legislative Priorities
    - i. What we know is coming [CRT – what do we want to do with this issue](#)
    - ii. What would we like to support/join? [Redistricting, criminal justice](#)
    - iii. What would we like to champion?
    - iv. [MM: not having seen the legislation and/or maps it is difficult to get involved, ACLU is involved in ending Juvenile fines and fees \(by statute fees must be assessed\) MM would like us to join that effort](#)
    - v. [New: supports the juvenile fees issue, the Kansas policies are antiquated and appear to be designed to hold people back, impacts background checks and college admission.](#)
    - vi. [Davis: also join with the fine issue. There is no debtor's prison, but the outcome is the same, the system is stacked to work against the people within it. Saline County looks at sentencing equity as well, reviewing the judicial system and the judges who make decisions that impact people. – Medicaid Expansion as economic development tool. Medicaid coverage for daycare workers, daycare providers can't afford healthcare provisions for their workers](#)

- vii. Elmore: Medicaid expansion is expensive but - break it down to the particulars it might pass – alternative schools – Bishop Moore has an alternative school in Wichita, a private school k-8, he is seeking public money for this school- redistricting, we need to look at it as individual commissioners and then see what we can do
  - viii. Westbrook: CRT, that is just a talking point thing no ground gained, the juvenile fees are the more important issue, the goal is to create better opportunities for the youth
  - ix. McCormick: recommends we support a few efforts, we are not prepared to lead on any of the issues, expansion and redistricting will take up oxygen, TAKE THE burden of funding the judicial system off the shoulders of juveniles
  - x. New: CRT may not even get to the point of legislation, but people might look to us to make a fuss about it. CRT shouldn't be a trigger for suicide or a guilt inducer but common language right now is to drag it in with DEI and all things related. Perhaps we get in with education rather than legislation.
  - xi. MM: will have a piece in the Reflector about CRT and the impacts of racism on Black children rather than centering white children in the conversation
  - xii. MM: people who are upset about CRT redefine it every time they talk, it defies being nailing down
  - xiii. Davis: black folk don't think about CRT unless it is brought up to them, he notices white people can't imagine increasing the role of Black people without diminishing their role. We can do both. Need to see the legislation, if they deliberately try to keep our history out, then it will be a problem
  - xiv. Elmore: Patrick Penn, Elmore wants to side with Penn, the problem isn't what is being taught, but enhanced with Black history
  - xv. MM: pushes back against Elmore, Penn doesn't have a good grasp on CRT or how it works.
  - xvi. Davis: perhaps we do need to get ready with materials to present on short notice
  - xvii. Elmore: we are a diverse group, whose idea are we going to present? We need to go back to the grassroots of this organization, we need to touch base with our communities on the subjects
  - xviii. Lewis: wrote an article for the SCLC about CRT, this is a messaging campaign issue, the other side doesn't know what it is but they are sticking to their guns. Our side needs to have a message, don't get into debates and stick to DEI, anti-racism and belonging. There are lawyers building arguments that the CRT bills are censorship. Lawrence staff go through DEI training and they want the academic freedom to teach true history
  - xix. MM: Progeny is engaged in the work for juvenile fees has a Topeka office, contact them for potential internship candidates
  - xx. Ax the Tax, Redistricting, Juvenile fees, keep an eye on CRT
- b. Black Legislative Day at the Capitol, Wednesday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022. A day of education and advocacy

- i. Is anyone available to run point during advocacy meetings with legislators or do you know people who would be willing to serve in that capacity?
  - c. Upcoming town halls
    - i. Look to set up a town hall in your district
  - d. Set a meeting time – statute says once a quarter and discuss electing officers and terms for serving commissioners – for the love of all things holy – come to the meetings!
- IX. Announcements
- X. Adjournment