

Minutes of the April 1, 2022, meeting of the Kansas African American Affairs Commission

Call to order 2:35pm

Roll call: Present: Dr. Beryl New, Mark McCormick, Jonathan McRoy, Dr. Trent Davis, Jonathon Westbrook, Joseph Elmore, Stacey Knoell

Absent: Dr. Anthony Lewis

In Chairwoman Dr. Beryl New's opening remarks she thanked the Commission for the work that they do adding a reminder that we are trying to satisfy many people of different mindsets and worldviews. Our commitment to the work will outlast any criticism.

There was no public comment nor any special guest.

Executive Director Update: We have handed the barbershop initiative to Dr. Sharla Smith of Kansas University Medical Center. She has the research background and institutional infrastructure to run the project with efficacy. KAAAC is providing \$12,000 toward funding the project that is designed to work with barbershops to address health disparities in the Black community.

Our strategic planning is underway. We have partnered with Angeline Johnson of Community Connections Consulting Services to handle our strategic planning. She is at the stage of conducting interviews with the Commissioners.

The Black Legislative Day at the Capitol was a success. Approximately 80 people attended the day at the Capitol and heard presentations about topics from how to apply for boards and commissions to efforts for police training reform. We also had scheduled meetings with 9 legislators throughout the day. That was especially successful as we brought constituents to meet with their legislators to talk about issues that are important to the Black community.

The Voter Engagement Day was a success. A smaller crowd attended the engagement day where we focused on issues of voting, ballots, and how to write op-eds.

New Business:

Town Halls. In light of COVID still being an issue to some extent, there was much discussion around how to hold town halls. There are other ways of gathering information from the Black community around the state including using an online survey or an online platform for meeting virtually rather than in person.

The Commission elected a new Chair, Mark McCormick, and Vice-Chair/Secretary, Jonathan McRoy.

Mr. McCormick thanked the commission for the honor and thanked the previous chair for the offer to come and discuss what the position entails.

Mr. McRoy was humbled that other commissioners would have the trust in his position. He also thanked the previous Vice-Chair, Commissioner Westbrook for his leadership and dedication as well.

Adjourned 4:11 pm.