

Minutes of Kansas African American Affairs Commission meeting 27 August 2021

Meeting called to order at 2:10pm by Commissioner New

- I. Call to Order and Welcome
- II. Roll Call:
 - a. Commissioners present: Elmore, McCormick, McRoy, New, Knoell, Lewis
 - b. Commissioners absent: Davis, Westbrook
- III. Chairman's Opening Comments
- IV. Public Comment: none
- V. Brief Commissioner updates
 - a. Commissioner McRoy shared about his work with the Kansas Leadership Center and the Wichita Non-Discrimination Ordinance. A part of economic development and progress is helping to make Wichita a welcoming place for people who live and work there.
 - b. Commissioner Elmore shared his pride in the individual successes of those of us on the Commission.
 - c.
- VI. Brief Executive Director Update
 - a. COVID Vaccine Distribution – Executive Director Knoell has been working with Dr. Ximena Garcia and BCG (Boston Consulting Group) with vaccine distribution focusing on the African American community. She taken part in COVET and RADx-Up calls which discuss vaccine distribution operations across the state and WYCO respectively. KAAAC has planned from scratch one event, the Nicodemus Homecoming Days event with KDHE and the Graham County Health Department. Director Knoell is still working with churches and now turning to barbershops and hair salons for possible vaccine events.
 - b. Redistricting Stakeholder – KAAAC is a part of a bi-weekly call with redistricting stakeholders including KHLAAC, Mainstream Coalition, Loud Light, LWV, Civic Engagement Table, ACLU, and others who are keeping an eye on the redistricting efforts. KAAAC has written two letters in collaboration with KHLAAC to the Legislative Redistricting Committee as together African Americans and Hispanic comprise approximately 18% of the Kansas population. Now we are turning to write another letter specifically from the standpoint of the African American community and how gerrymandered districts can impact the engagement of our community. Director Knoell has a draft of that letter under peer review and may submit it as a letter to the editor to The Community Voice newspaper.
- VII. Old Business
 - a. Legislative Agenda/KAAAC area of focus – this will be developed with the strategic planning
- VIII. New Business
 - a. Strategic planning – we are pleased to have received a Presidential Grant from the Kansas Health Foundation. We are at the stage of waiting to hear back for bids from two consultants. We should be able to make a decision at the next full commission meeting
 - b. Redistricting – letters and testimony presented
 - i. Those present decided to pursue the idea of holding a Lunch and learn series walking people through the testimony process. These 45-55 min sessions will be

designed to encourage African American participation in the redistricting process. Details and a schedule to come.

- c. Potential focus for commission – How should we proceed? Should we become involved as a commission or as individuals?
 - i. Partner on issues of criminal justice, pay day loan, and CROWN Act, breast cancer awareness, other issues
 - ii. Potentially lead on issues of Maternal and infant mortality in Black communities
 - d. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday 2022: Each commissioner should come to the next meeting with ideas for a speaker for the MLK event in January. We also discussed the need to make sure there is a recorded word from GLK. For planning purposes, we should we assume it will be virtual, that way we can record things in advance and we can be finished with the program before the event day.
 - e. Attending Galas: When/if the NAACP banquet happens, we should buy a table
- IX. Announcements: next two meetings are September 10th and 24th at 2:30pm via Zoom
- X. Adjournment: adjourned at 3:45pm