

**African American Advisory Council Minutes**  
**Michael D. Burns, Chairperson**  
**March 19, 2015**

**ATTENDEES:**

Audrey Sneed-Morton  
Robin B. Albritton  
Shirley Barsh  
Michael D. Burns  
Keith D. Smith  
Diane Cottrell

Renee Heard  
Tracy Marshall  
Millie Donelson  
Jacque Johnson  
Rhonda Laye

**Telephone Participants:**

Carole Freeman  
Cheryl Dampeer  
Relunda Washington

Michelle Carter  
Bremen Campbell  
James Robinson (J. R.)

Jataun Rollins and Dr. Fayette Coleman-Gill were excused from today's meeting.

The meeting was officially called to order by Chairman, Michael D. Burns at 10:30 am.

**ORDER OF MEETING:**

**WELCOME:**

Renee Heard (new member) was welcomed and introduced to the members of the council.

Mike recognized the women on the council in honor of *National Women's Month*. He discussed the role that women have played on the council since its' inception. Mike acknowledged the founding female members of the AAAC.

**REVIEW OF MINUTES:**

The minutes were reviewed and accepted with noted revisions.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT & PERMANENCY ENHANCEMENT PROJECT (PEP):**

- Mike related that he attended a supervisory forum in Central Region in Bloomington in which Dr. Houston presented on the PEP.
- He reported that the wards' length of stay in care continues to be a problem.

- Mike encouraged all members to access, as well as utilize the PEP website.
- Currently, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) oversees the contract for the PEP website.
- On 03-09-15, Mike met with Director Sheldon to discuss the dialogues across the state.
- Mike put the report into the Logic Model to provide consistency across the state.
- The Director looked at the need for recruitment. Beatrice Ramirez with the Latino American Committee (LAC) is expected to send the final draft to the Director regarding the need for Recruiters. It was noted that positions for Recruiters have been implemented.
- Director Sheldon is expected to attend the April's AAAC meeting and address the council by 11:00 am.
- The Director wants to address the HB 291 cases and Foster Home Recruitment.
- Mike related that he is in need of quality programs for fathers.
- A meeting (time and location is forthcoming) is scheduled for 03-31-15 to collaborate with various agencies that provide services to fathers. Mike is in the process of trying to build a collaborative network for working with fathers.
- Tracy identified the Young Fathers Project out of Jackson Park, (773) 310-1421.

#### **DUALLY INVOLVED YOUTH COMMITTEE:**

- Tracy provided a report for this committee. She related that the issues surrounding this population have been discussed with the Progressive Partners Action Team (Cook South Sub-Region).
- Fayette has communicated with DCFS Legal, Robin Sims-Powell regarding the stats –data will be looked from 2008 to present. Also, the barriers to having children placed will be examined.
- Tracy explained that there's a safety concern about mixing dually-involved youth with the general population.
- Tracy related that there's concern about workers' safety. It was reported that there have been cases involving murderers.
- Rhonda related that she has requested that stats are maintained on this population. She reported that she has to complete documentation regarding this population. Rhonda related that she has discussed this issue with Janet Ahern.
- Diane suggested that Rhonda maintain a log to assist the council with supporting this population.
- Tracy reported that some parents of this population are involved.
- The following data is needed from 2008-present:
  - Which kids are being adjudicated (no abuse or neglect)

- Ages
- Crime services
- Length of stay and race
- Parental involvement

**CONFERENCE 2015:**

- Mike informed the members that the Department is *not* in support of a conference due to the Executive Traveling Order.
- The conference is *tentatively* scheduled for Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at Governor's State from 9:00 am -4:00 pm. There will be no cultural presentation.
- It should be noted that attendees will not be reimbursed for lodging or traveling.
- Continuing Education Units (CEU) will be provided to conference attendees
- All council members are charged with marketing the conference.
- Mike spoke with the Director about the conference and the Director discussed the option of all different divisions/departments hosting one conference.

**NEWSLETTER:**

- Bremen related that the latest edition is close to print-photos are still needed.
- J. R. agreed to provide the necessary photos for the newsletter.
- Mike requested that the photos, as well as the write-ups from the dialogues be included in the newsletter.
- Diane agreed to provide Bremen with the awardees' bios for last year's conference.

**AFRICAN AMERICAN SERVICES:**

This agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

**TRAINING:**

- J. R. reported that he has not received information about new hiring classes.
- One new hire has been identified in the Champaign area on Angela Hassel's team.

**HOST FAMILY:**

- Tracy related that Bremen and J. R. are the hosts for the month of March.
- Cheryl agreed to send her donation to Tracy.

**MEMBERSHIP:**

There are no new inquiries at this time.

**LEGISLATIVE:**

This agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

**FOSTER HOME RECRUITMENT & STATEWIDE STRATEGY:**

This agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

<b>BUSINESS UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:</b>
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- Mike reported that he participated in a teleconference with the Children's Bureau in which they are conducting an assessment on the front-end.
- Mike inquired with the members about the most pressing issues facing the front end. The responses included the following:
  - Lack of resources for the families
  - There's a need for more collaboration between the divisions
  - Engagement with clients
  - Additional time is needed when taking protective custody (72 hours instead of 48 hours)
  - Constant staff turnover

Diane, Millie and Rhonda were thanked for hosting a great luncheon for today's meeting.

**The meeting was officially adjourned at 12:05 pm.**