

**Mayor's African American Advisory Board – MAAAB**  
**Tuesday, February 4, 2025 – 9:30 am**

**Location: Ed Ball Building, 214 N. Hogan Street, 32202 – First Floor Hearing Room #1002**

**Meeting Attendance**

**Board Members:** Dawn Curley, Chair Barbara Darby, Latrina Dowdell, Kelly Frazier, Kiara Nixon, Ronetta Wards, and Errol White.

**Excused:** Lee Brown and Audrieanna Burgin.

**Staff and Elected Officials:** Patricia McCollough, Lisa Ransom, Edwina Henry and Schnell Chin.

**Guests:** Bervinda Mincey, Lydia Bell, Spencer Fletcher, Darlene Neal, Kim Pryor, Cvonzell Dondric, Karen Pinkney, Geanee Brantley, Mildred Jennings, LaToya Goodman, Kenyada Key, Shakira Way, Vanessa Davis-Frederick, Carol Gamble, Monique Stewart, Maceo George, Jacqueline Harrington, Robert Flornoy, Eunice Barnum, Equel Baray, Kraster Layfield, Aleta Wiley, Denise Scott, Ronnie Christopher, Courtney Porter, Dana Maule, Marcet Springs, and Wells Todd.

**Meeting Summary**

- 1. Call to Order and Verify Quorum** – The Mayor's African American Advisory Board (MAAAB) was called to order at 9:33 a.m. and Edwina Henry verified that a quorum was present.
- 2. A Moment of Centering** – Chair Darby read Langston Hughes' poem, "I Too, Sing America" in commemoration of Black History Month.
- 3. Approval of Agenda** – It was properly moved and seconded that the Meeting Agenda be approved.
- 4. Approval of Previous Meeting Summaries** – It was properly moved and seconded that the Meeting Summaries for December 2024, January 2025 be tabled to the March 12, 2025, Board Meeting.
- 5. Mayor's Staff Updates** –
  - Ms. Patricia McCollough, Special Assistant to the Mayor, Civic Engagement and Youth, reported that Mayor Deegan has several Town Hall Meetings scheduled. The theme of the Town Hall Meetings: Healthy, Safe and Strong Jacksonville. Ms. McCollough encouraged everyone to attend at least one of the meetings.
- 6. Chair's Report** –
  - Chair Darby announced that the Board's annual report had been circulated to the Board and has been submitted to the Mayor's Office.
  - Dr. Darby reported that she attended the Board's Program Committee Meeting on 1/7/2025, to discuss progress on the Black History Month Celebration.
  - On 1/14/2025, Chair Darby attended the Sherwood Forest Community Meeting at the Legends Center and stated that informative issues were raised and that she will forward concerns to the appropriate Board Committees for action.

- On 1/17/2025, the Chair attended the MLK Unity Breakfast at the Prime Osborn Convention Center and stated that it was very well attended. She also remarked that the youth were well represented.
- Chair Darby attended the Health and Public Safety Committee Meeting on 2/3/2025, at the Mary L. Singleton Senior Center, and encouraged her Board colleagues to get out into the community to hear directly from citizens and to be more informed.

## 7. Committee Reports –

- **Health and Public Safety Committee** – met on 2/3/2025, at the Mary L. Singleton Senior Center.
  - Community members asked about ways to increase community awareness of events in Jacksonville. Another community member stated that emphasis needs to be placed on community responsibility in that resources exist but must be actively used by residents.
  - Lieutenant Archbold, JSO, responded to questions from community members and credited the use of crime data and community involvement and neighborhood clean-ups have all played a major role in crime reduction. Lieutenant Archbold encouraged residents to report crimes anonymously via the non-emergency line (904) 630-0500 or the Crime Tips Hotline.
  - Mike Williams, City of Jacksonville, Environmental Quality Division (EQD), addressed community concerns raised at last month's Health and Public Safety Committee Meeting. Mr. Williams discussed how his division, EQD, handles air quality complaints and enforcement. In addition to discussing EQD processes, Mr. Williams also encouraged community members to call (904) 630-CITY or file a concern using the MyJax online portal to report concerns.
  - Dr. Lynn Sherman, City of Jacksonville, Executive Director of Health Programs, spoke on public health, maternal and infant mortality and gave several health resources: HealthLink Jax Initiative, the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Meals on Wheels and University of Florida's Meals on Wings Program, which also provides nutritious meals to seniors.
  - Board member Curling encouraged neighborhood associations to take a larger role in sharing community updates. Lieutenant Archbold proposed a community safety fair.
  - Cathy DuPont asked about adult dental services. Dr. Lynn Sherman stated that there are limited options due to low reimbursement rates.
  - Lieutenant Archbold committed to attending the monthly meetings of the MAAAB's Health and Public Safety Committee.
  - The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 3, 2025, from 12 – 2 pm, at the Mary L. Singleton Senior Center.

- Board Chair Darby reiterated that the MAAAB's Committees are based on Mayor Deegan's priorities and read the role of the MAAAB from the Executive Order creating the Board. The MAAAB's work began in October and the goal for the Board is to bring forth recommendations from the community.
  - **Program Committee** – met on 1/29/2025, due to a change in the Mayor's availability, the date of the Black History Month Celebration has been changed to February 13, 2025.
    - The new date has been communicated to all attendees and program participants.
    - The Board has been provided with the final run of show and follows the program set forth by Chair Darby and the Program Committee.
    - Dr. Burgin, Chair of the Program Committee, asked Board members to continue promoting the Black History Month Celebration through their networks.
    - The Program Committee will next plan a Juneteenth Celebration. Board members are invited to suggest themes for the Program Committee to explore.
    - The Program Committee's next meeting is scheduled for 2/6/2025, at the Main Public Library, from 5:30 to 7:00 pm.
  - Chair Darby thanked the Committee for setting up and planning the Black History Month Celebration with such a short timeframe. She issued an apology to anyone who showed up at City Hall yesterday for the Celebration and noted that the Committee did its best to reach everyone with the new date and time.
  - **The Board's Executive Committee** – has not received any feedback on the By-Laws submitted to Mr. Dennis for review and next steps. Lisa Ransom indicated that she has reached out to Dr. Ahmed for assistance and getting feedback on the By-Laws.
  - Chair Darby has requested the remaining Board Committee to schedule their meetings.
- 8. New Business** – The MAAAB's Committees are: Economy and Infrastructure, Health and Public Safety, Program, Military and Veterans Affairs, and Arts and Culture. Each committee is aligned with Mayor Deegan's priorities, as identified in the Transition Report.
- **Next Steps** – At the March Board Meeting, Chair Darby would like for each committee to report on the concerns and recommendation from what they have learned from the community.
  - **Open Forum** –
    - Board member White stated that after the conclusion of the Black History Month Celebration, the Program Committee will focus on the Juneteenth Celebration.
    - Ms. McCollough announced that Mayor Deegan's Youth Initiative – Young People Emerging Society (YES), will hold a Youth Summit on February 22,

2025, at the Main Public Library, and she is asking the public to help recruit youth to participate in the Summit.

**9. Public Comments and Announcements (three-minute time limit)**

- Dana Mahle, a visionary film maker, is interested in promoting the future of tech for youth. She also discussed her documentary on historic Durkeeville.
- Eunice Barnum complained that it is challenging to get city leadership/agencies to respond to her concerns.
- Lydia Bell, Brentwood Metro Gardens Neighborhood Association, inquired as to the status of the “Neighborhood Bill of Rights.”
  - Chair Darby requested a copy of the “Neighborhood Bills of Rights” to gain a better understanding of the issue.
- Robert Fulnoy discussed his desire to save the Carter G. Woodson School and transform it into a training center and wondered if the MAAAB could help with funding.
  - Chair Darby replied that funding projects is not the role of the Board. Mr. Fulnoy was directed to contact the city’s Historic Preservation Division.
- Shidra White and Ms. Mahle spoke on the need for resources and volunteers for community clean-up projects.
  - Ms. Ransom referred Ms. White and Mahle to Dan Durbec, Keep Jacksonville Beautiful, for free clean-up resources.
- Darlene Neal, Grand Park, announced the MLK Memorial Day Parade is scheduled for February 17, 2025, that there will be a candle light vigil on April 8, 2025.
- Monique Stewart, Jacksonville Policy Engagement Group, announced a meeting on February 11, 2025, at 3 pm to discuss the Carter G. Woodson Project. Meeting location is 232 E. 8<sup>th</sup> street.
- Kim Pryor announced that the Bungalo Court Restoration Project is looking for funding.
  - Board member Nixon directed Ms. Pryor to contact the State of Florida Historic Preservation Division, as they have grant funding.
- Ernest Smith expressed concern for the potential loss of identity in historic LaVilla due to the University of Florida’s new construction. Additionally, Mr. Smith interest in the vacancies on the MAAAB and requested that more black males are needed on the Board.
- Chair Darby thanked members of the community for sharing their concerns.

**10. Adjournment**

- It was properly moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting of the Mayor’s African American Advisory Board is scheduled for Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at the Ed Ball Building, First Floor Hearing Room at 9:30 a.m.