

**Mayor's African American Advisory Board – MAAAB**  
**Wednesday, January 8, 2025 – 1:00 pm**

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

**Meeting Attendance**

**Board Members:** Lee Brown, Audrieanna Burgin, Dawn Curling, Chair Barbara Darby, Latrina Dowdell, Kelly Frazier, Kiaira Nixon, and Vice Chair Ronetta Wards.

**Excused:** Errol White.

**Staff and Elected Officials:** Dr. Parvez Ahmed, Lisa Ransom, and Edwina Henry.

**Guests:** Owamani Magezi, Orlando Spencer, Tameiko Grant, Alexis Ross, Candice Wood-Holliday, Brian Williams, Jonika Smith, Dana Mahle, Jessica Tisly, Trey Ford, Dr. Erin N. Anthony, Kenneth R. Covington, Taryn C. Wharwood, Alfreda Boney, Michelle Denno, Vamecia Powell, Anthony Garth, Ali Steed, Ronald Simmons, Jessica Scott, Dr. Melissa Chester, Patrina Dixon, Kristina Dyer, LaToya Goodman, Shauna Thompson, Marsha Griff, Monique Stewart and Tinesha Tutt.

**Meeting Summary**

- 1. Call to Order and Verify Quorum** – The Mayor's African American Advisory Board (MAAAB) Meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m., and Edwina Henry confirmed that a quorum was present.
- 2. A Moment of Centering** – Dr. Darby offered a Moment of Centering to focus the efforts of the Board.
- 3. Approval of the Agenda** – The Agenda was approved.
- 4. Approval of Previous Meeting Summary** - It was stated that the previous month's minutes will be distributed at the next meeting.
- 5. Mayor's Staff Updates:**
  - Dr. Parvez Ahmed discussed the upcoming MLK Unity Breakfast, to be held on January 17, 2025, at the Prime Osborn Convention Center, and encouraged everyone to attend. This year the breakfast will feature a community chat with Jonathan Eig, Pulitzer Prize Winning author of the biography – King, a Life.
  - Dr. Ahmed also noted that 2025 is the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," and that there will be multiple commemorative celebrations throughout Jacksonville.
  - Next month is Black History Month, the MAAAB Program Committee was urged to offer some proposed dates for the celebration and Dr. Ahmed will consult the Mayor's schedule to ensure her participation in the event. He noted that the event should be held during daytime hours.

## **6. Chair's Report:**

- Board Chair Darby announced that the MAAAB Annual Report to the Mayor and Council is due at the end of the month. Dr. Darby will forward a draft for Board input. The Report will cover the months of September through December 2024, which reflects the Board's period of operation.
- All city of Jacksonville Boards and Commissions are mandated to take Ethics Training within six (6) months of appointment and every four (4) years thereafter. Executive Order 2024-02 mandates the MAAAB to abide by this requirement. The Board Coordinator will circulate the training schedule for 2025, for anyone still needing the training.
- The draft of the MAAAB By-Laws has been forwarded to Mr. Dennis for review and next steps.
- As a point of clarification, Chair Darby stated that individually, members of the MAAAB can go out into the community, but not as a group, in order to bring back first hand feedback and information from the community.
- Chair Darby has expressed an interest in attending a Citizens Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) Meeting to listen to community concerns and will share during the committee reports of the Board.
- Dr. Ahmed noted that attending CPAC Meetings would be a good idea, to learn the concerns and aspirations of the community.

## **7. Presentation:** Patricia McCollough, Special Assistant to the Mayor on Civic Engagement and Youth. Topic: Consolidation.

- Ms. McCollough distributed a handout to correspond with her presentation and presented each Board member with a copy of the book "A Quiet Revolution," which discusses the Jacksonville-Duval County Consolidation and give an account of "promises made," but not necessarily kept to the neighborhoods.
- Chair Darby thanked Ms. McCollough for her presentation and stated that the discussion helps to set the groundwork for the Board: informing leadership of what still needs to happen for all citizens.

## **8. Committee Reports:**

- Health & Public Safety Committee – Latrina Dowdell, Convener  
The Committee held its first meeting on 1/6/2025, at the Mary L. Singleton Senior Center, 150 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 32206. Questions/concerns from the community included:
  - Is there an update on the JEA Septic Tank Phase Out Program
    - Ms. Henry will forward information from JEA
  - Will the committee have a liaison with JSO
    - Ms. Dowdell is working with JSO for a representative to attend

- The Norwood Community expressed concerns about a “bad smell” from a factory in the community
    - Ms. Henry suggested contacting 630-CITY (2489) to put in a “Care Ticket.” The complaint will be routed to the appropriate department for follow-up and the person filing the complaint will be able to track resolution of the complaint.
    - Ms. Dowdell indicated that she will request a city department representative to address air quality concerns in the community.
  - Comments concerning road conditions were referred to FDOT
  - Dr. Wilkerson, UF Health, addressed men’s health and overall community health concerns.
  - Cathy DuPont discussed the ABCs of Healthy Babies and programs available under the Healthy Start and Fatherhood Program.
  - The Committee set its meeting schedule for every first Monday, from 12 – 2 pm at the Mary L. Singleton Center.
- Chair Darby commented that MAAAB’s charge is to serve as a conduit from the community to the Mayor.
  - Dr. Ahmed suggested that the Board may want to invite members of City Council to attend MAAAB Meetings. He also indicated that he will be inviting members of the Mayor’s leadership to bring policy and initiative updates to the Board.
  - The Program Committee – Dr. Audrieanna Burgin, Convener  
The Committee met on 1/7/2025, at the Main Public Library, 303 N. Laura Street, 32202.
    - The Committee selected “Education” as the theme for the Black History Month Celebration.
    - The suggested event program: Welcome, Prayer (the community wants the clergy involved), Song (Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing), Board Chair Darby to introduce Mayor Deegan, Mayor gives remarks, Board and Mayor make presentations to honorees, Honorees: Edward Waters University, Legacy Honoree, Duval County Public Schools named in honor of African American figures, Artwork in the City Hall Atrium, and either Dr. Ahmed or Mr. Dennis to close out the program
  - Chair Darby commended the committee for their ability to pull together an event plan with such a short timeframe.
    - The Program Committee is working with Dr. Ahmed to coordinate a day and time with the Mayor’s schedule.
      - Dr. Ahmed also commended the Program Committee for their quick work and suggested Monday, February 3, 2025, for the Black History Month Celebration. He also noted that the Public Affairs Office will post information on the city’s social media site and will ensure that local media will be present. Regrettably, Dr. Ahmed noted that there is no budget for this event. He suggested a community co-sponsor and also that the committee should work with Sports and

Entertainment to coordinate scheduling the use of the City Hall Artium. Lastly, Dr. Ahmed urged the committee to be expeditious in requesting a Mayoral Proclamation.

#### **9. New Business:**

- The Board Coordinator will forward informational documents from staff.
- Board's Open Forum:
  - Board Chair Darby would like to hold an evening Open Forum, in addition to the regularly schedule Board Meeting, in March. She stated that the community is waiting to see some action/activity from the Board.
  - Ms. Nixon announced that the family of Mr. James Martin, Vice President of the Jacksonville Branch NAACP and a member of the Democratic Black Caucus, has requested a Resolution or Acknowledgement in Memoriam. Mr. Martin's funeral service is being held at the end of the week. Ms. Nixon was directed to take the lead on preparing the Acknowledgement and to forward it to either Dr. Ahmed or Mr. Dennis for approval.
  - Board member Curley shared several fliers announcing community events celebrating Black History Month.

#### **10. Public Comments and Announcements:**

- Mr. Brian Williams wanted to know if the Board will focus on developing small businesses.
  - Board Chair Darby stated that the Board has an Economy and Infrastructure Committee and that they will be scheduling their meeting soon.
  - Dr. Ahmed directed Mr. Williams to contact the Jacksonville Small and Emerging Businesses (JSEB). Greg Grant is the JSEB Administrator.
- Ms. Dana Mahle, Moncrief Springs Community, wanted to know if the MAAAB could add content to support community groups.
  - The MAAAB does not have a social media page.
- Mr. Eugene Ford shared information on the Duval Storm Water Council.
- Ms. Katrina Nixon made several recommendations for the Black History Month Celebration Event: The United House of Prayer Youth Choir.
- Mr. Ken Covington expressed appreciation for Mayor Deegan in putting the MAAAB in place. He stated that the majority of concerns in the African American community are already known and requested that the Board put their energy into helping to resolve issues.
  - Chair Darby thanked Mr. Covington for his attendance and comments.

#### **11. Adjournment**

It was properly moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The next meeting of the Mayor's African American Advisory Board is Monday, February 4, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., in the Ed Ball Building, First Floor Hearing Room.

