

COAA July 2017 MINUTES

The following minutes are taken as the COAA/ MOAA and the public input was reported.

07/05/17	6:05 PM	OFFICE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS	6 th Floor
Meeting called by	Chair Lydia Nylander		
Secretary	Commissioner Abeba Taddese		
Attendees	<u>Commissioners:</u> Lydia Nylander, Abeba Taddese, Abdel Maliky, Akua Asare, Kedist Geremaw, Chibu Anyanwu, Ikenna Udejiofor, Nana Afari-Dwamena, Willair St. Vil <u>Deputy Director:</u> Heran Sereke-Brhan; <u>Language Access Coordinator:</u> Aly Kaba <u>Public:</u> Donnette Cooper, DHCD; Ron Smith, DC DDC; Isabelle Billon		
June Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meeting minutes were accepted as distributed with minor corrections to ensure correct spelling of names		
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Chair Nylander opened the meeting by welcoming the Commissioners and public attendees.		
STANDING BUSINESS			
MOAA Updates/Commissioner Updates	Update on Peabody Street Fire Victims <ul style="list-style-type: none">Worked with Peabody Street fire victims, June 24-25. About 200 people displaced, approximately 12 Ethiopians, 3 families from W. Africa. Language access not a real concern.Mamadou and Bez were there on June 24, Heran was there to support families on June 25. Commissioner Abeba Taddese was there briefly on both days.Heran is working with victims to help them recover immigration documents and passports. Has been in touch with Ethiopian Embassy and it looks like they will help and waive fees.Carlos Rosario was there – at least 10 of their students suffered, one was Ethiopian.Some questions from victims about who would be advocating on behalf of African families/individuals.Community is now asking for free legal support. They would like to		

	<p>have discussions with management to make sure their demands and needs are met. OAA will explore, but the office is likely to have restrictions that prevent its extensive involvement,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borger has been very responsive to date. They've hosted a dinner for fire victims and are exploring interim housing options. • <i>Next steps:</i> What can Commissioners can provide? How can we help to address need for psychological support/counseling services? <p>Young African Connexions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd Annual Summit: Strengthening Diaspora, Partnership and Engagement – Friday, July 14, 2017, 5-7:30 PM • Mandela Day of Service: July 15, expect participation from Wagner and Howard YALI Fellows <p>African Community Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFP slated to go out mid-July. May need Commissioners to help with review process. Will open July 17 and close August 17. Commissioners raised questions about application process, in particular, a desire to ensure a new pool of applicants each year. Heran assured the Commissioners that they saw new applicants each year and agreed to keep Commissioners updated on the need for reviewers. <p>Other Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Mason, census report. Information/analysis not thorough enough. Need to wrap report up but it needs more work. <p>Update from Commissioner Abdel Maliky on Public Safety in Ward 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal was to have liaison officer at meetings • There was a lot of expressed support from officers at the Know Your Rights event for the African community, but no one has attended COAA meetings yet. • COAA would like an officer present at monthly meetings, to provide regular updates and serve as a point of contact for the community. Liaison should update COAA on current issues, proposed solutions, and any challenges on a regular basis. • From Heran: New African liaison unit came to OAA office today, 7/5/17. Apparently, they have run into some issues that have prevented them from moving at the speed they would like. Reason why they could not be at meetings, but will be African Connexions Summit and Mandela Service Day. • Commissioner Lydia: How do we make sure this is relayed to community? Are any African liaison members planning to attend Ward 4 monthly meeting? What is overall safety strategy for African residents? We should make sure we are all speaking on behalf of the communities we are a part of, and working to make sure the
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	<p>vision presented to the community at Know Your Rights is realized.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mamadou was a part of setting up liaison unit, so he knows how to broach issues/concerns with the unit. Important for Commissioner Lydia Nylander to be a part of these discussions. • Commissioner Willair has volunteered to draft a 1 page concept note outlining proposed engagement approach, which he will submit to the Chair on July 14. <p>Update from Chair Lydia Nylander regarding Training Manual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules of operation. Lydia to send out a draft for comments. Looking for input from Commissioners. Will share it in advance of next meeting – August. Time will be set aside to discuss draft, issues/concerns/questions. <p>Committees/Focus areas for Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public safety, economic development, events and outreach, strategic partnerships. These have emerged as four core issue areas. Chair would like Commissioners to choose at least one and focus on them. How do we follow-up with community who make it a point to come to OAA meeting? • Important to ensure alignment with OAA priorities. These seem to mesh well with current priorities, which change according to the Mayor's priorities. • While it is important to align with MOAA priorities, Commissioner Akua reminded the group that one of the COAA's primary objectives is to advocate for the African community. • Important to understand legislation that defines COAA and describes its role.
Upcoming events	<p>Update on Events Next Week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy hour on 13th – Commissioner Willair and Commissioner Barnes are planning the event. Scheduled to accommodate fellows from Howard, already on their schedule. Hoping also to have Wagner fellows join. • Announcement for happy hour is in African Beat. Location: Queen of Sheba restaurant. Good way to connect with fellows, build new ties, represent the Commission. • Montgomery AAG is hosting YALI fellows on same day, July 13th. • Commissioner Willair's wife will be hosting a breakfast – for younger, business generation. Focus on business networking. • Thursday: Commissioner Akua will serve as MC. • Friday: There will be food at Summit, need Commissioners to help with ushering and hosting. Commissioner Lydia who is also on a panel will MC. • Saturday: Commissioners Kidist, Abeba, Lydia, tentative Akua. Path to Greatness is partner – a nonprofit that works with youth/youth

	<p>volunteer opportunities. The Alice Fergusson Foundation has helped to connect MOAA to Park Service. This year they will be out another event, but they are providing bags, gloves, etc.</p> <p>Health Summit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working to finalize dates- likely mid/late September, trying to plan it for some time during African Heritage month. • Some vendors have expressed interest already. • Organizing Commissioners (Nana and Chibu) are working on a new theme, but really need other Commissioners to step up and be responsive when requests for help are made. • Heran suggests we try to tap into group of grantees. US Conference on African Immigrant Health has expressed interest in supporting health summit. Planning team encouraged to reach out to them. <p>Reach your Greatness Entrepreneur Summit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee based event – not necessarily an event that aligns with OAA interest, but suggestion to reach out to them for their connection to Howard for help with health summit. <p>Smithsonian Partnership/African Art Museum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner Willair: would like to explore a way to host an event there, but need sponsors/financial partners. • Commissioner Akua: shared information about an individual who would like to offer free financial workshops through his new State Farm business and partner on events. Has shared this information with Commissioner Willair. • Would be good to explore ways to host events at African Art Museum. The director is interested in supporting OAA. As a first step, we should invite her to an OAA meeting. Donnette, from the community has offered to support an event and relationship building. <p>Some September events in the works. Heran to share information as it becomes available.</p>
Members of the Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ron Smith – Advocate for disability community in Washington DC. Here to invite everyone to DC Developmental Disability Council Meeting, on July 20 at 441 4th Street (general meeting from 3-5 PM). Will be celebrating chairman Matt McCollough promoted to Director of Disability Rights for DC. Would like to build a partnership with DC Developmental Council. He suggests Ronald King at Department of Health – outreach specialist as a contact for the

	<p>health fair. Health is a big concern for Developmental Disability Council. Council is here to support African community and ensure best health outcomes for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• OPC – Washington Gas merger with AltaGas. OPC will be advocating on behalf of District consumers for a merger that protects the interests of residents.•
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Ended: 8:20