



Fairfax County NAACP
General Membership Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2018

Location: Kings Park Library, Burke, VA

Meeting Facilitator: Kofi Annan, President

Attendees: 25

President Annan called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. He began the meeting by asking all new visitors to stand and be recognized.

President Annan called for the approval of the previously distributed membership minutes from the January meeting. A motion was made, duly seconded, and the minutes passed without objection.

Next, the President Annan called for the Financial Committee Report. Treasurer Michelle Leete provided a detailed financial report, which she indicated that she would be submitting for audit. The report was accepted without objection.

Following the Financial Report, President Annan recognized Fairfax County NAACP member Susan Howard for a discussion of her resolution regarding the Climate of Racism within the County, State, and Nation. Ms. Howard had made a suggestion at the January General Membership Meeting that the Fairfax County branch needed to make a statement about the climate of the County, State and Nation since the rise of White Nationalism with the election of Donald Trump, the events of last summer in Charlottesville, where hundreds of White Nationalists were allowed free reign on the campus of the University of Virginia and where one woman was murdered as a result.

Ms. Howard read her resolution to the assembled membership group and after much discussion and suggested amendments, a vote was called for. The resolution passed overwhelmingly, with only one objection. (A copy of the final resolution is attached.)

Next, First Vice President and Political Action Chair Karen Campblin provided an legislative update on the Virginia General Assembly. Campblin noted that a delegation of Virginia State NAACP members held a lobbying day in Richmond on January 16, which was well attended. Among the issues that were discussed there and promoted by the State Conference were as follows:

- **Raising the threshold of a grand larceny** (felony) conviction from \$200. Virginia is currently the state with the lowest threshold for grand larceny, thus trapping those committing petty theft (a \$200 cell phone, for instance) in the criminal justice system for life as convicted felons. Campblin noted that a bill making its way through the assembly calls for the threshold to be raised to \$500.(House Bill 17)
- Ensuring **written policies for the operation of body-worn camera systems** are developed in each jurisdiction within the Commonwealth that operates such systems—policies that conform with those already established by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. (HB 402)

- **Reducing the term of school suspensions** throughout the state of Virginia. (SB 170)
- **No excuse absentee voting** (House Bill 1072) to ensure that all citizens can vote in the run-up to election day.
- **Creating a Civilian Review Panel** to evaluate all Police Use of Force incidents to ensure transparency within the public safety sector. (HB 1514)
- Defining and denying support to organizations that are classified **as Domestic Terrorist Organizations** (HB 1601).

Despite significant effort on the part of those individuals and groups who support these initiatives, Campblin reported that it is likely that only the grand larceny threshold bill would get out of committee, but assured the group that all of the remaining bills would be brought up in future legislative sessions.

Next President Annan reviewed the branch's substantive events calendar for the coming months, which includes a Black History Month Program (February), a Women's History Month Program (March), a Hip-Hop Voter Registration Program (May), and a Health Fair (June).

President Annan then provided a Criminal Justice Report:

Use of Force Study – 40% of use-of-force incidents in the County happen to African Americans, who comprise only 9% of the population. Annan will meet with Police Chief Roessler to discuss and to recommend that an outside auditor be brought in to review the current use of force policy and make recommendations for improvement.

Civilian Review Panel – Fairfax DOES have a civilian review panel thanks to the County Board's adoption of substantive recommendations from the Police Practices Review Panel, on which our previous President, Shirely Ginwright, served. The Panel is up and running, but too few citizens are aware that their cases can be brought before the panel for review. Annan is urging that citizens be made aware of the panel's ability to review their case when arrests occur.

Body-worn Cameras – Fairfax DOES now have police wearing cameras. This has been a test program for the past three months. Annan and others will attend the police conference on Friday to announce the results of the test period.

School Resource Officer Policies – Fairfax now has police serving as SROs in all County Middle and High Schools. Annan noted that these officers were put in schools to help protect children, but more and more are being used to arrest children who are disorderly or acting out in school, adding to the already fraught school-to-prison pipeline. Incidents such as arrests for disorderly conduct, grand larceny, and trespassing are on the rise at our County schools. Annan stated that the criminal justice system is NOT the solution to school-based behavioral issues. He urged that all school Principals and administrators receive sensitivity training to issues of race and behavior, and that more data be released by the County with regard to arrests and incidents involving the School Resource Officers.

School Board Member Pat Hynes was in attendance and President Annan asked her to stand, be recognized, and say a few words to the gathering. Hynes provided various remarks on her work with the school board, noting that she was the only school board member in attendance and suggested that every one of our NAACP meetings should be attended by at least one school board member, since education issues seemed to be a priority for the branch.

She admitted that entrants into the “Advanced School Programs” such as the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science & Technology are under-represented by students of color and she plans to meet with Education Chair Sean Perryman to discuss what might be done about that. She stated that she has pushed her colleagues on the school board and the new school superintendent to adopt an “Equity Scorecard” for each school within the Fairfax County system to be able to quickly see where various schools can use help in ensuring equitable treatment of all their children. She said that the issue of fairness and equity within the school system was a “systemic challenge.” This issue she noted, would be front and center at the school board’s March 12 working session and she urged members of the branch to attend and make their voices heard.

During the New Business section of the meeting, President Annan noted the following items:

The branch is planning a “Returning Citizens Fair” for those who are returning to the community after stays at correctional centers throughout the state. This will be held in conjunction with the Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) program.

Annan called attention to another death that has occurred of a citizen in the custody of the Fairfax County Sheriff’s Department. He called for more transparency into the circumstances surrounding the death of Henrietta Smith.

On the other hand, Annan complimented Sheriff Kincaid for her refusal to continue the County’s contract with the U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement division so that citizens will no longer be held in custody at Fairfax County facilities any longer than their sentence requires.

Finally, Annan indicated that the branch was moving to re-engage with Historically Black Churches in the county to create a stronger bond between these strong organizations and their local NAACP.

At 11:50, Annan called for a motion to adjourn, which was duly made, seconded, and unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY

Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

TO ADDRESS THE CURRENT POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OF RACIAL HOSTILITY

Whereas the mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the nation’s oldest grassroots civil rights organization, is to ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination;

Whereas the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) actively advocates for the civil rights of and campaigns for equal opportunities for all American citizens, in particular communities of color and seeks to remove all barriers of discrimination through the democratic processes;

Whereas policymakers in the current political climate have attempted to implement Executive Order 13769, a travel ban, restricting entry into the United States by majority Muslim countries, to impede legal immigration from African, Caribbean, and Latin American nations in favor of European nations, terminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and construct a border wall between the United States and Mexico;

Whereas policymakers in the current political climate have attempted to dismantle the Affordable Care Act (ACA), terminate affirmative action policies, and suppress voting by African Americans, Hispanics and other communities of color,

Whereas the current political climate has promoted and emboldened organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, the Pennsylvania Light Foot Militia, the New York Light Foot Militia, the Virginia Minutemen Militia, the Oath Keepers, the 3 Percenter, the Traditionalist Worker Party, the League of the South, Identity Europa, Vanguard America, the National Socialist Movement and other organizations affiliated with the "Alt-Right" movement to commit acts of violence directed at people of the United States; and

Whereas the conduct of elected officials and the members of the aforementioned organizations have formed patterns of intimidation, including uncivil discourse replete with hatred, bigotry, misogyny and religious intolerance thus creating barriers of inequality; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Fairfax County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), on behalf of its members respectfully call on the members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax County Public School Board to:

1. Develop a plan to address the reported increase in racial and religious bullying in Fairfax County Public Schools;
2. Denounce all forms of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and other religious discrimination;
3. Allocate resources that will promote fairness and justice, and meaningful community involvement as stated in the purpose of the One Fairfax Policy; and
4. Promote programs and services that encourage active participation in the democratic processes.