



**COMMISSION ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS  
(CAAA)**

**MARCH MEETING MINUTES**

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Meeting Date: March 17, 2021

WebEx Meeting

1. **Call to Order**: Chair, Jeffries Leonard called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.
2. **Roll Call**: Quorum was established. Quorum is established when there is a presence of one third of the Commission (voting and non-voting Ex-Officio). There were 10 Commissioners present, 6 Public Members and 4 Ex-Officio.

**Commissioners Present:**

- Kimberly Jeffries Leonard, Public Member, Ward 4 (Chair)
- Salim Adofo, Public Member, Ward 8
- Spencer Gopaul, Public Member, Ward 5
- Kimberly Dickerson, Ex- Officio Member, MPD, Ward 7
- Kristin Shymoniak, Public Member, Ward 8
- Melanee Woodard, Public Member, Ward 5
- Anthony Diallo, Ex-Officio Member, DCRA, Ward 7
- Ronald King, Ex-Officio Member, DC Health, Ward 7
- Sondra Phillips-Gilbert, Public Member, Ward 6
- Delano Hunter, Ex-Officio Member, DPR, Ward 5

**Commissioners Absent:**

- Charles Jones, Ex-Officio Member, DOES, Ward 2
- Lolita Ratchford, Public Member, Ward 1
- Ryan Jones, Public Member, Ward 4
- Deneira Owens, Ex-Officio Member, DHCD, Ward 7
- Lauren Vaughan, Public Member, Ward 6
- Vivian Derryck, Public Member, Ward 4

3. **Approval and Correction of Minutes**: Vice-Chair Spencer Gopaul made a motion to accept and approve the meeting minutes. Commissioner Sondra Phillip-Gilbert seconded the motion.
4. **MOAAA Update**: MOAAA Executive Director Rev. Bowen thanked Chair Jerffies for her COVID preparedness work throughout the community and Associate Director Gaines for his assistance with preparations for the Council hearing. Executive Director Rev. Bowen congratulated Dr. Faith Gibson Hubbard as the new Director of the Office of Community Affairs. Associate Director Lionell Gaines shared that MOAAA will assist those that need to access the COVID-19 Vaccine registration. Vaccination registration can be made via [vaccinate.dc.gov](https://vaccinate.dc.gov) or calling the Call Center.

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In Honor of Women's History Month, The Mayor's LBGT Office will hold Queer Women of Washington (RSVP: [HERE](#)) will take place March 25th at 6:30 PM.

The Washington Women of Excellence Awards will be held March 26 (RSVP: [HERE](#)). MOAAA's next installation of Financially Fit Series Generational Wealth Building Series focusing on taxes will be held March 24 at 5:30 PM (RSVP: [HERE](#)).

On March 22, Mayor Bowser will sit before the House Committee on Oversight and Reform advocating for DC Statehood Hearing (HR Bill 51).

### 5. Guest Speakers:

- Dr. Faith Gibson Hubbard, Director of The Mayor's Office of Community Affairs (MOCA) (Email: [faith.gibsonhubbard@dc.gov](mailto:faith.gibsonhubbard@dc.gov), Phone: 202-716-5130).
  - MOCA will be reintroducing themselves to the community and providing resources to the community, hold budget listening sessions to get community insight and share other important initiatives and information.
  - Questions Asked:
    - Was the Office of Grants Services a part of Serve DC at one time?
      - The Office of Grants Services is now titled as the Mayor's Office on Volunteerism and Partnership which is also known as Serve DC.
    - How will the budget decrease for outreach impact MOCA this fiscal year?
      - MOCA will create and utilize partnerships with both community organizations and DC agencies and be more innovative with less funding such as partnering with other offices, organizations, and agencies.
    - How does MOCA address MOAAA having one of the smallest budget compared to other cultural Commissions/Offices knowing that the African American community is a prominent group in the District that is in need of resources?
      - Some of the other offices have a larger budget because they do things that MOAAA does not do such as language access services. MOAAA has to be a beacon of light for the African American community and MOCA will be heavily reliant on resources and community members to help the office identify additional resources and collaborate and leverage the funding that other offices have. MOCA will be holding community budget listening sessions to gain feedback regarding the Budget and setting priorities that will positively impact the African American community.
    - What role can the Commission play about Building Blocks DC Emergency Operation Center and can the Commission be a part of the work?

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- Yes, the Commission can play a role and become engaged in the initiative. Dr. Gibson Hubbard will have MOCA connect Building Blocks and MOAAA.
- Can MOAAA and receive additional funding for staffing and resources?
  - All recommendations made through the listening sessions will be presented during the budget oversight hearing. There is a possibility for additional funding through grants.
  - Community Member Jackie Carter volunteered to help lead organizing a recommendations for MOAAA at the budget hearing
- Difference between MOCRS and MOCA?
  - MOCRS is Mayor's Office on Community Relations and Services providing ward-wide constituency services and help residents navigate the multiple layers of government that can support them.
  - MOCA includes 13 other offices that are specific to constituencies and issue areas such as MOAAA.
- Does the Commission have a position on the proposed African American History curriculum/course legislation?
  - It is of great value to expose and teach students of all cultures and history. The Commission's mission is to uplift, teach, and share the accurate history and culture of African American communities. The Commission can help strengthen and develop the development and disbursement of the curriculum.
  - Dr. Morrison volunteered to assist with moving the African American history initiative forward.

### 6. **Commission Business:** The Commission did not have any items in the agenda.

- Commissioner Woodard made a motion to hold a special Commission Public Meeting in April. It was seconded by Vice- Chair Gopaul.
- Emancipation Day Celebration will be virtual. MOAA will be collaborating with other agencies and organizations to discuss emancipation and connecting it to DC statehood, Black History, and Black Lives Matter. There will be no concert or parade. More information will be shared.
- (Old Business) No Old Business discussed
- (New Business) The Commission will hold a non-public meeting to discuss making recommendations for the Budget Priorities -- Secretary Shymoniak will work with Associate Director Gaines on scheduling.
- Commissioner Adofu suggested that during the Commission's recess that a Black Leadership Collective be held to allow members to become familiar with each other to foster collaboration and relationship building.

### 7. **Public Comments:** Below are action items for Commissioners:

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- Commissioner King offered appreciation and kudos to Director Gaines for going door to door to register seniors for the COVID vaccination. He visited Commissioner King's sister and brother-in-law who were initially reluctant and registered them.
  - Action Items for the Commission for the next meeting:
    - Commission meeting to establish recommendations regarding budget priorities.
    - Commissioners Adofo and Gopaul work alongside Associate Director Gaines to establish a Black Leadership Collective during the Commission's recess.
8. **Adjournment:** Chair, Jeffries Leonard adjourned the meeting at 8:00 pm.