**The Links Incorporated**

**Middlesex County Chapter Meeting Minutes**

**April 11, 2020 (1st draft 04/21/20)**

**HOSTESS/MEETING LOCATION:** Chapter President, Link Kim Savoy/Zoom Video Conference Call – 12:30pm

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ATTENDANCE: Members present – 38 Active / 1 Affiliate / 3 Alumni = 41 Total Attendees** | | | | | | | | |
| X | Kaye Allen | X | Julia Cofield | X | Cassandra Lockett | X | | Stephanie Robinson |
| X | Earlene Avalon | X | Terri Williams Cohee | X | Kathy Lucas | X | | Kim Savoy |
| X | Rebecca Barnett | X | Donna Cramer | X | Juliette Mayers | X | | Nikole Skoko |
|  | Vivian Beard \* |  | Barbara Cruz |  | Desiree McNeil | X | | Shanique Smith |
| X | Michele Bingham | X | Terri Cubia |  | Dani Monroe | X | | Shelby Smither |
| X | Clemia Brittenum | X | Jennifer DaSilva |  | Valerie Mosley \* | X | | Kathy Taylor |
| X | Tomiko Brown Nagin | X | Chenita Daughtry | X | Angela Motley |  | | Kathy Thurman |
|  | Kimberly Budd | X | Natalie Dixon \*\* | X | Nike Okediji |  | | Shawnda Walker |
| X | Tamara Cadet | X | Beverly Edgehill |  | Lisa Owens | X | | Pat Washington |
|  | Sylvia Carr |  | Latoyia Edwards | X | Janet Palmer-Owens | X | | Terry Wilkins |
|  | Cynthia Carter |  | Juarez Farrington | X | Danielle Pelot |  | | Sabrina Williams |
| X | Petrina Cherry | X | Jacqueline Glenn | X | Deloris Pettis | X | | Theresa Wilson-Coney |
| X | Elizabeth Clark-Donald | X | Kimmie Jackson | X | Stephanie Pinder-Amaker | X | | Paula Wright |
| ***Alumni Members Present: 3*** | | | | | | | | |
|  | Frances Bernat | X | Carolyn G. Hebsgaard |  | Jackie Benson Jones | |  | Donna Norris |
|  | Clemmie Cash | X | Marion Grayer |  | Donna Levy Wray | |  | Dorothy Terrell |
|  | Claudette Crouse |  | Donna Hardy |  | Patricia Long | |  |  |
|  | Jacqueline Fields |  | Perea Hopkins | X | Veronica Lytle | |  |  |
|  | Michele Gibbons-Carr |  | Jean Hurd |  | Julia Monroe | |  |  |

\* Members on Leave (2) \*\* Affiliate Members (1)

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chapter President, Link Kim Savoy at 12:30pm. Link Earlene Avalon led the National Pledge. Chapter Recording Secretary, Link Pat Washington did the roll call to confirm members who were present on the call.

Link Kim welcomed members and noted it was good to have so many attendees in light of the current circumstances related to Covid-19 which has prevented us from meeting physically since February. Her remarks were emailed earlier this week to inform members that today’s meeting agenda is condensed because there are some business matters our Chapter must discuss and be voted on today.

The first item of business was to take a Chapter vote to approve conducting our monthly Chapter meetings virtually (effective as of today) as this may become a part of our ‘new normal’ going forward. Our current Chapter bylaws indicate meetings are to be held physically/in person. A motion was made and seconded to allow monthly Chapter meetings to be conducted virtually when we are not able to meet in one physical location. Members voted to approve this change, effective today, April 11th. This vote allows today’s meeting to be held virtually, via Zoom video conference technology.

Link Kim noted we must also vote to approve the annual budget for the fiscal period beginning May 1, 2020; vote to approve the slate of officers effective May 1, 2020 and have a discussion today about a recommendation related to our fundraising Gala, currently scheduled for October 2020. We will also have a discussion about the Hostess Meeting schedule due to the cancellation of the March 2020 Chapter meeting as a result of the pandemic. Link Kim advised that our social time, normally held at the beginning of our meeting, will be held at the end of today’s business meeting for those who are able stay on the call for some fellowship time.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the February 8, 2020 meeting minutes as submitted.

**CARE AND SHARE (Link Earlene Avalon)**

Link Earlene asked the chapter to join her in wishing Happy Birthdays to the following members who celebrate their birthday in March: Links Sisters Michele Bingham, Cassandra Lockett, Petrina Cherry, Clemmie Cash, Desire McNeil, Marion Grayor and Nikole Skoko; and, in April: Link Sisters Michel Gibbons-Carr, Terry Wilkins and Tamiko Brown Nagin

**TREASURER’S REPORT:**

**Chapter Budget**: Treasurer, Link Deloris Pettis, reminded the Chapter that at the February meeting she presented a proposed budget for fiscal year May 1, 2020 thru April 30, 2021. We usually vote on the proposed budgets at the March meeting. Due to current events, our March meeting was cancelled. Link Deloris shared that there was a change since the last meeting. The original proposed budget was based on 50 members but that number is now at 49 because another member (Juarez Farrington) will be moving to the Alum status effective May 1st. In addition, the gala topic and resulting decision may require minor changes to the budget. She noted that neither of these adjustments will affect the Chapter’s Program budget or ability to deliver planned programming and activities because we have a very good cash position. The detailed cash projections for fiscal year 5/1/2020-4/30/2021 (without the gala) have been prepared. After all expenses (excluding the gala) we are projected to end the next fiscal year with a combined positive account cash balance of $40,211.93. Following discussion, a motion was made and seconded to approve the budget as submitted to the National Office for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2020. The Chapter voted to approve the budget.

**Account Balances:** Link Deloris reported that as of March 31, 2020, the accounts have been reconciled. The balances are as noted below:

* Restricted Account $17,634.77
* Unrestricted Account $48,420.16
* Foundation Balance $30,722.00

**Grand Total: $96,776.93**

**Membership Dues:** Link Deloris reminded members that annual Membership dues ($350) were due to be paid by March 31st. Members who have not paid their dues should do that as soon as possible. She noted that emails were sent to all members who have outstanding payments due but should contact her if anyone has questions about their payment status.

**Friendship Assessments:** Link Deloris reminded members that the $150 member Annual Friendship Assessment payments are due to be paid no later than the June monthly Chapter meeting.

**Member Payment Protocol:** Link Deloris clarified that ***all*** checks payable to the Middlesex (MA) County Chapter Links (dues, assessments, tickets, etc.) should include the reason for the payment on the check memo line and be given or mailed to the Chapter Financial Secretary, Link Cindy Carter Cole. Payments may also be made online via Zelle money transfer transactions directly from your bank account if your bank is part of the Zelle Money Transfer Network (include reason for payment) or on the Chapter website via credit card. Noted there is a service fee charge for payments submitted via credit cards.

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

**Annual Volunteer Hour Reports:** Membership Vice President, Link Liz Clark Donald, advised the Chapter that due to the pandemic, the National Office has waived the 48 hour requirement for this fiscal period, however Link Liz does recommend that any members who have more that 48 hours submit their hours to her.

**Chapter Member Activity/Changes:** Link Liz noted that in addition to Link Kathy Taylor’s request to move to Alum status, Link Juarez Farrington also requested to move to Alum status. Link Liz read Link Juarez’ letter to the Chapter. Both status change requests were approved by the National Office, effective May 1, 2020. Link Liz noted that plans will be made to celebrate both of these members and recognize them for their many years of community service and contributions to the Chapter as soon as possible after the pandemic restrictions are lifted.

**Chapter Hostess Meeting Schedule:**  Link Liz noted the March Chapter meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic and that April’s meeting is being held today via Zoom. This unexpected event requires that we alter the hostess scheduled dates. The May meeting will be another virtual meeting and it’s likely that June will also be virtual unless restrictions are lifted and the Chapter feels comfortable being together in one physical location in June. Based on this, the decision was made to push back the Hostess Meeting schedule and resume in September. Link Liz will be drafting the hostess meeting schedule over the next few months and will be in touch with members who are schedule for host a monthly member during the upcoming fiscal year. Link Kim will notify members in advance of the May and June meeting dates.

**Election Slate of Officers:**  Chapter President, Link Kim Savoy informed the Chapter that our By-Laws (Article 4, Section 4) states officers are elected for one-year terms, except for the Treasurer who has a two-year term. Based on the By-Laws we are required to present a slate of officers to the body annually for a chapter vote. Link Kim noted that at the April 11th joint meeting with the Executive Board and Executive Council Members (comprised of Past Presidents), it was agreed to present a slate of officers to the Chapter today that consists of the officers who are currently in place for a chapter vote. Following discussion, a motion was made and seconded to adopt the proposed slate officers to serve for a one year term beginning May 1, 2020 and ending on April 30, 2021. The chapter votes was taken and the slate was approved as recommended.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**2020 Fundraising Gala:** Chapter President, Link Kim, updated the Chapter on the discussion that took place at the joint meeting between the Executive Board, Past Chapter Presidents and Gala Co-Chairs to discuss the 2020 Gala in light of the current pandemic’s social distancing guidelines and the fall out surrounding the state of emergency conditions. Many scheduled events and large gatherings have been cancelled and many other events are likely to be postponed or cancelled. The objective of the discussion was to assess the pros and cons of moving forward with the Gala vs. postponing, cancelling or changing the scope of the 2020 Gala and agree on a recommendation to present to the Chapter for a final decision. Some of the key considerations included in the assessment were:: current pandemic status & projected outlook, adverse impact the pandemic/state of emergency conditions have and will continue to have on large and small businesses and individuals who would be the Chapter’s target audience for sponsorships and ticket sales, as well as the Chapter’s financial and contractual obligations to the Gala venue. During the meeting, the venue contract cancellation language was discussed; language, indicates a refund of all or part of the deposits paid would be refunded depending on the cancellation notification date. Link Kim, presented the group’s recommendation to cancel the Gala, as currently planned and notify the Venue. Following a discussion with the Chapter, the Chapter members agreed with the recommendation to cancel the Gala, to not issue any additional deposit payments and notify the venue of the cancellation in writing. A motion was made and seconded to cancel the October 2020 Gala A decision will need to be made regarding whether to seek a refund of deposits already paid, use the deposit for a future Friendship activity or let the venue retain the initial deposit for a future Gala to be held there on a future date. The Chapter will continue with other fundraising efforts this year (perhaps grant requests); just not the Gala.

**Program Committee:** Program Committee Chairperson, Link Petrina Cherry, updated the Chapter on the contact she has had with We Belong since the pandemic to understand the needs of program participants and determine how the Chapter could be of help. About two weeks ago, she delivered food and sanitizers for distribution to those who were of need. She plans to reach out again to determine what else we can do to support them during this time. The members thanked Link Petrina for reaching out on behalf of the Chapter. Members noted that our Chapter should continue to increase our support to We Belong. It was also recommended that a separate meeting be scheduled by the Program Chair and in addition to program committee members, extend the invitation to all Chapter members to participate in a brainstorming session to develop a recommendation for how best to refocus our programming plans in a comprehensive way given how program participants of We Belong may be impacted by the state of emergency fall out: could be more focus on basic needs, such as; internet access for online classes, supportive care associated with behavioral issues, etc.

Link Kim closed the meeting by thanking everyone for taking attend today’s meeting. She noted our May meeting would probably be another virtual session and also invited members to stay on the line, for some social time if their schedules permit. Recording Secretary, Link Pat conducted a final role call to make sure that everyone on the call today was noted for attendance purposes because a few other members joined the call after the initial roll call.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1:45pm.

Meeting minutes prepared and respectfully submitted by Recording Secretary, Link Pat