**ASALH Executive Council Conference Call Minutes**

**July 16, 2013**

The meeting was called to order by President Scott after the establishment of quorum.

The following Council members were on the call: Edna Green Medford, Gina Page, Randy Rice, Roy Betts, Lionel Kimble, Troy Thornton, Janet Sims-Wood, Gladys Gary Vaughn, Carlton Wilson, Paula Senior, Kenya King, Sylvia Cyrus.

The focus of the call was to address the rising call to boycott the conference in Jacksonville. President Scott shared with the Council members information regarding the boycotting the conference and the state of Florida that was being shared with him be members and scholars. While members spoke of the prospect of the NAACP calling for a boycott of the state of Florida, President Scott share with the Council that the NAACP planned a convention in Florida, which ends at the end of the week. They are not boycotting and if they call for a boycott in the future they will look like hypocrites. He acknowledged that there are sincere people calling for a boycott and a decent number of scholars also calling for a boycott of Florida. It is a live issue and to dismiss it would not take seriously the concerns of the members.

President Scott shared that the message, which was placed on constant contact, was an effort to set the groundwork for honoring our contract with the hotel and to let the people know that when we go to Florida it is not our intent to be a group of people talking about the past without any clue of what is happening around us. If the Council can agree to move forward with the conference then an agenda will be launched to address the situation in Florida but more generally to address what appears to be a new age of challenges around civil rights and voting rights. The organization needs to start begin a campaign and share it with members that will address the issues and concerns that are facing our people today.

The conversation was opened to the Council members to discuss what they have been hearing about boycotting Florida and discuss their feelings about going to Jacksonville, Florida.

Several Council members discussed the pros and cons of moving forward with the conference.

President Scott shared that if we back out of the conference we stand to loose approximately $225,000. The organization would owe the hotel $125,000, consultants about $25,000 and opportunity costs of about $50,000. The $50,000 that ASALH would loose is what is used to pay staff. The reserves will have to be used to pay for the hotel and the consultants however ASALH would loose about three staff members. The loss of three staff members would preclude the ASALH from holing the luncheon in February. The decision to boycott Florida would have a rippling effect.

Carlton Wilson shared that the majority of our members know that a boycott would cripple the organization.

It was decided to hold a conference call by Monday with the branch members. Additionally, all the braches in Jacksonville should be contacted. Gina Page asked what is the benefit of a boycott? She further explained that if we can identify what people think boycotting will accomplish then in the response to why we are not boycotting those reasons could be addressed.

President Scott shared that if we are true to the principle of boycotting states that have discriminatory practices against blacks as opposed to responding to the individual case then, there are about 22 states that we cannot go to. Most of the states left that we would be able to go to are states that we never hold a conference in. ASALH would not be able to function if we stood on principle.

Gladys Gary Vaughn stated that there is no state that is clean. There are similar raw incidences in most of the states like the one in Florida.

***It was moved by Edna Green Medford and seconded by Randy Rice to move forward with holding the conference in Jacksonville, Florida.***

Roy Betts yes

Janet Sims-Wood yes

Gladys Gary Vaughn yes

Carlton Wilson yes

Gina Page yes

Randy Rice yes

Lionel Kimble yes

Troy Thornton yes

Daryl Scott yes  ***Vote: Unanimous***

A conference call will be held with branch leadership and members to affirm the conference coming to Jacksonville on Monday. Sylvia Cyrus suggested that the honorary co chairs/committee along with any politicians be the second call since they are the people of affluence in the Jacksonville area. Call three would be all of the Florida branches. The fourth call would be a call, which includes all the other branches.

President Scott suggested that we host six presidential panels. These panels would be open to the public with no fee charged for the panels. Troy Thornton asked about security for an open forum, it is an unplanned expense that will impact our budget. Sylvia Cyrus stated that she would reach out to NOBLE for security support.

The Voter Empowerment Project was introduced as a project, which will create knowledge about the rules and regulations governing voting in every state. President Scott stated that he would put together committees of scholars who can put together for every state, a 1,500-2,000-word essay regarding the history of voting in each state. This knowledge will be offered in the form of an AP. The AP will be free and it will be produced with the help of Shukree Tilghman. President Scott shared that this would not be a static website, it would change as the laws and practices change throughout the country. The wake up call is there is no safe place in the United States and to the extent that we may have been perceived to be complacent we are moving. ASALH is taking on a different dimension of the work.

Gladys Gary Vaughn shared that she likes the idea of moving from focusing on history to sharing history as it is made. She shared that we need to look for partnerships for this project.

President called for a motion to authorize the Voter Empowerment Project database. The motion would not authorize the expenditure of funds to develop the AP. A motion will be requested at a later time to authorize the expenditure of funds for the AP.

Concerns were raised about the cost of the entire project and the scholars that would be doing the work. It was requested that a two-page proposal be submitted outlining the proposal and preliminary costs. President Scott stated that he would draft the proposal and call a meeting when the proposal has been completed. After much deliberation a motion was made as shared below.

***It was moved by Randy Rice and seconded by Roy Betts that we authorize the Voter Empowerment Project and that we support the President moving forward with the caveat that we will vote on the budget at a later date.***

Janet Sims-Wood yes

Gladys Gary Vaughn yes

Carlton Wilson yes

Edna Green Medford yes

Lionel Kimble yes

Troy Thornton yes

Kenya King yes

Paula Seniors yes ***Vote: Unanimous***

Early Bird registration was numbers were requested. Sylvia Cyrus shared that as a result of this call she will extend the Early Bird deadline to August 10, 2013. Reports will be sent tomorrow along with the link for listening to the call.

***It was moved by Janet Sims-Wood to adjourn the meeting at 10:21 p.m.***

***Vote: Unanimous***