



## ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY®

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### **Executive Council Meeting Thursday, 18 December 2025**

## **MINUTES**

Call to Order  
702pm EDT

Anita Shepherd, Vice-President of Membership

Roll Call

David M. Walton, Secretary

Attendees: Karsonya Wise Whitehead, Anita Shepherd, David Walton, Sylvia Y. Cyrus, Chadra Pittman, Sundiata K. Cha-Jua, Lopez D. Matthews, Zebulon Miletsky, Crystal Moten, Camesha Scruggs, Carlton E. Wilson, Aisha Johnson, Tomiko Meeks, Daryl Michael Scott, Gladys Gary Vaughn, Keni Phillips, James Morgan, Denise Rolarke Barnes, Kimberly Leonard Jeffries, Lionel Kimble, Camesha Scruggs, John Adams, Leslie Etienne, Natanya Duncan

Proxy: Aiasha Haykal to Lionel Kimble

Parliamentarian: Fashika Willis

Approval Of Agenda

**Motion 1: Moved by Tomiko Meeks to approve December 18, 2025, Executive Council Meeting Agenda as modified, seconded by Kimberly Leonard Jefferies. Unanimous Passing.**

Approval of November 20, 2025, Minutes David M. Walton, Secretary

**Motion 1: Moved by Sundiata to adopt November 20, 2025, Executive Council Meeting Minutes with necessary corrections, seconded by Tomiko Meeks. Unanimous Passing.**

I. President's Report - Kaye Whitehead, President

- A. The Mellon Foundation granted an additional \$285,000 for the Freedom Schools over two years
- B. Mt. Zion Freedom School dissolved but the Karsonya Institute has been approved as its' replacement
- C. The Black History Month Luncheon is almost sold out, as of today

- D. National Convening on February 1, 2026
- E. Developing a 100<sup>th</sup> Black History Month Anniversary Pin
- F. We need a search committee for a new editor of *JAAH* – we want the committee formed by January

**Leslie Etienne moved to adopt the committee assignments, with necessary changes. Seconded by Natanya Duncan. Unanimous Passing**

## II. Committee Reports

Membership –Anita Shepherd, Vice President for Membership

Action Items:

### **Motion 1:**

**The Membership Committee moves that the Margaret & Robert Garner Branch (OH) be dissolved and is eligible to reorganize using the process in the Branch Procedural Manual. This branch is not functioning and has been in probation for five (5) years and is not able to meet the requirements for chartering. Unanimous Passing.**

**President Whitehead claims the gavel at 714pm EDT**

### **Motion 2:**

**The Membership Committee moves that the Organizing George Cleveland Hall Branch (IL) be dissolved and is eligible to reorganize using the process in the Branch Procedural Manual. This branch is not functioning within the chartering requirements and has been on probation for five (5) years. The branch president has indicated she has no interest in aligning with ASALH's governance structure. Unanimous Passing.**

### **Motion 3:**

**The Membership Committee moves that the branch compliance should not require branches to donate \$600 or any other amount. A contribution of \$600 is suggested, but not required, to maintain good standing. Tabled and sent back to the Membership Committee.**

**Call the question by Anita Shepherd. Seconded by Lionel Kimble. Failed.**

**Motion to table and send back to the Membership Committee by Natanya Duncan. Second Lionel Kimble. Passed**

Audit & Finance (A&F) – Carlton E. Wilson

**The Audit & Finance Committee moves to accept and adopt the 2026 ASALH Annual Budget. Passed.**

Development – John Ashley/Karsonya Whitehead

- A. Has raised close to \$50k
- B. Others have raised close to a total of \$70k

Governance – Walter Lanier

Marketing and Public Relations – Zebulon Miletsky

- A. The media advisory went out the first week of December for the Luncheon
- B. The press release will go out right before MLK Day 2026 for the Luncheon
- C. We are targeting a partnership with C-Span
- D. We have a “Black History Moments” initiative on social media

Nominating – Daryl Scott

- A. We will appoint people to fill vacant EC seats

III. Program - Aaisha Haykal, Vice-President for Programs

Black History Month Virtual Festival and Luncheon – Gladys Gary Vaughn

- A. The BH Virtual Festival is Feb 1-28, 2026. With weekly programs and the Luncheon.
- B. The 8 living past presidents have been asked to contribute a 1-minute welcoming video.
- C. This year, we have 550 BH Luncheon tickets and we are nearly sold-out (100 tickets are still available).
- D. We will acknowledge and honor long-term Luncheon volunteers.
- E. We will recognize and honor the 8 living past presidents.
- F. An EC Photo.
- G. Will include two poets (one to open and one to close the Luncheon).
- H. We will have 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary swag.

ASALH TV/Virtual Black History Program – Lopez Matthews

- A. Pre-recorded sessions
  - a. Numerous topics, such as: art, community orgs, SNCC
  - b. We will have shorts of the sessions

IV. Freedom School, Sundiata Cha-Jua

- A. 8 functioning Freedom Schools
  - a. Regional and size diversity

- b. The Mellon Foundation granted an additional \$285,000 for the Freedom Schools over two years V. Executive Director's Report – Sylvia Cyrus, Executive Director
- c. First grant ends March 31, 2026 – New grant begins April 1, 2026

VI. Executive Director's Report – Sylvia Cyrus

- A. Newly elected EC members photos and bios are on the website.
- B. Consultants and staff photos are on the website.
- C. Legislation about the selling of public lands – keep an eye on this development.
- D. Conversion from Abila to YourMembership
- E. Our Giving Tuesday Campaign has raised over \$1000 thus far.
- F. 2028 Conference is in Jacksonville – 2027 and 2029: TBD
- G. ASALH Store is thriving – 2025 revenue +\$22k
- H. Providing Branches with landing pages

VII. Announcements

Dr. Whitehead is Finalist for best radio host in the DMV

EC members: PAY YOUR DUES by December 31<sup>st</sup> – this includes membership dues for incoming EC Members

**Sundiata Cha-Jua Moved to adjourn, seconded by Natanya Duncan. Unanimous Passing.**

**Adjourned 9:09pm EDT**

**Approved by Executive Council on January 22, 2026**

**Submitted by David M. Walton Secretary**