



ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY®

301 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, NW | SUITE 2204 | WASHINGTON, DC 20001
202.238.5910 | ASALH.ORG

Executive Council Meeting Friday, 21 February 2025

MINUTES

Call to Order

Karsonya Wise Whitehead, President

Attendees: Sanders, Moten, Miletsky, Phillips, Matthews, Johnson, Scott, Duncan, Cyrus, Haykal, Shepherd, Whitehead, Adams, Lanier, Wood, Walton, Barnes, Cooke, Wilson, Scruggs

Duncan moved to adopt the agenda. Matthews seconded. Motion Passed unanimously.

Duncan is acting as the Parliamentarian. President Whitehead requested the Parliamentarian convenes the meeting

DMS: we should follow the Constitution. Adams agrees. Reads the By-Laws 29b).

Gavel officially handed over to VP Membership Shepherd as President Whitehead had to briefly leave the meeting (expected to be for one-hour)

Cyrus: For the good of the council, we will accept a two-minute meeting from our guest from the National Park Service (Adreena Ifil).

Overseeing the Woodson House renovations. Ms. Ifil thanked the Association for the partnership with the NPS for the Woodson House. Encouraged the Association during challenging times and affirmed the NPS commitment to the partnership.

Duncan Motion to accept Dec and Jan minutes. seconded Adams. Motion passed unanimously.

Membership Committee Report – Shepherd

Please refer to the written report (archived) – it is NOT duplicated here.

Emphasized EC members recruiting at least 2 people

Branch compliance is still a major issue!

DMS: three membership campaigns?

Target: 30 new Life Members (fully paid)

10-15% membership growth

Wilson: Increase institutional membership

DMS: Morgan State will have one this year

The only institutions represented on EC who cannot are Federal Government

Programming Committee Report – Haykal

Please refer to the written report (archived) – it is NOT duplicated here.
Theme(s) to be approved by June EC Meeting

Treasurer’s Report – Adams

Please refer to the written report (archived) – it is NOT duplicated here.
Adams discusses his understanding of his role. His focus: The strategic direction and financial health; NOT the granular debits and credits.

2-3 Concerns:

Cash reserves: what does it represent? It is not donor restricted cash. Perhaps the council decided to do that in the past. He requests the documentation about why that decision was made. We have \$298K in Cash Reserves Savings.

Adams: Can some of it be used to “elevate” the Association’s revenue stream?

Cyrus: no restriction on the money. The EC can allocate it however they see fit.

Lanier: Policy/Procedure. Does it exist? If not, it needs to be developed.

Adams should come back with a recommendation.

Adams: the Audit and Finance Committee should actually address/develop this policy/procedure.

Branches out of compliance: how are we going to help branches come into compliance? What will it take to get them in compliance?

VP of Membership Shepherd encouraged EC members to personally call 2-3 Branch Presidents to talk and solicit information/feedback from them.

Prior VP of Membership perhaps did too much of the branches’ heavy lifting.

DMS: how many branches are out of financial compliance?

The Treasurer will investigate this. If we build up our human capital (branches), we will build up the overall Association.

Shepherd: a new Branch (compliance) report will be submitted in March.

Freedom Schools: as an opportunity to increase revenue. Reaching out to allies. What more can we do with ASALH programs that would allow them to be marketed in such a way.

Fund Development: It needs to be done right now. Adams proposes to the auditing and finance, Executive Director, and President take a look at the budget and consider a motion to modify the budget in response to the current challenges (government cuts and freezes).

Sanders: suggests a \$5-\$10 increase in Conference registration to generate more revenue. Atlanta is a desirable location; thus, it should not impact registration. This is in lieu of next year many may not have institutional support to attend the 2026 conference.

Cyrus: It is hard to find a developer for less than \$150k in this market. We are looking for a candidate. Asks EC to make recommendations.

The President's Report has been tabled (she is unavailable at this time).

Atty Cooke: State of the Organization

Branches need to be in compliance to legally exist. ASALH cannot do business with organizations that do not exist.

Lawsuit: Filed Dec 2023 by 19 ASALH members over internal corporate governance impropriety (Dulany's "resignation" and "recension" of said "resignation") Cooke filed documents to dismiss the lawsuit. The judge dismissed their case. The plaintiffs filed a motion for reconsideration, their motion was denied and dismissed with prejudice. They appealed. Filed a brief in response in October 2024, it is now in appellate court. They have 10 days from last Tuesday (2/18) to respond to Atty Cooke's brief.

DMS: does their lawsuit matter at this point? Atty Cooke: as Dulaney is no longer president, it is a moot point.

Cyrus: document is on our EC private page for review

Lanier: Governance Report

Removal of Bynum

April 2024 last meeting attended (missed 9 meetings/work-sessions)

Has not paid his EC dues (past due \$1300 – if not removed by June, it will become \$2300)

Abandoned his committee's responsibilities.

Committee recommendation:

Passed with all saying yes and one abstention by Scruggs (President Whitehead and Miletsky did not vote – they were out of the room)

Timing of election and swearing in of new officers and EC members

It is under discussion in the committee

Update of Policy and procedures

For example, the Bynum matter should not have to be a voting matter

Cooke advises the type of protest like the 'Silent March' is 1st amendment protected right. It is non-partisan articulation, thus it does jeopardize our 501c(3) status. Branches in different states should consult their state and local laws to ensure that it does not impact their 501c(3) status.

Adams: can our enemies weaponize the allegations, tying us up in litigation? Will we have Liability, will we need insurance?

Cooke: all 501c(3) organizations, especially that may be philosophically in opposition to the current federal administration need to be cautious, very cautious. Have branches consult with council in their jurisdictions. ASALH must avoid partisan politics. Voter registration and awareness is fine. Endorsing candidates is a violation of our 501c(3) status.

Audit and Finance Committee Report - Wilson

Please refer to the written report (archived) – it is NOT duplicated here.

Wilson: we should look and consider the recommendations in the Treasure's Report, such as policy related to Cash Reserves

Suggested a re-examination of our budget and financial status at the June meeting to consider possible changes.

VP of Programming Haykal:

Black History Month Festival

ED Cyrus provided information on the luncheon in the working session (please see those minutes)

Virtual Programming needs to be reassessed and its purpose defined. Are we going to solicit a sponsor?

Barnes: is there a way to determine the Festival's impact on membership?

Haykal: during COVID, yes. Afterwards, no.

President Whitehead: should we put our focus on luncheon and less on the virtual festival?

Haykal: perhaps

President Whitehead: maybe focus on around the year programming on ASALH-TV as opposed to just February "dumping"

President Whitehead: will follow-up with Matthews on using her class to assist with editing content into savvy social media "shorts", "clips" < "reels" etc.

Madam President is back and has the gavel

Matthews: The YouTube algorithm has brought more attention and awareness of ASALH to the public

Duncan: promote ASALH in your book talks and public talks

Lanier requests a slide to use for public talks to promote ASALH

President Whitehead: reach out to local branches when you do community talks

DMS: Former ASALH Presidents, Officers, and EC members do not mention their ASALH affiliation in public and public talks

Walton: Are we close to monetizing ASALH-TV? Matthews: YES!!!!

Miletsky: I can create press releases to announce new Officers and EC members.

Awards Committee Report: Scruggs

Needs nominations for Council Award of Special Recognition by March 31st

Nominating Committee Report: Daryl Michael Scott

Have met the deadlines required thus far by the Constitution and By-Laws

Adams: for corporate EC members, have we done outreach to solicit candidates from Black business organizations?

DMS: not necessarily for candidates but have had Corporate EC Members who were members of those types of organizations

President's Report: President Whitehead

Please refer to the written report (archived) – it is NOT duplicated here.

Does social media/radio drive new ASALH Membership

We need a larger public facing presence

Project ASALH 2025

Preserve Black History

Defend ASALH – with your donations

Promote Black institutions

Promote Black History

Use your platform to tell the truth about who we are

Protect Black History

Teach-ins

Freedom Schools

Marketing

ASALH statements

March 21 convening on ZOOM 10am-12pm

“Fierce urgency of Now” – to have ASALH leading the way

March 11th

Coffee and Convo w/ the ASALH President

Go after American History grants

ASALH Black History moments

Have people submit their Black History moments

2–3-minute video

Engaging people

Emphasize to your audience “Call to action: JOIN ASALH”

Read her monthly “Kitchen Table Statements”

Academic Conference Planning Committee Report: Gus Wood

Please refer to the written report (archived) – it is NOT duplicated here.

We need to push the panel concept. We want people to submit panels as opposed to individual papers.

We need workshops as well.

Working on utilizing the “human capital” at the Atlanta University Center

Barnes: Are we doing a semi-quincentennial event?

Wood: we have a spot open for it, but not any plan.

Strategic Planning & Freedom Schools: Gus Wood

Please refer to the written report titled “Plan of Implementation” (archived) – it is NOT duplicated here.

Executive Director's Report: Cyrus

Automatic reoccurring annual dues payment is now available

DMS: Let's make it a campaign

CBC has reached out. Congressman Al Green has reached out to have a meeting with Whitehead and Cyrus

Branches must be compliant to be under our umbrella and/or apply for grants in our name

Be available at the Black History Month luncheon to interact with sponsored tables and thank them

We are a member of CESU

2028 Conference will be in Jacksonville, FL

We are now part of PayPal giving

Brenda Coleman is the Atlanta Host Committee Chair for 2025

Nikki Taylor is coming to the Black History Month luncheon

For the good of the Association

The Washington Informer is celebrating 60 years

Approved by Executive Council on March 20, 2025

Submitted by David M. Walton Secretary