

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING**  
**Tri-State CHAPTER**  
**July 1, 2016**  
**12:00PM – 3:00PM**

**Meeting was called to order by National Chair Joanna Freeman Richards at 12:10pm.**

**Opening Prayer:** National Chair asked Chaplain Wanda Bropleh to open with prayer. Chaplain started with the singing of “We Gather Together,” followed by a prayer of thanksgiving for traveling mercies for all who were on their way. Chaplain Bropleh prayed for Unity and for God’s will to take place during the meeting.

Opening and welcome remarks were made by the National Chair, who welcomed all attendees to the meeting, and also thanked God for traveling mercies. She reminded members of the Executive Board that the ultimate purpose of all the Association does is for the children of Liberia.

**Welcome Remarks by Host Chapter:** Tristate President: President Freeman welcomed all members to the meeting, noting that Tristate members have worked very hard to make the 24<sup>th</sup> National convention the best ever and the “mother of all convention”.

**Housekeeping Announcement (by President Freeman):** He provided housekeeping information and offered apology for his planning team not being on time at the event location.

**Acceptance of the Agenda:** The agenda was read by National Secretary Charles Coleman. A Motion was made by Metro Representative J. Saba Kla Williams to accept the agenda as read, which was seconded by President Mona B. Diggs. The motion was passed.

**Minutes from October 24<sup>th</sup> 2016 Tri-State Executive Board Meeting**

The minutes from October 24<sup>th</sup> 2015 Board Meeting, were read in silence. The National Secretary reminded members that the minutes were emailed in advance and corrections, if any, will be made on a page by page basis for the sake of time. After review, the minutes were accepted. Metro Representative J. Saba Kla Williams praised the team for emailing minutes in advance.

**Scholarship Committee Report:** Committee Chair National Chair Emerita Gudrun Harris reported that 39 students received scholarship this year, which is the highest number the Association has paid for to date. The Chair Emerita thanked the administration for its support.

She indicated that several planned projects have not been completed due to the transition of the school administration.

Emeritus Handel KC Diggs commended the Academic and Scholarship Committee for a job well done. He also asked if the Association had provided 39 scholarships in the prior year, to which the National Chair responded that the number was 30.

**Presentation of the Banner:** Second Vice National Chair for Membership and Public Relations, David Moore, presented a banner with the pictures of all National Officers to the Executive Board that could be used as background for photos at the events.

**Membership Committee Report:** Committee Chair, M. Daniel Nelson; reported that he personally spoke to the various Chapter presidents and he has a list of recommendations and concerns from the presidents that will be presented at the general meeting.

**Recommendations from Chapter Presidents:**

1. If a person is not active or does not participate in Chapter activities or pay Chapter dues, the person should not be allowed to register as a member of the Chapter at Convention, but should register under the National Association.
2. Persons who have been found guilty of fraud should not be allow to run for any office

**Questions and Comments:**

Cllr. Mohamedu Jones asked how long a Chapter member would be absent to Chapter be considered “inactive?” What is the definition of “work for the Chapter”?

Metro Representative J. Saba Kla Williams commented that the recommendations from the Chapter presidents and all reports being discussed at the Executive Board meeting should have been sent to members in advance to be reviewed before the meeting.

Cllr Jones commented that if these recommendations are brought to the floor of the general meeting, it will cause uproar. He would suggest a detailed report of the recommendations should be sent in advance to the Executive Board members for review and approval.

National Chair Emeritus Handel K. C. Diggs recommended that all committee reports made at Executive Board meetings should be full reports and not brief synopsis.

**Convention Committee Report:** Committee Chair Angeline Bishop-Oshoko thanked everyone for their concern for her health.

She said she was under the impression that all reports to the Executive Board meeting had to be full reports, but she would give a brief synopsis.

She reported that early on there were some confusion about roles and responsibilities regarding the National Convention, but that TriState was now well aware of the Chapter’s role and the role of the National Association regarding Convention.

She also indicated that various Chapters had implemented programs and raised funds. The First Vice Chair indicated that she had discussed with chapter presidents about how to raise more money and how to have successful programs. She suggested a “buddy system” be established to share best practices on how to have successful fundraisers. She further pointed out that Chapters did not sponsor many projects at the school this past year; she was unsure if chapters did not receive information about projects or if it is because the school administration was not organized.

### **Questions and Comments:**

National Chair Emerita Gudrun Harris commented that although no projects may have been sponsored, TriState and DC Metro contributed to the scholarship committee.

President Mona B. Diggs commented that the reason why DC Metro Chapter did not contribute to a project this past year is because of the frequent turnover of principals at the school, no list of approved projects has been distributed.

National Chair Freeman Richards commented that President Diggs was right that the list of projects was not made available because of the many and frequent changes to the school administration which caused a lack of a clear picture of what projects are needed. Interim Principal Deline had specifically asked that projects be placed on hold until a permanent principal was hired.

President, M Daniel Nelson asked about the conflict between the Association and Bishop Hart regarding the appointment of a representative of the Association to the Board of Trustees, he wanting to know if it has been resolved. National Chair Freeman Richards responded that the relationship has improved and the search is currently on going to find someone to serve as our representative to the Board

President, J. Yuku Stewart commented that every year he hears people making statements comparing DC Metro and Tristate Chapters to other Chapters, which he feels is unfair, because several other chapters are new and every state works differently. He also pointed out that it is unfair to compare smaller chapters to Tristate and DC Metro Chapters, which are larger. He feels that Texas Chapter works very hard and he does not like hearing the caparison.

First Vice Chair Bishop-Oshoko responded that while there are chapters that are stronger, the comparison was not intended to be negative, but was to show the difference, and point out options to the newer and smaller chapters

National Chair Emerita Harris commented that perhaps we need to change the wording “weak” and “strong.” She indicated that she thought the plan for chapters to work together and mentor each other is a good idea.

Clr. Jones reiterated that the First Vice Chair had specifically pointed out in her report that Chapters do not have to have the same events or fundraisers as DC Metro and Tristate chapters did, but could develop programs suitable for their needs. For example, Metro may have two programs and generate \$5,000 but other chapters could do 5 “fish fries” and generate the same amount.

**Committee Report Accepted:** It was moved by Board Representative Kla Williams that the Convention Committee Report be accepted, which was seconded by National Chair Emerita Harris, and passed by the Board by majority vote.

## **Chapter Presidents Reports:**

### **DC Metro Chapter Report by President Mona B Diggs:**

- \*DC Metro is strong and the members are strong.
- \*The Chapter hosted its annual Family and Friends Day in May, which was a success.
- \*The Chapter is currently working on the annual Fr. Emmanuel Johnson program scheduled for October 8, 2016.

### **PennDel Chapter Report by President M Daniel Nelson:**

- \*PennDel remains under the theme of “reemergence” because there was still addressing similar issues emanating from the prior administration. T. \*They have the same officers, and the Chapter advisors are Cherinne Goodridge Smith and Alfred Major, the former president.
- \* Despite a roller coaster year, he reported that PennDel remains strong.
- \* President Nelson informed the Executive Board that for the first time in history PennDel is paying its annual assessment in advance. (President Nelson hand delivered a check for its 2017 assessment to the National Treasurer.)
- \*PennDel has 63 registered members but only 15 are active and participate.
- \*On March 19, 2016 the Chapter held its Cllr. Cyril Jones program. He thanked all who attended for supporting this fundraiser.
- \*The Chapter has impressed many in the community including the New Castle Board of Realtors who underwrote the Cllr. Cyril Jones program. The New Castle Board of Realtors voted to put PennDel permanently on its charity list.

### **Texas Chapter Report by President J. Yuku Stewart:**

- \*When they were voted to host convention they were the first Chapter to pay assessment fee last year.
- \*The Chapter has a big job and needs everyone support, suggestions, and ideas in any way possible
- \*Board meeting is confirmed for November. It will be held on the same day of the Annual Amb. H. D. Williamson’s awards program
- \*Texas will make a full presentation about the 25<sup>th</sup> convention at the general meeting.
- \* executive Board Members will have an opportunity in November to visit some of the venues.
- \*The Board meeting venue is at the Catholic Ranch and the owners have offered to prepare lunch for the board meeting.

### **Tristate Chapter Report by President Joseph Freeman:**

- \*In less than a year after taking over he was tasked with hosting a Convention.
- \*They had \$3,000.00 in the Chapter’s account and were faced with how the Chapter would raise the funds needed. They had a food sale, had a Christmas party and George D. Brown program. A committee was formed and did an excellent job in planning the Convention.
- \*Tristate successfully pre-registered 84 people, a new record.
- \*The Chapter successfully raised over \$8,000.00 in less than 8 months. He gave all the praise and recognition to TriState officers and members.
- \*He assured all that it will be one of the best conventions ever.

### **Questions and Comments:**

National Chair Emerita Harris commended President Joe Freeman on a job well done for taking on task of hosting a Convention in July only after being elected in September.

### **North Carolina Chapter Report by President Richard Wright:**

\*We now call ourselves the “returning” Chapter; returning against all odds.

\*The Chapter has 68 members with 14 due paying members and 8 active members.

\*Due to the small fraction of active members, the program there had been scheduled had to be cancelled at a loss.

\*The Chapter has an ongoing fundraiser of T-shirt sales. Many chapters offered to help sell shirts. North Carolina is hoping the chapters are selling the shirts and will turn in money soon.

\*The Rev. Fr. E. G. W. King Program will be reinstated in February 2017 and will be moved from Charlotte to Raleigh, NC. They are hoping that the change in location will generate more success. They are planning a weekend event not just a one-day event.

### **Questions and Comments:**

Clr Jones asked which chapters owed North Carolina for T-shirts. President Wright responded: The following chapters, Tristate, DC Metro, PennDel, Georgia and Texas have not paid for the T-shirts. Rhode Island is the only Chapter that has paid in full for the T-Shirts.

National Chair Freeman Richards thanked President Richard Wright. He is a person who gives you courage, she said. She worked closely with him during North Carolina Convention. He had health problems, but did not grumble. Even illness did not stop him from performing his duties as president.

### **Minnesota Chapter Report:**

\*National Chair Freeman Richards told the board that President elect Mr. James Ledlum is unable to attend due to family obligations, but Richmond Goodridge was scheduled to proxy for him, but he is not here.

### **Georgia Chapter Report:**

\*National Chair Freeman Richards told the board that she was hoping President Ora Scott, or the board members would attend or send a proxy, but no one from Georgia was present.

\* National Chair Freeman Richards shared that Georgia Chapter was able to pay a partial assessment of \$1,200.00, balance \$300.00 due before November 2016 board meeting.

### **Questions and Comments:**

First Vice Chair Bishop-Oshoko shared that she has been in touch with both Georgia and North Carolina presidents and they are dedicated to help improve the membership and to hold the Rev. Fr. E. G. W. King and J Wah Doe Bedell, Sr. programs respectively.

National Chair Freeman Richards asked that the Association put our arms around the struggling chapters and help guide them to success.

National Chair Emeritus Handel K. C. Diggs asked what was the stumbling block to the revitalization the Midwest Chapter? Second Vice Chair David Moore responded that the major problem is leadership. They need someone to be the leader. He has reached out to Abdul Sirleaf and Comfort Kenneh.

First Vice Chair Bishop-Oshoko inquiry if the National Association could set up an interim president to regroup the Midwest Chapter.

Cllr. Jones responded that while the National Association could identify someone to help revive the Chapter, it could not establish an “interim president.”

National Chair Emerita Harris asked if it has been discussed to merge Midwest with another Chapter indicating that one member, Theo Elliott has been very concerned about the situation.

2nd Vice Chair David Moore explained that while Theo Elliott is a member of Midwest. It takes five hours for her to travel to Detroit to attend a meeting of the Midwest Chapter.

Cllr. Jones explained that Midwest Chapter has always included Michigan, Ohio and Illinois, but there is no reason why alumni in Illinois could not form their own Chapter.

First Vice Bishop -Oshoko asked what happened to the formation of the California Chapter.

National Chair Emerita Harris responded that the member who was interested in organizing the alumni in California had moved to Liberia for work but he has now returned to the United States.

Cllr. Jones explained that the National Association cannot form chapters; only alumni who are interested can come to the National Association and ask to form a Chapter.

#### **B. W. Harris School Liberia Report by National Chair Joanna Freeman Richards:**

\*Shortly after the Freeman Richards administration took office, she was informed that Lurleen King Falla was no longer the principal.

\* Anthony Deline was appointed interim principal, but as soon as he took the position he asked the Association to put a hold on projects because his time was short.

\* With the appointment of new principal Mr. Hilary Collins, the Association is looking forward to receiving information about the projects needed at the school.

\* Principal Collins was planning to attend the 24<sup>th</sup> convention in person, but didn't receive his visa appointment in time.

#### **Questions and Comments:**

First Vice Chair Bishop -Oshoko asked when Principal Collins might provide the list of projects to the Association. National Chair Freeman Richards responded that she was not aware of a time frame, to which First Vice Chair Bishop -Oshoko suggested that Principal Collins be given a deadline.

#### **Audit Report:**

\*The audit report was read in silence.

\*National Chair Freeman Richards asked that the Executive Board pay close attention to the findings and recommendations.

- \* First Vice Chair Bishop-Oshoko suggested that receipts be photocopied immediately because they fade quickly.
- \*National Chair Emerita Gudrun Harris suggested that receipts can also be scanned and save on the computer to be preserved
- \*Board Representative Kla Williams said that the Chapter needed to see the audit report before it comes to the Executive Board.
- \*President Diggs reported that she had never seen the current audit report under review before now.
- \*National Chair Freeman Richards responded that the report was sent to DC Metro Treasurer, Ophelia Acolatse before the meeting.

### **B. W. Harris Alumni Assoc. USA Board Rep to Liberia and Liaison**

- \*National Chair Freeman Richards reported that she had recommended that a position of liaison be created at the last meeting that is separate from board representative. It was voted and approved by the board.
- \*A separate line item was added in the budget to provide a stipend to the liaison.
- \*The liaison, Adolf Sackey has been extremely helpful with receiving shipments, working with the scholarship committee etc.

National Chair Freeman Richards informed the Executive Board that Mrs. Juanita E. Mason Neal a former President of the Board of Trustees B. W. Harris Episcopal School had passed away, and asked for a moment of silence to honor Mrs. Neal and all who have passed in the last year.

### **New business:**

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#### **Reports to the Executive Board**

Board Representative Kla-Williams: recommended all committee reports be sent to the members of the Executive Board in advance and the committee chairs can make brief report at the meeting. National Chair Freeman Richards responded that committee reports were received in advance and apologized for not forwarding them to members of the Board and would in the future. As far as the presidents' reports, she had requested they be provided by May 31, but they were never provided. Moving forward the CURFIS and president reports will be distributed in advance to the Board, she said. Also, in the future the presidents will not make a full report at the meeting since the report will be distributed in advance.

National Chair Emerita Harris suggested that the CURFIS report should be received in advance and the presidents do not have to make a full report, but have the opportunity to add to the CURFIS report.

-First Vice Chair Bishop Oshoko asked who would review the reports as they come in? The National Chair responded that the he financial team will review the CURFIS reports.

- National Chair Emerita Harris suggested that the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> vice chairs should also have opportunity to view reports in addition to the financial team because they worked with the chapters.

- First Vice Chair Bishop Oshoko offered clarification: Chapter presidents will send reports by deadline to the Financial team for their review, following which they will forward the reports to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairs who will then review each of the reports and send them back to the National Chair, who will then send them to the entire Executive Board to review before the

meeting. If a report is determined not to be complete during the review process, it will be returned to the Chapter to be completed.

**\*Chapter Presidents need to be more responsive:** First Vice Chair Bishop Oshoko asked all Chapter presidents to please answer her calls and respond to her emails in the interests of the Association.

**\*New Resolution:** At the June 2015 Executive board meeting, a resolution was passed that required all chapters to provide income and expense report to the National Association after each event/fundraiser. National Chair Emeritus Diggs pointed out a correction that the reports should be provided to the Chapter membership and the National Association.

**\*Constitution Committee Recommendations:** Cllr. Jones informed the Executive Board that the Constitutional Review Committee has recommendations and amendments that will be presented at the general meeting. The procedure will be to make presentation, allow a few questions and clarifications and then ask for a vote. Members could express their opposition through their votes. He wanted Board to be aware of the format that will be used.

**\*Convention Ball & Presentations of Awards:** Executive Board Representative Jurudoe Martin recommended that to save time, leadership, classes, Chapter and individual awards be presented on Friday night at the Welcome Party, and that only the Dillard H. Brown, Capital Campaign and Presidential Awards will be presented during the Chairman's Renaissance Ball. B

- Cllr. Jones clarified that the Board does not have to vote on the Convention program. The program structure of the Convention Program is the responsibility of the National Chair. U.

**2nd Vice Chair Remarks:** Second Vice Chair Mr. David Moore thanked all presidents for their help throughout this tough year. He invited members of the Board to his home for food.

### **Recommendations**

National Chair Emeritus Diggs recommended chapters hold fundraising events and report to the National Association and the chapter members 30days after the event.

President Daniel Nelson suggested 60 days instead of 30 days due to limited resources available to chapters to complete reports.

Cllr. Jones cautioned that such reports be presented to the Chapter first the members' input and approval before presentation to the National Association.

National Chair Freeman Richards thanked everyone for coming and asked everyone to arrive on time to all events in order for them to start on time. She informed the Board that the general meeting will be extended by 30 minutes to accommodate the vote on the proposed constitutional amendments.

It was moved by National Chair Emeritus Diggs at 2:44pm that the meeting be adjourned, which motion was seconded by President Mona B. Diggs, and passed by the Board by majority vote.

Chaplain Wanda Bropleh led all in singing “Bless Be the Tides that binds” and closed with a prayer.

**Meeting Attendees:**

**National Officers:**

Joanna Freeman-Richards – National Chair  
Angeline Bishop-Oshoko 1st National Vice Chair  
David Moore 2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice Chair  
Charles Coleman –National Secretary  
Comfort Browne – Asst. National Secretary  
Albertha K. Gillespie – National Treasurer  
Meyartha C. Perry – National Financial Secretary  
Wanda Bropleh – National Chaplain

**National Chair Emeritus**

Handel K. C. Diggs  
Gudrun Harris

**Tri State Chapter**

Joseph Freeman  
Jurudoe Harris Martin  
Elyne Padmore

**DC Metro Chapter**

Mona B Diggs  
J Saba Kla-Williams  
Dorothy Richards Tolbert

**Georgia Chapter**

**PennDel Chapter**

M Daniel Nelson

**RI Chapter**

**NC Chapter**

Richard Wright  
Amanda Wright

**Legal Counsel**

Mohamedu F. Jones, Esq.

**Observers**

G Orlando Richards-First Man  
Mildred Kla Williams, Observer  
Ophelia Acolatse, Observer  
Rosalyn E. Coleman, Observer  
Tayonnah Roberts, Observer  
Varney Coleman, Observer  
Alvin Goodridge, Observer  
Faith Kasor, Observer  
Judith Karpeh, Observer  
Mary Washington, Observer  
Thelma Collins, Observer  
Dora Ernst, Observer  
Hawa Braima, Observer  
Comfort Kenneh, Observer

**Liberia:**

Shirley Cassell, Observer

**Canada:**

Miatta Dahn, Observer