

PACTS-UKHS Alumni & Friends Association, Inc.
COMMUNITY MEETING
November 16, 2013
1:30 PM

PACTS-UKHS Alumni & Friends Association, Inc. Board of Directors
Members Present:

Dr. Ray V. Spain, President; Dr. William E. Russell, Vice-President; Tina Schofield-Warren, Secretary; Laurice Malbon Yarn, Treasurer; Margie Wilson Coefield, Museum/Archives; Mary Henry Smith, Membership/Committees; Edna Hawkins Hendrix, Historian/Museum/Archives.

City of Virginia Beach Representatives Present:

**Cynthia Whitbred-Spanoulis, Department of Museums Deputy Director
Mark A. Reed, Historic Resources Coordinator**

Dr. Ray V. Spain, PACTS-UKHS Alumni President, called the meeting to order, welcomed those attending and introduced the Guests (Representatives of the City of Virginia Beach). He spoke on the formation of the Alumni Association and introduced the Board of Directors.

Handouts: Association By-laws (Articles I-II); Purposes; Objectives (Article III); Association Operations (Article X) were submitted for review. He further defined the relationship of the Association with the operation of the PACTS-UKHS Museum. The Association's work involves unification of Alumni and Supporters and as an Advisory group to the Museum.

Edna Hawkins Hendrix presented background information on the formation of the Museum. She gave recognition of the Historical Committee; the Alumni Association; the History of Princess Anne County Training School-Union Kempsville High School (1938-1969). There were remarks from the audience on how the African-American community raised the money to purchase the land in order to persuade the city to commit to build a high school for African-American students. Now, approximately 75 years later, there appears to be a struggle to keep the Museum operating. Margie Wilson Coefield gave remarks regarding the Alumni Association not being in the position of operating the Museum services.

Mark Reed, Historic Resources Coordinator spoke of "a special place in history" of PACTS-UKHS and the Museum. He further stated the city has an on-going commitment with Alumni

involvement. He also spoke of an up-coming exhibit “African Americans and Jim Crow” on display in the Museum through February. He also spoke of the Department of Museums Budget through Fiscal Year 2015; proposal as starting point for future planning and developments; the City of VB focus on dollars and numbers. etc. (During the 3-year period, the Museum received only \$1600 in donations). He further remarked on the need for all to work together for change; that all agreements have time limitations; and the original agreement between The Historical Committee and VB City Schools. A further Question and Answer period defined that the original agreement was not with the Alumni but with The Historical Committee. Dr. Russell spoke quite strongly against Department of Museum’s tactics. Mr. Reed responded that the Department wants to work with all the community and again remarked on the financial status of the Museum: One educator position for three historic houses in 2010 through the coming fiscal year; and all educators to collaborate with educational programs for each site. He also stated the Departments are preparing budgets to be submitted late November. Proposals for The Museum’s budget are to be submitted at City Council meetings January-March 2014 (?). City Council can make adjustments at any time. “All interested must attend Public Hearings, etc.”

L. Yarn: “we are not here to bash the messenger, our museum is the only representation of Black Americans in Virginia Beach”; M. Coefield: “we want our voices heard and require feedback”. There were other questions and remarks from attendees regarding staffing and Grants of other historic houses. Ms. Spanoulis responded: “The city of VB does provide Grants (allocated amount) to some historical sites, i.e. Old Coast Guard Station, on their own, has a 501 (c) 3 status and admission fees. Grants are subject to appropriations to the budget. We thought The Alumni Association wanted to operate The Museum, and the proposal was offered as an opportunity”. The Department of Museums will continue to operate The Museum until Fiscal Year 2015. After 2015, only City Council has the authority to decide the management of operations of The Museum.

Dr. Spain again made the position of the Alumni Association clear: “The PACTS-UKHS Alumni & Friends Association, Inc. is not able, at this time, to engage the The Alumni Association in operating The Museum. If a group, at this point in time, wants and is able to operate it, they may do so; and The Association needed to hear from the Virginia Beach community.”

Dr. Spain thanked the Representatives of the Department of Museums of Virginia Beach for their attendance and willingness to answer questions.

Upon the Representatives departure at 3:30PM, the meeting continued with Comments and Reactions of the Alumni and Friends.

- 1. Preventive measures to counteract forthcoming proposals.**
- 2. Museum supported by African-American community; may need separate facility to house The Museum.**
- 3. Physical entities community supports and improves should not be handled in the same manner.**
- 4. Ownership - (?) purchase a parcel of land and place a building to house The Museum.**
- 5. Think through future strategies involving funding and operations.**
- 6. "Originally our land; Must stand up for our school and our history! Struggles of our community in VB, one of the most prejudiced cities in the USA; need to make a plan for the future."**
- 7. Secure the history of our school.**
- 8. Get resources, information, be aware of what can be done.**
- 9. Induction of The Museum in State of Virginia Historical Society, etc.**

Dr. Spain again spoke on the status of The Museum; the Mayor and other city officials are aware of our concern. The Museum will operate throughout the next fiscal year. He proposed a letter of this meeting's response to the Department of Museums and the Mayor.

The challenges before us are to "pass on the legacy to the younger generation to carry on the history of the school and going forward into the future."

There was also a sharing of memories and struggles from former students: Roy Reid and Esther G. Wilson.

RESPONSE TO DEPT. OF MUSEUMS PROPOSAL: The Alumni and Friends Association, Inc. write letter rejecting our involvement in operating The Museum.

Solicit and engage the support of the entire African-American committee; Bombard the City Council with phone calls and emails. The response was put to a vote. The majority of attendees approved The Alumni and Friends Association, Inc. Board of Directors' response of rejection to the proposal of operating The Museum.

Dr. Spain announced our next Community Meeting will be held January, 2014, Date, Time, and Place will be determined; Alumni and Friends will be contacted through mail, email, and telephone, etc.

The PACTS-UKHS Alumni & Friends Association, Inc. Community Meeting was adjourned at 5:30PM by Dr. Ray V. Spain, President.

**Minutes of Meeting, November 16, 2013
Respectfully Submitted;**

Tina Schofield-Warren, Secretary

**PACTS-UKHS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION, INC.
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