



CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE

Timothy M. Keller, Mayor

African American Advisory Board

Tuesday, October 6th, 2026, 11:00 A.M.

City Council Committee Room

One Civic Plaza, 9th Floor, Suite S9300, Albuquerque, NM 87102

To join virtually: [Zoom Link](#) Meeting ID: 880 2314 2446

Voting Members Present

- (1) Beverly Gaines, Black Chamber of Commerce of New Mexico Alternate (In person)
- (2) Rita Powdrell, African American Museum and Cultural Center of New Mexico Designee (Zoom)
- (3) Rachel Mwadi, New Mexico Black Leadership Council Alternate (In person)
- (4) Ava Silver, University of New Mexico African American Student Services Alternate (Zoom)
- (5) Nicole Bedford-Jacobs, University of New Mexico Hospital-African American Community Liaison (In person)
- (6) Patrick Barrett, The New Mexico Center of Black Excellence Designee, Interim Vice Chair (In person)
- (7) Hope Thomas, New Mexico Black Lawyers Association Rotating Member (Zoom)
- (8) Officer Rob Duren, Albuquerque Police Department Black Ambassador(s) Designee (Zoom)
- (9) Bishop David C. Cooper, Ministers Fellowship Designee (In person)
- (10) Clarence Smith, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Albuquerque Branch Designee (In person)
- (11) Dr. Xeturah Woodley, Albuquerque Public Schools African American (AA) Equity & Engagement Coordinator (In person)

Members Absent

- (1) Rev. Darnell Smith, Baptist Ministers Union Designee
- (2) State of New Mexico Office of African American Affairs (Declined to participate)
- (3) Martin Luther King Jr. State Commission (Declined to participate)
- (4) Vacant- Community Subject Matter Expert
- (5) Vacant- Community Subject Matter Expert
- (6) Vacant- Community Subject Matter Expert

Other Attendees

- Ayana Zahara (In person)
- Eric Spurlock, African American Museum and Cultural Center of New Mexico (In person)
- Adri Norris (In person)
- Jordan Locke, State of New Mexico Office of African American Affairs (Zoom)
- Dr. Lisa Christopherson (Zoom)
- Dr. Lisa M. Taylor (Zoom)
- Andrea McCormick (Zoom)
- Eugene Pickett (Zoom)
- Chelsea Harris (Zoom)
- Tracey Jackson (Zoom)
- Tonya Covington (Zoom)
- Hope Thomas (Zoom)
- Jordan Tate (Zoom)
- Rada Moss (Zoom)
- McOwiti Thomas (Zoom)
- Tracey Jackson (Zoom)

City Staff Present

- Nichole Rogers, City Councilor, District 6 (In person)
- Ziarra Kirksey, Policy Analyst to Councilor Rogers, City Council (In Person)
- Chevonne Watson, Administrative Assistant/Project Support, City Council (In person)
- Chris Sylvan, ONC Neighborhood Liaison, City Council (In person)
- Vince Higgins, Public Information Officer, City Council (In person)
- Julia Coulloudon, Deputy Director/General Counsel, City Council (In person)
- Victor Hall, Associate Counsel, City Council (In person)
- Garrett Cornelius, Council Technology & Logistics Specialist, City Council (In person)
- Neema Pickett, African American Community Liaison, Office of Equity and Inclusion (In person)
- Alicia Romero, Head Curator and Curator of History, Albuquerque Museum (In person)
- Andrew Connors, Associate Director, Albuquerque Museum (In person)
- Robyn Robinson, Public Art Planner, City of Albuquerque Public Art Program (In person)
- Darryl DeLoach, Social Services Coordinator Public Safety Echo, Albuquerque Police Department (Zoom)

Minutes

I. Call to Order

a. Welcome

Interim Vice Chair Patrick Barrett, serving as Acting Interim Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m. in the City Council Committee Room, City Council Offices.

b. Roll Call

Members and guests introduced themselves. Representatives from participating organizations and other public attendees were present. Hope Thomas noted for the record that she or Felecia Adams attends on behalf of the New Mexico Black Lawyers Association.

c. Confirmation of Quorum

A quorum was confirmed. Ten voting members were present at the meeting. Bishop David C. Cooper joined shortly after, bringing the total voting members in attendance to eleven.

II. Review of Agenda

a. Review of October 6, 2026 Agenda

The October 6, 2026 agenda was reviewed and accepted by consensus. Clarence Smith moved to approve the agenda as presented. Beverly Gaines seconded. The motion passed unanimously on a roll-call vote. Ava Silver, who was unable to speak on Zoom, cast her vote in the meeting chat.

III. Review of Previous Minutes

a. Review of September 1, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Clarence Smith moved to approve the September 1, 2026 Meeting Minutes as presented. Beverly Gaines seconded. The motion passed unanimously on a roll-call vote. Ava Silver, who was unable to speak on Zoom, cast her vote in the meeting chat. Members received the September minutes by email and in hard copy. Clarence Smith asked that the minutes reflect his title as President of the NAACP Albuquerque Branch, a position he held at the time of the September meeting. Staff confirmed the correction. The Board approved the September 1, 2026 minutes unanimously on a roll-call vote.

IV. Public Comment (2 Minutes per Speaker)

- Jordan Locke, State of New Mexico Office of African American Affairs. Mr. Locke informed the Board that OAAA has decided to no longer participate on the Board. He resigned as Interim Chair and said he looks forward to serving on the Board's subcommittees. Councilor Rogers thanked him for stepping up and said she had called and emailed OAAA's executive director about the decision but had not yet received a response.
- Dr. Lisa Christopherson. Dr. Christopherson thanked the Board for its leadership and mentorship and said she was glad to see a quorum and strong participation after many meetings.
- Andrea McCormick. Ms. McCormick criticized the OAAA executive director's decision to withdraw from the Board, described it as a failure of leadership, and called for his immediate resignation.

V. Presentations

a. Albuquerque Museum – Overcoming Hateful Things: Stories from the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Imagery (Alicia Romero and Andrew Connors)

The Albuquerque Museum will host a traveling exhibition from the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Imagery at Ferris State University in Michigan. It opens Saturday, November 7, 2026 and runs through April 2027. Albuquerque will be the only venue west of the Mississippi to host it.

- Exhibition overview. The show includes 151 objects, photographs, and interpretive material. A 3D model of a prior installation is available online. Dr. Romero circulated the visitor's guide from the Jim Crow Museum and will send the link to Councilor Rogers' team for distribution to Zoom attendees. A content advisory will be posted; the images are difficult and in places violent, and teenagers may attend with a parent's or guardian's permission.
- Why the museum brought it here. Mr. Connors said the museum sees it as its job to tell the truth about racial injustice, including in New Mexico, where Dr. Romero's research shows the legacy of Jim Crow persisting in advertising and popular culture into the 1960s. The exhibition will not be augmented locally.
- Opening weekend. Dr. David Pilgrim, founding director of the Jim Crow Museum, will give a public talk on opening day, with a private tour planned for select community members. The Albuquerque Museum Foundation member preview is Friday, November 6, 2026, and the museum invited Board members to attend. Staff will collect Board members' email addresses so invitations can go out.
- Programming requests. The museum asked for the Board's input and partnership on a panel discussion in January or February 2027 on Jim Crow's legacy in the Southwest, featuring local subject-matter experts. The museum also offered its Third Thursday evening events (5:00 to 8:30 p.m., every third Thursday except December) and February Black History Month programming as partnership opportunities. School group tours are always free.
- Board discussion. Councilor Rogers raised the need for healing alongside the exhibition and proposed a dedicated quiet space at the museum staffed by healers from across the community's traditions, from faith leaders to meditation practitioners, for visitors who may be triggered. She also suggested APS field trips and Black Student Union visits; Dr. Woodley reported that several schools have already signed up. Dr. Lisa Taylor offered to help connect the exhibition to Black health outcomes then and now in her role as inaugural DEI director for the UNM College of Nursing. Rita Powdrell noted that the African American Museum and Cultural Center was invited more than a year ago to help bring the exhibition to Albuquerque and urged that the voices of New Mexicans who

lived through Jim Crow be part of the lectures and programming. Ayana Zahara asked that the exhibition also educates people who are not Black on how these patterns begin and how to recognize and call them out today.

- Outcome. Councilor Rogers identified this as the first project for the Board's cultural events and heritage preservation subcommittee and asked Ms. Powdrell to **help lead the** identification of local subject-matter experts for the panel. Staff will connect Ms. Powdrell with the museum team.

b. Seventh World Congress on Racial and Ethnic Inequality (Neema Pickett and Robyn Robinson)

Robyn Robinson, Public Art Planner with the City's Public Art Program, and Neema Pickett, Office of Black Community Engagement, reported on the World Conference on Racial and Ethnic Inequality, now in its 30th year, hosted by the Roy Wilkins Center at the University of Minnesota. Ms. Robinson directed the conference's arts programming.

- The conference drew more than 400 participants from 11 countries, plus student delegates. Themes included global collaboration, youth leadership, new economic models, human rights and the future of democracy.
- Ms. Robinson described how Twin Cities artists stepped up during COVID, after the murder of George Floyd, and during Operation Metro Surge: five and a half miles of murals on Lake Street, free food and wellness programs, a global social justice film festival with 17 entries, and the youth-run Roots Cafe that Ms. Pickett highlighted as a model for youth-led economic development. The arts generate about \$4.1 billion a year in the Twin Cities.
- Both presenters invited the Board to partner with Public Art, the Listen and Learn education programs, and the Office of Equity and Inclusion on larger-scale community programming in Albuquerque. Ms. Robinson also noted Route 66 Centennial and Green Book exhibit on the 8th floor of City Hall, on view through the end of October.
- Eugene Pickett thanked the presenters and spoke to the link between the arts, farming and ranching communities, and preserving community history. Ms. Pickett announced that *Woods Before Sunrise*, an exhibition of Black contemporary art in New Mexico, closes October 18, 2026 at the Albuquerque Museum.
- Acting Chair Barrett asked whether a written report on the conference could be shared with the Board. Ms. Pickett agreed to provide one.

VI. Board Leadership and Updates

a. Interim Chair and Interim Vice Chair

- With Jordan Locke's resignation, Patrick Barrett agreed to run the meeting and to serve as Interim Chair. Councilor Rogers reminded members that officers remain interim so that the incoming community subject-matter experts have a chance to serve as chair or vice chair once seated. City staff will continue to provide mentorship and support to the interim officers.
- Nicole Bedford-Jacobs volunteered to serve as Interim Vice Chair. On the advice of staff, the Board took a roll-call vote, and her selection passed unanimously.
- Interim officers: Patrick Barrett, Interim Chair; Nicole Bedford-Jacobs, Interim Vice Chair.

b. Community Subject Matter Expert Appointments

- The Mayor will recommend Marcus Porter and Dr. Lisa Taylor for appointment to the Board. The Mayor is still deliberating on the third seat and did not want to hold the first two names while he decides.
- City Council is scheduled to confirm the two appointments at its October 19, 2026 meeting at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall. Board appointments normally go on the consent agenda. The appointees are not required to attend but are welcome in the room or on Zoom.
- Applications remain open. The Board still wants community members to apply so they can be placed on subcommittees.

VII. Governance and Bylaws

- The Board deferred substantive review of the proposed bylaws to the November 3, 2026 meeting, where it will be the main item. Councilor Rogers asked members to read the draft closely before then. The Board is holding off on adoption until the community subject-matter experts are seated so they have a voice in the document.
- The bylaws list the Board's focus areas on their first page. Education and Youth was added as a focus area after the others and will need to be added to the authorizing ordinance.
- Staff are tracking all needed ordinance changes. March 2027 marks one year since the ordinance passed; at that point the Board will review what is working, what is not, and whether to add community seats or member organizations.
- Rita Powdrell asked that incarceration be added to the Missing and Murdered focus area, noting the number of people exonerated after fifteen or twenty years in prison. Bishop Cooper added that the Board will need capacity on policing and law enforcement. Members agreed to fold incarceration and policing into that subcommittee's scope.

- Bishop Cooper also asked where technology fits, given how few Black professionals work in the tech and AI sectors. Members agreed to treat it as a focus within both Economic Mobility and Education and Youth.

VIII. Action Items and Next Steps – Subcommittee Leadership

Councilor Rogers asked the Board to identify a member to lead each subcommittee so community applicants can be placed under Board leadership. Members volunteered as follows, with formal assignments to be recorded at the November meeting:

Subcommittee / Focus Area	Board Lead(s)	Other Members
Cultural Events and Heritage Preservation	Rita Powdrell (African American Museum and Cultural Center); Eric Spurlock to be invited	
Missing and Murdered Black Persons and Families, including Incarceration and Policing	Officer Rob Duren (APD Black Ambassadors)	Neema Pickett on the Fair Wages for Incarcerated Workers Act
Health Outcomes and Disparities	Dr. Lisa Taylor (pending supervisor approval), in collaboration with Nicole Bedford-Jacobs and UNM Hospital	Dr. Xeturah Woodley (APS grant work)
Civic Engagement and Public Participation	Clarence Smith (NAACP); Patrick Barrett	Bishop David C. Cooper (Reclaim Your Vote)
Education and Youth	Dr. Xeturah Woodley (APS); Beverly Gaines	Ava Silver (UNM collegiate youth); Patrick Barrett; Nicole Bedford-Jacobs
Economic Mobility	Open; several applicants forwarded to the Mayor could fit this area	

- Civic engagement call to action. Mr. Smith reported that the NAACP's largest current project is voting rights, including phone banking to voters in gerrymandered states; the Albuquerque Branch is assigned Texas. Anyone who wants to help make calls should see President Smith. Bishop Cooper noted the Ministers Fellowship's partnership with the

National Urban League's Reclaim Your Vote campaign. October 6 was the first day of early voting.

- Education and Youth scope. Councilor Rogers described the subcommittee's purpose: bringing a youth voice to advise the City, summer youth employment and the share of Black youth actually hired, placement on the Mayor's Youth Council, educational attainment, and supporting Black Student Unions, including vetted community members with APS visitor passes serving alongside BSU advisors.
- Subcommittee operations. The ordinance is silent on when and how often subcommittees meet, so each will organize itself, choose Zoom or in person, and pick one priority to work on in its first year. Staff can help secure meeting space. Eric Spurlock asked whether members can call meetings as needed; Councilor Rogers confirmed they can.
- Open Meetings Act. Hope Thomas cautioned that subcommittees could be subject to the Open Meetings Act depending on their function. Staff will confirm.
- Standing updates. Ayana Zahara asked whether subcommittees will work with the day's presenters. Councilor Rogers said yes, and that each subcommittee will have a standing report-out item on the Board agenda so the full Board can track progress and collaborate.
- Timing. Subcommittee meetings will tentatively begin in January 2027. The Board's branding is now finalized, and staff will order outreach materials so the Board can hold community events and recruit members before the holidays.
- Policy opportunity. Neema Pickett announced that the Fair Wages for Incarcerated Workers Act will be introduced in the upcoming legislative session and invited interested members to contact her to join that work.

IX. Announcements

- NAACP Albuquerque Branch (Clarence Smith). Branch officer elections take place this November. Nominations open at the membership meeting on Saturday, October 10, 2026 at 1:30 p.m., 1119 Edith Blvd. SE. All officer seats and five to twenty-four executive committee seats are up for election; candidates need a consent form, available at the meeting. The 75th Annual State Conference of Branches, themed "We the People," runs October 23 and 24, 2026 in Hobbs, New Mexico, with a Friday gospel extravaganza at the Western Heritage Museum and Lea County Hall of Fame (**\$40 observer**), a prayer brunch (\$50), and a banquet (\$100). Mr. Smith also announced that he is running for Branch President. Staff will circulate the conference information.
- Delta Sigma Theta, Albuquerque Alumnae Chapter (Beverly Gaines). Voices of the Vote, a spoken-word event featuring students from Albuquerque Academy and other schools, takes place tonight, October 6, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at Nexus Blue Smokehouse. Free and open to the public, with food.

- New Mexico Black Leadership Council (Rachel Mwadi). The Council's 5K in the International District is set for October 24, 2026, roughly 7:30 a.m. to noon, with food and youth performances, including African youth dancers. Ms. Mwadi will confirm the time.
- New Mexico Black Lawyers Association (Hope Thomas). The annual Raymond Hamilton Scholarship Brunch is Saturday, October 17, 2026. Tickets are \$50, with sponsorships available at newmexicoblacklawyersassociation.org. Proceeds fund scholarships for Black law students at UNM. Staff will include the link in the notes.
- African American Museum and Cultural Center (Rita Powdrell). Under the Mayor's initiative opening City properties to nonprofits, the Center has petitioned the City for the property at 118 8th Street to build a permanent African American Museum and Cultural Center. Eric Spurlock has been working with Property Management and viewed the site with the Department of Arts and Culture. The full build is estimated at \$141 million. Councilor Rogers called it huge news and said she will follow up offline on the Council process, bring in Neema Pickett and Robyn Robinson, and talk through land-ownership strategy and phasing. She urged the community to go to the 2027 legislative session with a unified funding ask, pointing to the Asian Cultural Center's success in securing federal, state, and city support with several organizations advocating together, and noting the state's roughly \$1 billion surplus.
- Black Chamber of Commerce of New Mexico (Beverly Gaines). The next Lunch and Learn is October 27, 2026 at 11:00 a.m. at the Chamber, featuring Raúl Bujanda, Executive Director of Public Safety for the City of Albuquerque, on City resources available to the community. Past sessions are recorded; Ms. Gaines will send the link to Mr. Barrett, who asked about the earlier session he missed.
- Kenyan Ambassador. In response to a question from Officer Duren, Councilor Rogers reported that the Kenyan Ambassador sent his regrets for October but still plans to visit, now hoped for November. Mr. Thomas will confirm. If the visit falls after November 7, the Board would like to include a tour of the Jim Crow exhibition.
- Board headshots and biographies. Photographers were on site for Board member headshots immediately following the meeting. Staff will arrange a separate session for members who attended remotely. Members still need to submit biographies; at the November meeting staff will name those who have turned theirs in. The goal is to have faces and bios on the website before the Board begins community engagement.

X. Next Steps

a. Review of Assigned Responsibilities

1. City Staff – Correct the September 1, 2026 minutes to reflect Clarence Smith as President of the NAACP Albuquerque Branch.
2. City Staff (Chevonne Watson and team) – Pulse-check the community applications received, sort them by subject area or subcommittee interest, and report back so the Board can begin inviting applicants onto subcommittees.
3. City Staff – Resend the draft bylaws and governance materials ahead of the November 3, 2026 meeting.
4. City Staff – Confirm whether Board subcommittees are subject to the Open Meetings Act.
5. City Staff – Track proposed ordinance amendments, including adding Education and Youth as a focus area, for review at the Board's one-year mark in March 2027.
6. City Staff – Collect Board members' email addresses and pass them to the Albuquerque Museum for the November 6 member preview invitation.
7. City Staff – Connect Rita Powdrell with the Albuquerque Museum team on the January/February panel and related programming.
8. City Staff – Schedule a headshot session for members who attended remotely, and post biographies and photos to the AAAB website as they come in.
9. City Staff – Order Board-branded outreach materials now that the emblem is finalized.
10. City Staff – Distribute the NAACP state conference details, the Black Lawyers Association brunch link, and the APD training facility address for the November meeting.
11. Board Members – Review the draft bylaws closely before November 3 for an extended discussion and possible adoption.
12. Board Members – Submit biographies to City staff before the November meeting.
13. Subcommittee Leads – Confirm leadership assignments at the November meeting and identify one priority for each subcommittee's first year.
14. Rita Powdrell – With the Board's help, identify local subject-matter experts for the museum's panel discussion and related exhibition programming.
15. Dr. Lisa Taylor – Confirm with her supervisor whether she can lead the Health Outcomes subcommittee.
16. Albuquerque Museum – Send the visitor's guide link and the 3D exhibition walkthrough to staff for distribution to the Board.

17. Neema Pickett – Share a written report on the Seventh World Congress with the Board.
18. Beverly Gaines – Send Patrick Barrett the link to recorded Black Chamber Lunch and Learn sessions.
19. Rachel Mwadi – Confirm the start time for the October 24 New Mexico Black Leadership Council 5K.
20. Councilor Rogers – Follow up with Rita Powdrell and Eric Spurlock on the 118 8th Street property, the Council process, and a legislative funding strategy; share any update on the Kenyan Ambassador's November visit.
21. Members Interested in Policy Work – Contact Neema Pickett to join the Fair Wages for Incarcerated Workers Act effort or see Clarence Smith to help with NAACP voter phone banking.

b. Confirmation of Upcoming Meetings and Locations

The Board meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 11:00 a.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held:

Tuesday, November 3, 2026 11:00 a.m. Albuquerque Police Department Training Facility, Second Street (Address to be distributed by City staff)

The Board's ordinance requires meetings to be held in City buildings. Officer Duren has offered to host the November meeting at the APD training facility. Staff noted that November 3 is also Election Day; the meeting will proceed as scheduled, and members are encouraged to vote early.

Governance and bylaws will be the primary agenda item. Subcommittee leadership assignments and biography submissions will be confirmed at that meeting.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:51 p.m. Board members present stayed for headshots.