WESTERN AREA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING
Westin Oaks Houston at the Galleria*Houston, Texas
September 13-14, 2012

“Seize the Moment…Strengthen the Chain”

Link Constance Fitzpatrick Smith, Western Area Director, called the meeting to order.

Link Katie Allen led the Links Pledge and Song.

Link Johnnie Brown Swift offered scripture, Proverbs 18:24 as the source for the Linkspir.


Link Constance announced the passing of former Western Area Director, Link Doris McCarroll Pelkey.

REPORTS

Area Director  Link Constance Smith

- Welcomed Link Josie Daniels as the new Chairperson of the Fund Development Committee.
- Provided a recap of the National Assembly in Orlando, FL with WA highlights: Program Awards, WA Breakfast, Hospitality Suite with special guest appearance by Link Founder, Margaret Hawkins, Scott Hawkins WA graduates and 11 WA members to Cohort V
- Travel is a large part of the role of the Area Director
- Chapters are still struggling with the 1 in 5 attendance requirement - WA lost 35 Links to this failure to comply: as well as 23 Links lost to a failure to support the building fund
- Reminder: The 2013 WA Conference in Houston, Texas and the 2015 WA Conference in Sacramento, CA

Vice Director  - Link Jacqueline Howard
Opening statement of the love she and family received with the passing of her father
Acknowledged the need for better communication with chapters e.g. still some confusion with the 5-year periods covered by the 1-in-5 requirement
There is a new online process for the induction of new members – it is operational
Clarifying language is needed for boundary issues and the 50 mile radius area
Reviewed By-Laws passed at the Orlando Assembly that pertain to membership, i.e. Affiliate travel status
Reminder that November is Friendship Month

Financial Secretary - Link Cora Robinson
See Cora for details to include in minutes

Parliamentarian - Link Johnnie Brown Swift
Continues to receive chapter inquiries regarding Robert’s Rules of Order, local and national By-Laws
Submitted three articles for The Chain
Served as a panelists at the Orlando Assembly
Serves as a member of the National By-Laws committee – committee is still compiling amendments (20) that passed.

Nominating Chair - Link Vivian Hambrick-Ryan
Serves as a member of the National Nominating Committee that presented a full slate of candidates at the Orlando Assembly
All candidates were unanimously elected
Orlando Assembly was the first trial of the electronic voting system – reports that all went well
Reviewed the nomination process for the upcoming Area Conferences:
  o Chapters have received letters to submit intentions by October 15, 2012
  o Committee will certify eligibility
  o Nominees receive approval
  o Candidate fee due January 2013
  o Candidates may submit campaign literature to the Area website where only Chapter Presidents may access
  o Deadline is 90 days prior to the Conference (Mid-March 2013 for the Western Area)

Recess

Dinner

Friday, September 14, 2012
Executive Council Reconvened

• Called to Order by Link Constance Smith at 8:15 a.m.
• Pledge & Song led by Link Barbra Ruffin Boston
• Linkspiration read by Link Deborah Beavers-Watford


• Link Lorna Hankins moved that the agenda be accepted as presented. The motion passed.

**REPORTS** (Continued)

**Secretary’s Report** – Link Janice White

☞ Minutes from Executive Committee Conference call 5/24/2012, and corrected Minutes from Executive Committee Meeting 10/14/2011. Minutes accepted as presented.

**Rituals** – Link Marsha Webb

☞ New Rituals Manual will be available on-line in 2013.
☞ All Rituals are listed on the National Website.
☞ Each Chapter should create a “Rituals Box” so that the items necessary can be handed down from one administration to another.
☞ Recommended music is: Braham’s Lullaby.

**Program Chairperson** - Link H. Diane Scott

☞ Presented a *Journey Through Program Facets* with detailed information on the accomplishments of each of the five Program Facets

**Leadership Summit** – Link Jacqueline Howard

☞ Reviewed Program for upcoming Leadership Summit.

**Technology Report** – Link Alice Davis

☞ New member candidate’s on-line process is LIVE!
☞ Western Area Website – password = westernarea54

**Awards & Recognition** – Link Marcia Walker

☞ Plan is to establish a history of Western Area Awards
☞ Individual Awards/Recognition is: 25 – 40 – 50 years – Platinium

**Fund Development** – Link Josephine Daniels
HBCU – Our initial goal is $320K. Western Area has already contributed $26K thus far... We still need to raise $124K by 4/30/2013.

Ethics and Standards - Link Marguerite Toliver

- Committee to align and standardize information across all Areas
- Creating a Power point presentation to achieve this
- Reminder that issues within a chapter should first be addressed at the chapter level – before forwarding on to the area level
- The desire is that issues be resolved at the chapter level
- Reminder that when Emailing concerns, please do not send - reply all

Ethics & Standards Committee = VP of Membership, Parliamentarian, Chair of Ethics & Standards, 2 appointed members.

Legislative Issues - Link Theresa Lyons

- Participated in an Assembly Workshop concerned with “Get Out the Vote and Voter Suppression
- While waiting on a Memorandum Of Understanding with the NAACP and Chapter Presidents, we will distribute information re: registering new voters.
- Congressional Black Caucus – The Links, Inc. and Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity will co-host a Networking Reception during the 42nd Conference this year.
- A Legislative Issues Toolkit is available
- Preparing an Advocacy Manual for chapter use
- Local chapters are encouraged to align themselves with the local chapter of the NAACP in a Get Out the Vote (2012) Campaign.

Strategic Plan – Link Deborah Beavers-Watford

- The Strategic Planning Tool is now on-line!
- Training will be offered here at the Leadership Summit
- Chapter Presidents need to sign-up for the Webinars to ensure training is complete.

Archives & History – Link Eloise Pinckney

- Link Marion Sutherland has written her memoirs.
- Legacy Keeper Report is due to the Area Archivist by May 15th each year.

Treasurer’s Report – Link Roxann Chargois

- There have been significant changes in the new Financial Handbook:
  1) Annual Internal Audit up to $25K.
  2) Financial Review $25K - $50K (compilation)
  3) Full external audit annually if over $50K (page 4 of new handbook)
  4) Operations, Fundraising and Programming = 3 separate bank accounts (page 10 in new handbook)
  5) Our general counsel must review all contracts of $5K or more. Western Area Counsel = Valerie McGee (see page 12 in new handbook)
  6) Cannot use monies in Restricted Account to send delegates and/or alternates to Conclaves or Conferences. These monies should be moved to the Operations Account. (See page 13 in new handbook)
Communications & Public Relations - Link Lorna Hankins

- Provide information for educating members on how to access WA website Members Only Portal
- Celebrate Links history and Links member
- Create a Western Area Directory
- Promote the Links brand
- Quarterly issues of the Western Area Chain – Link Constance will publish the Western Area Times monthly and post on line.
- National Committee will design a social media (Webinar) module on Social Communication

Western Area Conference – Link Lorna Hankins

- 7 Texas Chapters will sponsor the Western Area Conference
- Expecting +/- 1,000 members to attend
- Theme: “Reaching for the Stars”
- Community Service Project = ‘ROSE’ (Responsible, Organized Sisters of Education) located in the 3rd Ward. (48% Hispanic, 45% Afro American)
  - Accept approximately 100 students per year
  - Supported by FEYW (Foundation for the Education of Young Women)
  - “Buy a Brick” program to enhance experience for students
  - Each sponsoring chapter has committed $10K toward community project.
  - Bring a flag from your Alma Mater to be installed there.
- Planning a cost effective souvenir journal – color cover and black & white pages
- Friday Social Event will be at the Space Center, Houston – plus exhibits… 5 Afro-American Astronauts and other Astronauts will also attend.
- Raffle – Hawkins Grads will work the raffle. “Starry Eyed Vacation” plus two other vacation trips are the big prizes to be awarded at the end of the White Rose Banquet. Members must be present to win.

Protocol - Link Wendy Phynes

- Committee receives and answers questions about Links’ ceremonies
- Chair worked as a member of the National Protocol Committee
- The Protocol Manual is online and will be updated in 2013.
- Working on alignment between the four Areas and National.
- Protocol is the entity that runs *underneath* all that we do
- Please notify the Protocol chair at least 3 to 4 months in advance of your local chapter needing protocol questions addressed (when inviting Area and or National Officers)

Adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Thanks to Link Charlotte Ned who was kind enough to record the Minutes on Thursday, September 13, 2012 in my absence due to travel delays.

Link Janice L. White
Western Area Recording Secretary