

Meeting: Town Hall – Delaware Legislative Agenda 2020

Date: Tuesday, January 14, 2020, 7:00-8:30 PM

Location: Trinity Faith Christian Center, 15516 New Rd, Lewes, DE 19958

Chairperson & Moderator: Nancy Powell

Speakers: Sandy Spence
Nancy Powell

Recorder: Ann Loar Brooks

Introduction & Opening

Nancy Powell opened the meeting and invited SDARJ members for make the following announcements.

Announcements

- Ann Loar Brooks
 - Donation envelopes for SDARJ and the Scholarship Fund are available at all SDARJ Town Halls
 - February 11, 2020, Town Hall – historical review of African-American music from the 1800's to modern day
 - Brochures for annual African American film festival hosted by SDARJ and the Rehoboth Beach Film Society (February 14-16) were available at the evening's welcome desk
- Don Peterson
 - The annual MLK Day parade will be held January 18, 2020 in the morning in Lewes
 - On January 21, the First State Community Action Agency presents a National Day of Racial Healing event 4:30 at 308 N. Railroad Street, Georgetown, DE
 - On February 7, 2020, CAMP Rehoboth and SDARJ will host the Shine a Light art exhibit and panel discussion about growing up African American in Sussex County at 37 Baltimore Avenue Rehoboth Beach, DE
- Women's March Sussex County Representative

- Eastern Sussex Democrats will be working to get out the African American vote. Check out the Women's March website and Facebook page for more information
- On January 19, 2020, from 2:00-4:00 the Women's March Sussex will hold the Looking Back, Moving ahead celebration at the Lewes Library.
- Drew McKay announced the formation of a Lewes-based commission on African American history.

Program

Sandy Spence explained the importance of the 2020 federal census and the implications for Delaware and mentioned the passage of the National Popular Vote bill in March 2019 and the early voting bill that will go into effect in 2022.

She then outlined the following bills related to racial justice that will come before the Delaware General Assembly in 2020:

- HB 80 – Earned Income Tax Credit (passed by House & Senate in 2019 but vetoed by Governor)
- SB 105 – Minimum Wage
- HB 73 – Absentee Voting (requires an extraordinary majority to pass)
- HB 175 – Voting by Mail
- SB 68, 70, & 82 – Gun Safety: assault weapons, bump stocks, and purchase permits (threatened by strong gun lobby)
- SB 71 – Prescription Drug Pricing

Nancy Powell addressed the state budget and upcoming bills that relate to criminal justice:

- HB 165 – Death Penalty Re-instatement
- Other criminal justice actions related to marijuana legalization, education, minimum wage, and voting
- HB 1 – Civil Citation for Juveniles (keeping juveniles out of the court system)
- HB 4 – Sentencing Reform
- HB 8/171 – Re-entry Funding & Licensing Requirements
- HB 10 – No Prosecution for Juveniles Under 12
- HB 258 – Prison Nurseries for Young Children of Prisoners
- SB 151/152 – opposing bills on Bail Reform
- SB 39 – Fees and Fines, e.g. Driver's Licenses
- SB 40/52 – Criminal Code Reform
- SB 130 – Rules related to Confessions to Police

She urged investigation of these bills and other justice matters on www.legiscan.com.

Sandy Spence further urged the audience to convey to fellow citizens that the census will have strict requirements on privacy, to look for a mailer in mid-March, and be aware that response will be possible via snail mail, phone, or online.

An audience member asked about including people who are experiencing homelessness in the census. Ms. Spence assured the audience that extensive measures were being taken to include this segment of the population. She also explained that, if the population of Delaware surpasses a certain (attainable) number, our number of representatives in the federal House of Representatives could increase and that prisoners will be counted according to their last home address.

A question about a census pre-certification postcard left the audience believing that it was most likely a scam – but nothing definitive could be said about this postcard.

An audience question about bail bond reform made clear that this bill, passed in 2018, is vulnerable to being rescinded.

Closing

The event ended at approximately 8:00PM.