

National Organizing Weekend, 1981  
Outline

October 23<sup>rd</sup> - Friday

Each founding chapter from fourteen states and the District of Columbia had a coordinator and two additional representatives present.

- I. Honorable Lucille Rose, former Deputy Mayor, New York City, and Coalition board member, as parliamentarian, opened the meeting.
- II. Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, former congresswoman and coordinator from Los Angeles, California, made a motion that a temporary chair be named to convene the national organizing meeting of NCBW.
- III. E.T. Trotter, Esq., coordinator from Memphis, Tennessee, moved that Jewell Jackson McCabe be appointed temporary chair.
- IV. Delia Young, coordinator from Kansas City, Missouri, seconded the motion—followed by a unanimous vote.
- V. Temporary chair, Jewell Jackson McCabe, coordinator from New York City, officially called the meeting to order. Ms. McCabe reviewed the weekend schedule of activity, agenda, goal and timetable.
- VI. Founding Chapter Presentation/New York Coalition of 100 Black Women.
  - A. Mary Burke Nicholas, a founder, Coalition board member and president of the National Association of Commissions for Women reviewed the "cause and concept" of the Coalition from a founding member's perspective. Ms. Nicholas reviewed our eleven-year history and reflected on the politics of the times, the concern about the development of young Black women and the need for a network for Black women to begin meeting, talking and working together as a solid, voluntary effort on our own behalf.
  - B. Evelyn Cunningham reviewed the Coalition's administrative/programmatic structure, including specific committee descriptions and methods of operations. She underscored the concept of trying to create a forum with enough diversity to attract a cross-section of Black women through either direct resource projects (for example, political action seminars, networking directory, career development/employment forums, conferences, etc.) or advocacy action (for example, representation on commissions and special committees, testimony before local, state and federal regulatory committees, media watch projects, etc.)

- C. The Role Model Program was singled out as an example of an effort that speaks directly to the core of our purpose—passing on the legacy of Black women's achievements and experiences to our youth. It was noted that this project, like the networking directory, was easy to replicate on a chapter-to-chapter basis and that those projects were good vehicles to begin organizing around.
- D. Dolly Christian, Employment Committee chair, reviewed her committee's mandate, approach, accomplishments and vision for the future: including a projected computerized résumé bank, "how to" employment seminars and membership recruitment for corporate board/commission referrals.
- E. Mary Layton, Public Relations Committee chair, described and distributed a seven-page kit on the Media Alert Project that the Coalition launched. She explained that we have begun to coordinate and align with other advocacy groups concerned with the image of Blacks and women in media. She explained that this too was a good example of a program that could be replicated throughout the National Coalition Chapters to further enhance our mission to create a presence for Black women.
- F. Vivian Dixon, chair of the Budget and Finance Committee of the New York Coalition, distributed a budget and finance kit and reviewed its contents, which included budget procedures, forms and an explanation of the role and function of the Budget and Finance Committee. Ms. Dixon emphasized the need for a supervised annual audit and strict adherence to sound accounting principles.
- G. Jewell Jackson McCabe, president, described the diversity and myriad actions undertaken by the Coalition in the past decade. She focused on the need for a high energy level and clear purpose and direction in order to create the momentum necessary for success. Restating the need for political action and economic development, Ms. McCabe specifically reviewed the Coalition's evolving role as a source and catalyst for economic development: first by describing the study jointly commissioned by the Coalition of 100 Black Women on the "Impact of [three million] Working Women on the Economy of New York City." she emphasized the important groundwork this study laid by identifying the quantitative input of our labor in relation to the total New York City economy. She further reviewed the initial economic-development steps being taken by various committees, i.e., the approach that the Arts and Culture Committee has taken towards audience development, with the ultimate goal being to increase box-office receipts for minority artists; the Arts and Culture Seminar Series, which stresses the economic and investment opportunities of Black art; the Political Action Committee's production of 2 guides for minority goods and services (produced in 1976 and 1980). Ms. McCabe described the traditional and basic fund raising for community-based institutions in need (i.e., Community Action Committee's efforts on behalf of

the Greater Harlem Nursing Home and Harlem Dowling adoption service agency).

Ms. McCabe stressed the need for further research and development to create model economic development projects to be tested in the New York Metropolitan area. This project would be structured to facilitate the need for Black women's growth as entrepreneurs, joint venturers and corporate policy makers. She concluded the presentation by reiterating the need to be perceived by the community-at-large as a credible force clearly capable of transcending special interests when needed to embrace issues and efforts of common concern to the local community, civic, business and corporate interests, e.g., the Coalition being an important resource to New York City during the 1975 and 1978 fiscal crisis.

Describing key elements to gaining strength, McCabe stressed the broadening of alliances within the total community as essential to coalition building. Lastly, energy, patience, understanding, two-way tolerance and steady/focussed direction were recurring themes in the description of the evolution of the Coalition of 100 Black Women.

(A funding proposal for the National Organization is in the drafting stage.)

## VII. Constitution

- A. Corporate Labor Attorney Trotter presented a draft constitution; after several generic refinements were noted, a motion was made, seconded and passed to create a constitution committee to be convened at 8:00 p.m., Friday, October 23, with one representative per founding chapter as a member of this committee.
- B. It was moved, seconded and passed that E.T. Trotter be the Constitution Committee convener.

## VIII. Resolution: National Mandate/National Dialogue

Each state made a presentation focused on their own regional needs and perceptions as contemporary Black women.

- A. A national dialogue occurred with special focus paid to the common theme that recurred while discussing our National Mandate.
- B. Carol Ann Taylor, coordinator from Miami, Florida, presented a collective mission statement.
- C. In addition to having copious notes taken, the session was audio tape recorded.

- D. It was moved, seconded and passed that Delia Young convene the Resolution Committee at 8:00 p.m., Friday, October 23, with representatives from the founding chapters.
- IX. Nominations: The generic constitution, approved by the chapters, established the basic organizational structure, e.g., officers, board of directors, geographic make-up, etc.
- A. A motion was made, seconded and passed for Yvonne Brathwaite Burke to convene a Nominations Committee at 8:00 p.m., Friday, October 23, with representatives from the founding chapters.
- X. National Welcoming Reception
- A. We were delighted that Philip Morris agreed to underwrite the cost of a small reception to welcome the organizers of our national effort; to recognize our twenty-four founders and to honor our national movement.
  - B. In addition to the New York Coalition's board of directors, committee chairs, founders and longtime and corporate supporters, local civic and government leadership were invited to meet our sisters who had come from across this country to unite under the Coalition's banner. This enabled the founding chapters to witness this cross-section of alliances developed by the New York Coalition.
  - C. Our founders were presented with medallions for their vision in establishing the foundation of this movement. Awards presentations included: Congresswomen Shirley Chisholm and Yvonne Brathwaite Burke for their unwavering support and their fine example of a standard of excellence; Congressman Charles B. Rangel for his constant presence and assistance in our efforts on behalf of the Black community; James D. Robinson, III, chairman, American Express, for his unprecedented corporate fund-raising effort on behalf of the development of Black female talent, having raised 13 million dollars for a Black woman's college (Spelman College); Chairman George Weisman and Vice President Stanley S. Scott of Philip Morris for their consistent faith and financial support of our efforts; Percy E. Sutton for his encouragement behind the scene, support and financial commitment; and David N. Dinkins and Lewis Rudin for being the civic and corporate "extended family" from the beginning, taking the lead in respecting our presence.
- XI. Committees convened
- A. E.T. Trotter convened the Constitution Committee with the draft constitution as amended during the afternoon session and the constitutional recommendations as recorded during the afternoon session.

- B. Delia Young convened the Resolution Committee with the drafts from both New York and Miami and the summary of the national dialogue, which focused on the organization's mission statement.
- C. Yvonne Brathwaite Burke convened the Nominations Committee with input from the draft constitution and biographies on the coordinators and representatives of the founding chapters.

October 24 -- Saturday

- I. Committees reconvened
- II. Full assembly convened
  - A. Constitution  
presented/amended/adopted
  - B. Resolution: National Mandate  
presented/adopted
  - C. Nominations  
slate presented/elected

III. National Organizing Luncheon:

The luncheon was the culmination of the weekend activities and was emceed by Dr. Margaret Hayes, New York Coalition board member and coordinator for New Jersey.

- A. An historic review of the Coalition's "roots" was provided by Cathy Chance Connors, Evelyn Cunningham and Mary Burke Nicholas.
- B. Women representing politics (former Congresswoman Yvonne Brathwaite Burke), business (Rachel Robinson, president, Jackie Robinson Development Corporation) and labor (Josie McMillian, president, Postal Union APWU, AFL-CIO) spoke at the luncheon.