



**Rust College International Alumni Association
Alumni Special Call Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2021
10:00am – 12:30pm cst.**

Alumni Special Call Meeting was virtual due to Covid-19 and held via Zoom (electronic call)

RCIAA President Barbara Belfoure Redditt called the RCIAA Virtual Special Alumni meeting to order promptly at 10:04AM. President Belfoure opened the meeting with a welcome. Parliamentarian Damien Jackson Ellington provided information and order of the Zoom call including respecting alumni, waiting to be called upon to ask questions, raising of hands to be acknowledged, making a motion and muting lines. Alumni was informed that those who do not comply, the tech team would mute their lines.

Minister Paul H. Harris, in absent of the RCIAA Chaplain, said the Prayer.

The Alumni recited the Alumni Oath

RCIAA President announced that this is a Special Meeting and per RROO, the business of the meeting that was sent with the notice is the only business that should be discussed. She explained that at the November Meeting, the DC/Maryland/Virginia (DMV) Club was not installed due to officer not be present on the call. It was stated that the installation would take place at the Special Call meeting. Therefore, President Belfoure asked for approval to conduct in installation of the DMV club during the Special meeting and include it on the agenda. Also, President Belfoure asked to add to the agenda a report from the Nominations Committee regarding the 2021 Regular Election and the fundraising chair regarding upcoming fundraisers.

Adoption of Agenda: Phelisha P. Harris moved to adopt the agenda as distributed with the inclusion of the installation of the DMV Club, Nominations Report and Fundraising report. Tequilla Ship seconded that we accept the agenda as presented with the inclusion of the installation of the DMV Club, Report from Nominations and Report from Fundraising committee. Vote passed.

Election Chair Sabrina Rawls gave an overview and guidelines of the voting process virtually including how to raise hands, cast vote, lower hand, and the voting poll.

RCIAA Secretary Tommiea Jackson conducted the Club Roll Call. A total of 15 of 23 clubs were present. Clubs Represented: Atlanta, Chicago, Gulf Coast, Marshall/Benton, Jackson Hinds, Kentucky, Memphis, Milwaukee, North Carolina, Oxford, Panola, Springfield, and Starkville. 93 alumni were present on the call.

2019 Previous Meeting Minutes: RCIAA Secretary Tommiea Jackson reported that the 2019 minutes from the alumni annual meeting was provided from the prior administration. **Motion to Adopt the November 2019 Annual Alumni Meeting** - MeShonya Wren Coleman moved the 2019 minutes be adopted as distributed. Brian White seconded the motion. Vote passed with 99%. The 2019 minutes was adopted with a majority vote.

2020 Previous Meeting Minutes: RCIAA Secretary Tommiea Jackson reported tha the 2020 annual alumni annual meeting was distributed via email to the alumni. **Motion to Adopt the November 2020 Annual Alumni Meeting** - Michael Armstead moved the 2019 minutes be adopted as distributed. Juno Jacobs seconded the motion. Vote passed with 95%. The 2020 minutes was adopted with a majority vote.

Installation of the DC/Maryland/VA (DMV) Rust Club: RCIAA President Belfoure conducted the installation of officers for the DMV Rust Alumni Club. New Club Committee Chair-Keith Glass confirmed that the DMV club had met their requirement to be established. The following officers were installed: President, Dolores Stubbs; Vice President, Trennie Foster; Secretary, Arleen Rogers; Treasurer, Kadiatou Trarore'; and Chaplain, David Brown. The RCIAA welcomed the new club officers.

Voting of Documents: President Belfoure restated the purpose of the special call meeting was to vote on the documents from the November annual meeting. It was explained that the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures are fluid documents and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis at the alumni meetings and the committee has established recommendation forms for alumni to make suggested changes throughout the year. The policies and procedures and bylaws need to be adopted during the Special call meeting and thanked the committee members for their hard work on these documents.

Elections Committee Chair, Sabrina Rawls again discussed the procedures for voting electronically. The total number of alumni on the call was 96 alumni and 2/3rd vote is needed for the motion to pass / 65%.

Constitution and By-Laws Proposed Amendments for Adoption: Committee Chair, Brian L. White introduced members of the committee: Co-Chair, Yolanda Thomas and members – Dione Miles, Bill Scott, Leroy Frazer and Natalie Stennis. The proposed amendments include: Parliamentarian and Past RCIAA Presidents being added to the bylaws committee; the position of Treasurer be added to the Executive Officers; electronic meeting due to the pandemic; and separated the Nominations and Elections committee.

President Belfoure asked Chair White to address the comment period and responses received. Chair White discussed that Legacy Member was included in the bylaws that was distributed via email; however, the committee determined that Legacy members was not appropriate and that M.I. graduates would be included in the Associate Members category. Voting in Meeting in Article X of the bylaws; the alumni who have paid membership dues as of the meeting date is eligible to vote in the meeting which is different from voting in the alumni election of officers.

Questions: (1) Keith Glass asked for clarification as to who is allowed to hold offices; he indicated that the bylaws didn't clarify who was eligible to hold offices. Chair White responded that yes, at the local office associate member could hold an office; but not at the RCIAA level. President Belfoure referred to Bylaws, Article III on page 4 that distinctly address the alumni eligibility to hold an office on the RCIAA level.

Motion to Adopt the Bylaws: Paul Harris, DeSoto Club Member moved to adopt the bylaws as distributed with the amendment to remove the Legacy Member category and include M.I. graduates under the Associate Members category and to include privileges of member to vote during meeting in Article X of the Bylaws to include those members who paid membership dues as of the meeting date. Yolanda Thomas seconded the motion. Vote passed with 100% voting to adopt the amended bylaws.

Annual 2020-2021 Proposed Budget was presented. RCIAA President presented the Budget proposed by the RCIAA Executive Board. The Budget was presented at the November meeting and was emailed to all alumni to comply with the 30 day requirement. A slight change was made to the budget that was presented at the November. In preparing the RCIAA 2020-2021 Budget, it was discovered that the annual Regular Alumni dues of \$25 could not be included in the RCIAA budget to cover reimbursements or other alumni administrative or operative costs. The \$25 alumni dues goes to support the operation of Rust/Office of Alumni Affairs. It is not known specifically what the \$25 actually covers. A line by line report of the budget was given: \$73,500 was projected to be raised and actually collected is \$51,800. Expenditures include \$6,000 for (\$1,000 each) Classes who met the class challenge goal will receive a scholarship in the class name; \$11,500 for general Scholarship; \$5,000 Bus Fund; \$15,000 to support any special project or request from Dr. Taylor; \$5,000 for Emergency Student Funds; and \$10,000 Special Projects for RCIAA to support on the campus. Change to the budget includes 5% for RCIAA operating and administrative costs. It is permissible to use a percentage of funds raised to cover operational costs, thus the request is not out of order.

Questions: (1) Keith Glass asked if criteria has been set for students to receive the scholarships and if the RCIAA have authorization from Rust College to receive information regarding the student meeting the criteria to receive the scholarship? President Belfoure stated that Scholarship Committee has not yet been established nor criteria, as the RCIAA moves forward, a scholarship committee established. The RCIAA can decide to donate the general scholarship monies to Rust College and allow the college to distribute the scholarships to deserving student and report back to the alumni association the recipient's names. The scholarship committee will decide how best to handle the scholarships and report back to the RCIAA. Damien Jackson, commented that he works in student retention and can provide academic information about the students to the RCIAA along with Financial Aid information from Ms. Walton.

(2) Leroy Frazier asked about the \$25 membership dues: All funds raised by the RCIAA including dues is for the alumni association. To fit with the college stance of using the funds for the operation of Rust College, the RCIAA can decide that all of the funds (\$25 membership dues) will be provided to the college, but must be counted as the RCIAA funds provided to the school. The RCIAA is an independent body and makes the decision whether the \$25 goes to Rust College and not the college. President Belfoure added that the RCIAA will be in communication with Rust College regarding the \$25 and reimbursement for RCIAA expenses. Dr. Taylor has suggested that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) be developed between the College and the Alumni association related to the use of the dues and other items as well. Lifetime membership dues goes to the Endowment for Scholarships. **(3) Sabrina Rawls** suggested that the \$25 alumni dues cover the \$15,000 allocated for special requests from RC President. President Belfoure explained that the \$25 alumni dues are not controlled by the RCIAA. President Belfoure asked if the Office of Alumni Affairs could address the question. JoAnn Scott, Director of Alumni Affairs suggested, per the discussion with Dr. Taylor, that President Belfoure and Dr. Taylor continue the discussions to resolve the \$25 concerns. **(4) Keith Glass,** asked if the RCIAA was seeking to be reimbursed from Rust College. President Belfoure explained that going forward, expenses will be reimbursed from the funds raised and not from the \$25 dues as proposed in the budget. An example was provided regarding the purchase of an Ad for Dr. Beckley who was being recognized in a magazine. The college has not yet paid the invoice due to the issue as to what funds the invoice will be paid from. Keith suggested that a list of expenses be included in the budget. President Belfoure responded that including such in the budget is not appropriate but could be included in the Memorandum of Understanding. Any reimbursement requests must be supported by receipts and approved by the RCIAA Executive Board.

(5) David Brown asked if the RCIAA is a remote or its own 501(c)3? If the RCIAA wants any degree of independence of funds, the RCIAA should consider establishing its own 501(c)3 status. With that the RCIAA can still have a corporate relationship with Rust

College and still be a charitable organization.

(6) Leroy Frazier commented that in the spirit of our Alma Mater, Rust College, and in the spirit of Article 2, Section A in the newly revised bylaws, within the drafted MOU, it is strongly encourage that all RCIAA dues be counted as part of the RCIAA with the understanding that the RCIAA will contribute, documented on paper, all of those funds to support the Alumni Development Office. The RCIAA must have on its books that the \$25 be contributed all to Rust and not be decided by Rust College. The RCIAA is a self-governing body. It should be clear that the RCIAA establish the procedure that the \$25 be contributed to Rust College to support the Alumni Development Office.

(7) Sabrina Rawls suggested the budget be amended regarding the \$15,000 Special projects for Dr. Taylor and \$10,000 Special Projects for the campus thats taken from monies raised for scholarship; to be reduced to \$5,000 for Special Projects and the remaining toward Scholarship. President Belfoure clarified that in both fundraisers; the funds raised were for Scholarship; special projects, improvements to Rust Campus; and emergency funds for students. The purpose of the fundraisers were shared with the alumni. Alprentice Rawls asked for the special projects to the campus and Dr. Taylor be clarified because as presented is ambiguous. President Belfoure explained that donations from the RCIAA for example, lockers in the men's locker room and for example funds to replace drapes in the auditorium are campus related special projects. Special projects requests from Dr. Taylor include assistance with program or other proposals that does not relate to campus improvements. An example was shared of a request from Dr. Taylor for the Alumni to help fund the honors program because of loss of funds; the RCIAA was not in a position to make a donation. Going forward, the RCIAA wants to be in a position to make noticeable donations. President Belfoure stated that the examples shared can be included in the footnote of the budget. Damien Jackson shared an example of how the special project will come into play with helping students in the near future with staying in school. President Belfoure shared another example of how students need help with graduation unpaid bills that prevent them from graduating that alumni pull together resources to help out in emergency situations. **(8) Victor Ingram** suggested moving forward knowing the budget is a living document and adjusted as needed; but the line items of Special Projects cannot be defined during this meeting.

Motion to Adopt the Budget: Brenda Tucker moved that the Budget be adopted understanding that it is a living document and can be adjusted as needed. James Robinson seconded the motion. Vote passed with 90%.

Policies and Procedures: Co-Chair Yolanda S. Wright presented the proposed Policies and Procedures. Members include: Barbara Belfoure, Chair; Dr. Juno Jacobs, Damien Jackson Ellington, Errin Ceesay, Terri A. Wiggins, Jackie Riddle. A copy of Policies and Procedures should have been emailed to all alums for review to comply with the 30 day notification. Co-Chair read the mission of the Policies and Procedures.

Questions: **(1) Keith Glass** asked questions regarding Article 2, Section 2 regarding Term of Office, there is a line in the Term of Office states that "due to the fact that we just had an election that we have the option to suspend the election period". Since the RCIAA is in the middle of an election period now, the RCIAA missed the window for Nominations, the RCIAA missed the target date for ballots and now we are 9 days away from all nominees and self-nominees being submitted to the office, if the RCIAA accept this document, based on Article 2, Section 2, the RCIAA will be essentially dismissing or suspending this election this year, is that correct? President Belfoure stated that Keith Glass was incorrect with his interpretation of the term of office section in the Policies and Procedures. Co-Chair Yolanda Wright responded that the statement was inserted as an example; so if adopted today, it does not affect the current election. Before the election can be suspended, there has to be a motion and vote by the RCIAA to suspend the election. Keith stated that reading it looks like law and not an example. President Belfoure stated that the comment is an example as clarification was needed regarding a Special Election. President Belfoure explained why there was need to provide specifics regarding special elections and stated that by adding the words, "for example" would correct the concern. President Belfoure clarified specifically to Keith Glass that the RCIAA had not missed the targeted balloting date for the 2021 election. The nomination committee did not present a slate of candidates at the November meeting; however, the RCIAA can be on schedule and is on schedule. **(2) Leroy Frazier** stated that the Policies and Procedures should be reviewed and be in compliance with the newly adopted revised Constitution and Bylaws as parts of the Policies and Procedures repeated several parts of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Motion to Adopt the Policies and Procedures: Michael Armstead moved that the Policies and Procedures with the inclusion of the words "for example" in Article 2, Section 2; and that the Policies and Procedures be reviewed and in compliance with the newly adopted revised Constitution and Bylaws. Josephine Watkins seconded the motion. **Any Questions?** **(1) Larry Anderson** asked if there were any candidates that we have already or is that to be determined. President Belfoure responded that Nominations committee is on the agenda and the questions can be asked during that time. Keith Jones needed clarification about the review period of the Policies and Procedures. Christopher Moore stated that the question is too late because the vote had been called for by President Belfoure. Vote passed with 85%.

Seal: President Belfoure presented the Alumni Seal for vote to become the official seal. The Alumni seal was provided in the documents to comply with the 30 day notification.

Motions to Adopt the RCIAA Seal: Leslie McLemore moved the seal be adopted. James Robinson seconded the motion. Vote passed with 99%.

President Belfoure stated that the adopted documents becomes effective as of the meeting date: January 9, 2021.

Appointment of Chaplain: President Belfoure stated that the RCIAA has been operating for the past five out of six months without a chaplain. The RCIAA Executive Board has taken the proper procedures to make contact on

numerous occasions with the elected chaplain and in all cases has been unsuccessful. Therefore, the RCIAA would like to appoint an interim chaplain to carry-out the duties of the position until June 30th. Parliamentarian Damien Jackson Ellington stated that the RCIAA would need to make a motion to suspend the current chaplain before an appointment can be made.

Motion to suspend the current Chaplain: MeShonya Wren Coleman made the motion to remove Chris Carpenter, the elected Chaplain due to not fulfilling the position for more than five or six months. Michael Armstead seconded the motion. Vote passed with over 60%.

As President of the RCIAA, President Belfoure appointed Minister Paul Harris as interim Chaplain to fulfill the remainder of the term until June 30th. Paul is a Lifetime member, Class of 1986, member of the DeSoto Metro Rust MI Club. Paul is married to Phelisha Harris, also a Rustite. And has been very influential in recruiting over 20 members or more of the Harris family and friends from the Sikeston/St. Louis, MO area to attend Rust College, including two daughters. **Paul Harris, do you accept this appointment?** Paul Harris accepted the appointment. Alumni welcomed Paul Harris to the RCIAA Executive Board.

Nominations Committee: President Belfoure presented the Nominations Chair, Patricia Rayford to the RCIAA. Chair Rayford stated that she is a graduated of the class of 1974. Members are Sabrina Rawls, Terri Wiggins, Ejeera Joiner, Chris Moore, Willa Terry, Rosetta Davis, and Yolanda Wright. Nomination Timeline: December 18, 2020 – Announcement of Nominations period begins. January 18, 2021 – Deadline for candidates to submit application package: Resume, Cover letter and Headshot to Office to Alumni Affairs to kwoods@rustcollege.edu. Feb. 1, 2021 – candidates notified of eligibility to run for office via email from Nominations. Feb. 2 – April 2, 2021 is the campaign period. Candidates should not begin to campaign until notified of their qualification to run for office. This statement was also included in the email that was sent out on December 18, 2020. February 23, 2021 – Ballots will be mailed from the Office of Alumni Affairs to all eligible voters. April 14, 2021- All ballots to be returned to the Office of Alumni Affairs office, no exceptions. April 23, 2021 – Ballots will be counted by the Elections committee. Results of the election will be provided to the Office of Alumni Affairs and the RCIAA Executive Council. April 24, 2021 – Results of the election will be announced during the spring alumni meeting. Any Question?

Questions: (1) Dr. Frazier asked if the timeline coming as a recommended schedule for approval by the body? President Belfoure stated that the timeline is information for the process. Dr. Frazier recommended that due to the strong language the timeline be submitted for approval by the body. President Belfoure commented that the timeline was provided by the Office of Alumni Affairs in order to meet the deadlines provided in the bylaws. Dr. Frazier made a motion to approve the proposed RCIAA Nomination Committee Report with Schedule. Leslie McLemore seconded the motion. Vote passed with 82%.

Chair Patricia Rayford read the privileges of members and the qualification to run for office: Qualified Member must be current in payment of IA dues for prior fiscal year and/or candidate must be a financial contributor for at least 3 of the past 5 years with average amount of \$100 per year and a contributing member of their local alumni club. Qualification of officers: President, VP, Parliamentarian and chaplain must (a) be graduates of Rust College; (b) have been active in international and/or local club meeting for at least one year; and (c) have demonstrated interest and dedication to the ongoing programs of the college. Section B: Recording Secretary (a) be graduates of Rust College; (b) have been active in international and/or local club meeting for at least one year; (c) have demonstrated interest and dedication to the ongoing programs of the college; and (d) must be highly skilled in operating a computer and software programs, able to communicate with the leadership team via email, text, skype, and other computer mobiles. Must be able to set up conference calls for the meetings for the executive team members and experience in taking detailed notes.

President Belfoure explained that these requirements are what are in place according to the current bylaws and not the revised bylaws adopted during the meeting. The revised bylaws, where it states Rust College, the new bylaws say Rust and M.I. College. After the adopted of the bylaws please refer to Article VI Qualification of Officers before submitting an application packet. Chair Rayford presented the Election and Tenure section from the Bylaws. Each Rustite who is active as of June 30th of the previous fiscal year will be sent a ballot by first class mail containing all nominee who qualified. Person who were nominated after that date will not be on the ballot and the name will have to be a write in. All ballots should be mailed to the membership by first class mail 60 days prior to the date of the Spring Meeting. The mailed ballots should be returned via first class mail and postmarked no later than 10 days prior to the annual meeting. Please be very careful when mailing ballots back, it must be postmarked 10 day before the annual meeting. Ballots will be opened and counted by the Elections committee.

President Belfoure stated that the voted upon Bylaws supersede the former bylaws.

Question (1) Julius Cotton asked if the Treasurer position included in the Bylaws adopted today would be included in the current election. President Belfoure stated that it was her understanding that the adopted bylaws becomes effective immediately. The deadline to submit application packet is January 18th, 2021; thus anyone interested in running for Treasurer should submit application by Monday, January 18th via email to Kwoods with Office of Alumni Affairs. Julius Cotton asked if the Treasurer position would be included in the adopted bylaws. President Belfoure explained that the Nomination Chair's presentation was provided from the current bylaws and not the recently adopted bylaws. **(2) Dr. Frazier**, noted that some people may be interested in running for office and asked how soon would the alumni receive the minutes from the meeting or some statement. President Belfoure restated that the deadline is January 18th. Something can be sent out immediately by posting on our website, facebook page, emailed to all club presidents and the Office of Alumni Affairs can send out a mailing. **(3) JoAnn Scott** stated that the announcement can be posted on the Rust College website for ease of access for those individuals who do have email accounts.

Fundraising: Chair Monica Perdue introduced the fundraising committee. Michael James, Co-Chair. Chair Perdue thanked everyone for supporting the fall two fundraisers and stated that the fall fundraiser resulted in over \$51,000 being donated from alumni. The Spring fundraising dates are: February 26 – For the Love of Money. The next date will be April 9th, theme to be determined. More information will be coming in the next coming weeks.

Question: Dr. McLemore asked about the alumni who are eligible to vote in the election. Madame President read from the requirement stating that alumni who are active as of the previous year will receive a ballot. Dr. McLemore asked the RCIAA, to ensure greater participation, that individual who have paid their dues by January 31, 2021 can vote in the upcoming election? President Belfoure asked if that was a motion? Dr. McLemore moved that alums who had paid their dues by January 31st be allowed to vote in the upcoming election. Yolanda Kay Thomas seconded the motion. Any questions? Dr. Frazier stated that this is a constitutional issue that was just approved. Which the spirit of the motion is to suspend the rules of the newly adopted bylaws to allow for this to take place and this needs to be reflected. President Belfoure asked Dr. McLemore to restate the motion.

Dr. Frazier clarified that the motion should include the suspension of Article VIII Section C of the newly adopted bylaws to allow for the individuals who have paid their dues by January 31st be allowed to vote in the spring election. Dr. McLemore restated the motion to include the suggested language per Dr. Frazier. Yolanda Kay Thomas seconded the motion. **Question: (1) in the Zoom Chat:** How will this be communicated to the larger body? President Belfoure stated that communication will be the same as stated before that will include the announcement of the Treasurer. One notification will be sent out including the change to allow alumni to vote. It will be on the RC and RCIAA webpages, email blast, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Emails also to club presidents. Equanna Cooper, Chicago Club posed the question and asked if the information would go out this week? It was stated that the Chicago Club has senior members who do not have access to email. President Belfoure stated that the Office of Alumni Affairs ensures that alumni with no email address are sent via mail all notifications. Equanna Cooper asked about alumni who were not financial; but would want to pay dues to vote in the election? President Belfoure assured that the RCIAA and Office of Alumni Affairs will do everything possible to get the word out; but cannot ensure every graduate from Rust will get the word. The RCIAA will rely on club presidents, the Office of Alumni Affairs to use their contact information; use of Rust College and Alumni websites and every mediums to get the word out. **Question: (2) in the Zoom Chat:** Is the January 31st deadline for 2021 or 2020. President Belfoure responded January 31, 2021, as January 2020 would be included in the June 30th deadline eligibility. President Belfoure restated the Motion: The RCIAA voted to suspend the newly adopted bylaws that includes the requirement to vote in the election from June 30th of the previous year and voted to allow alumni who have paid their dues by January 31, 2021 to be able to vote. The voting process was clarified by Dr. Frazier regarding the hands raised. Vote passed with 66%. The number of alumni in attendance at the time of the vote was 86 and 2/3rd of the attendance is 57%. The vote passes.

The date is Saturday, April 24th, at 10am, at this meeting, the election results will be presented during the meeting.

Closing prayer.....Minister Paul Harris, newly appointed Chaplain.

Announcements: Happy Founders Day to men of Phi Beta Sigma and Happy Founders to all Greek Organization. Congrats to Paul Harris, member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, ZO Chapter to coming aboard the RCIAA Executive Board.

Motion to Adjourn the meeting was made by Paul Harris. Dorothy Booker/Willie Burley seconded the motion. Vote passes with 100%.