

HALL COUNTY ALUMNAE CHAPTER
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
North Georgia Community Foundation
340 Jesse Jewel Parkway, Suite 600
Gainesville, GA 30501
Minutes of the November Chapter Meeting
Held on Saturday, November 16, 2024

Pre-Meeting Safety Briefing: Soror Melanie Floyd presented the safety briefing via PowerPoint.

Chapter Members Present: Denise Arnold, Vallorie Coley, Sue Davis-Westmoreland, Kenya Ficklin, Melanie Floyd, Erica Glenn, Monica Hudson Cook, Sheriah Johnson, Patricia Lee, Denise Livingston, Gloria Maddox, Whitney McDowell-Robinson, Angela Middleton, Alisha Moore, Sheila Tabron, Francia Tolbert, Shirley Vereen, Deborah Washington, and Lisa Williams (A quorum was present for the transaction of business.)

Visiting Sorors: Bridgette Garnier and Erin Jackson

Call to Order: Soror Sheriah Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:19 a.m. The meeting proceeded with the ritualistic opening.

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was adopted as printed. (General Consent)

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: The previous minutes were approved as printed. (General Consent)

Teachable Moment: Soror Sue Davis-Westmoreland, the Physical and Mental Health Committee Chair, gave a "Self-Care and It's Benefits" presentation. The following was highlighted:

- Self-care becomes essential for healing and resilience.
- Taking time to process your emotions helps to prevent stress from building up and allows you to regain clarity and focus.
- Self-care routines remind us that our well-being matters beyond any setback, i.e., rest (seven to eight hours of sleep per night), mindfulness (positive self-talk), and physical exercise.
- By nurturing yourself, you build inner strength to approach future challenges with renewed confidence and optimism.
- Self-compassion is not just a momentary comfort, but a powerful tool to help you bounce back stronger.
- Remember to take time for self-care by accepting what is, letting go of what was, and having faith in what will be.

OFFICERS REPORTS

President's Message: Soror Sheriah Johnson relayed information from the October 2024 Exec Check as follows:

- **Regional Update:** Soror Amaris Johnson spoke about the impact to our region of the last couple of storms. The storms had impacts across several regions, so the International President requested that there be a collective effort in assisting the regions. Emails were sent out for sorors affected

by the storms to apply for funds that are available with DREF. More communication will be coming out on how we can support sorors locally. There are still a few outlier chapters working through financials for chapter compliance. Soror Amaris Johnson is asking that chapters send documentation to the state coordinator and copy her, so she knows if the chapter is still working with finance or audit to get events approved on a case-by-case basis

- National Finance Committee:** Soror Chante Obazee shared that the 2024 Annual Finance Report (AFR) template is posted on the national website. The AFR is due by February 28, 2025. The expectation is that the AFR should be 75% complete. Emails will be sent soon to set up one-on-one time to assist anyone through the AFR template if there are issues. Dues were payable for FY 2025 on July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024. Late fees (\$10) are applied after November 1, 2024, and a reinstatement fee (\$15 or \$30) is applied after January 1, 2025. Dues are to be submitted via eCheck in the Red Zone. FY 2025 corporate fees were due by September 30, 2024. Budgets for FY 2025 are due by November 30, 2024. If the budget is not in place by January 1, 2025, the chapter will not be able to function.

Sample Chapter Budget Timeline

MONTH	ACTION
August	Budget requests are due to the Budget and Finance Committee from chairpersons.
September/October	The Budget and Finance Committee meets to develop and document budget recommendations for review and consideration for approval.
October/November	Budget(s) for the ensuing year (2025) are presented at the Executive Board meeting approval.
October/November	Budget(s) for the ensuing year (2025) are presented at the chapter meeting for approval.

- Scholarship and Standards:** Soror Sabrina Polote reported that the policies and procedures review is in progress with the expected completion date November 30, 2024. The Presidents’ Webinar and Membership Intake 101 recordings are available in the member portal under National Scholarship and Standards Committee. The Nominations and Elections Webinar is scheduled for Monday, October 21, 2024. An Informz message was sent on October 10, 2024, for registration information. A follow-up webinar for the region is TBD.
- 2025 National Nominating Committee:** Soror Katrina Myricks announced the positions available for national office and committees.

Positions Available for National Office/Committees
International President and Chair of the National Board of Directors
National First Vice President
National Second Vice President
National Secretary
National Treasurer
Chair, 2027 National Nominating Committee
Chair, National Finance Committee
Chair, National Audit and Corporate Compliance Committee
Alumnae Member, National Audit and corporate Compliance Committee (2 Positions)

Collegiate Positions Available for National Committees
Collegiate Member, National Scholarship and Standards Committee

Collegiate Member, National Finance Committee
Collegiate Member, 2027 National Nominating Committee
Collegiate Member, National Audit and Corporate Compliance Committee (2 Positions)

- **Membership Intake:** Soror Amaris Johnson and Soror Bethaney Coleman Willis discussed myths vs. facts in relation to membership intake approval.

Myth:	Fact:
Membership intake is a right because my chapter wants to have it.	Membership intake is a privilege.
The regional director approved chapters that did not meet the Minerva Circle requirements.	Only chapters that met the Minerva Circle requirements were approved.

Survey data from chapters were used to determine membership intake. The last time the chapter had membership intake was considered also. Soror Amaris Johnson is trying to balance capacity and is looking at need versus desire or want. Chapters in Atlanta are expected to receive thousands of applications. The entire system cannot be stressed with allowing every chapter to have intake. Deadlines matter where membership intake is concerned. Sorors were reminded to stick to the facts and go back to watch the Fireside Chat webinar.

- **Social Action Committee:** Soror Alfreda Coward relayed that the election countdown is on. To make sure that everything can be done, use the resources from the national website. Go through elections do's and don'ts of election engagement and Get Out the Vote. Encourage everyone to download the frame Fortitude on the Frontline. Download the Delta yard signs and post cards. Eta Chapter shared a video presentation. A mark of one thousand women participated in the Georgia text-a-thon.

Soror Sheriah Johnson submitted a detailed report that is on file.

After Soror Sheriah Johnson gave her president's message, she shared that there were questions and concerns about the Minerva Circle election of which she wanted to address. Soror Sheriah Johnson's clarification is as follows:

I would like to take this opportunity to discuss the events of last month's meeting after the Minerva Circle election and the subsequent communications that followed. I felt it is needed to address the concerns raised to ensure that the entire chapter is informed and understands the explanations provided. After this, my hope is that we may put this matter behind us and move forward, focusing on the business of Delta.

So, let's talk about the issues.

Soror McDowell Robinson's concerns were as follows:

- 1) *The entire process surrounding lobbying/campaigning*
- 2) *The vote tabulation*
- 3) *The revote*
- 4) *And dismissal of sorors concerns*
- 5) *No recourse taken by leadership*

At the time that I was made aware of the concern it was addressed. I acknowledged the soror that

raised her hand and answered her question. I then advised sorors that we would need to conclude with the chapter meeting so that I may look into the matter. Sorors, remember we also had a Social Action event that day and since it took time to do the balloting, we needed to proceed with wrapping up the meeting as we had people waiting for us, and a majority of them ended up leaving because we did not show up on time. After reviewing what was reported by the nominations committee, I advised that WE failed to provide instructions to sorors on the rules and since WE failed to do that, candidates operated under the rules that were provided. Unfortunately, those rules failed to address the issue of campaigning and could not in good conscious penalize anyone for relying on the information that WE provided. I also stated that We will need to make sure to do better going forward and that is where we left off at the chapter meeting.

Following that, I did send communication to Regional Leadership to inform them of what had taken place and to inquire if there was anything else that I should have done in this situation. I did get a response and was advised that there was nothing else that needed to be done.

Soror Tolbert issues were as follows:

- 1) Being voluntold to be the elections chair*
- 2) Texted me and called me about her role as Elections Committee Chair*
- 3) Election Runner system and having to input the email address into the system for voting*
- 4) Explanation of two candidates running for COE*
- 5) Tallying the no votes*
- 6) The re-balloting process (switching from electronic to paper)*
- 7) Addressing the concerns from multiple sorors*

No one was voluntold to do this position. The process states that an Elections Committee Chair must be appointed at the conclusion of nominations. I initially asked Soror Davis-Westmoreland who declined b/c she was not going to be in town. Then I scanned the room to identify a soror who was not on the Nominating Committee and who was not nominated for a position and asked Soror Tolbert. This all took place during the chapter meeting. I told Soror Tolbert that we would help her as I felt she may be a bit uncomfortable as this would be her first time doing this role. I am always trying to help, but sorors, please remember we all have responsibilities to look at our Delta tools. They tell you exactly what you need to do. The duties and roles can be found in the chapter Policies and Procedures and the National Headquarters website under National Committees. There are webinars and tools to use. I reached out to Soror Tolbert before the executive board meeting to let her know that Soror Coley had put something together for her to review. Soror Tolbert was not able to make the executive board meeting, and I came to know the day of the chapter meeting that she had not had a chance to review her email, so she did not see what information was there for her. I texted Soror Tolbert the Thursday before chapter meeting informing her that I would set up the Election Runner for her and to inquire if she saw the email from Soror Coley. My text was acknowledged, and I was informed that Soror Tolbert would be arriving early to chapter so we could go over things, and I could assist her in understanding what she needed to do. She was going to also reach out to Soror Arnold for assistance. I did speak with Soror Tolbert the morning of the chapter meeting when she called me. She was on her way to the meeting but would not be able to be there early as expected.

Regarding the Election Runner, only sorors present could vote and it was the duty of the EC to input the emails for balloting purposes.

An explanation was given twice by me regarding COE position and that we had two candidates and you

must vote yes for only one of them. Even though this was ultimately the job of the EC, in trying to assist I presented the information to the chapter.

Regarding votes cast, initially there was some confusion, and it appeared to be a tie. When that was told to me, what I advised was that we have to have a clear winner and would need to re-ballot. I asked Soror Glenn to assist with helping get that set up. I was then advised that it would take too long to set up a new ballot and re-enter the email addresses. At that time, our parliamentarian advised that the document states that it must be secret ballot and not necessarily electronic. So, I instructed a paper ballot and requested that we utilize the same paper as to not take away from the anonymity of the voter.

I did revisit the Election Runner following the email from Soror McDowell-Robinson as I was not aware of any of her concerns. When reviewing, the ER actually had Soror Moore with nine yes votes and Soror McDowell-Robinson with eight yes votes. This was the same outcome as the paper balloting process.

At the time of paper balloting, it was not brought to my attention any concerns from any soror present in the room.

Soror Livingston's issues were as follows:

- 1) Bringing up her concerns to the Elections Committee Chair*
- 2) Issue with not making an announcement during the meeting*

In this matter to be as fair as possible, I could only act on information that I was provided and on what I knew had been presented. I want to also take this opportunity, sorors, to remind us all of our responsibilities, understanding that we are not perfect and sometimes things get missed, but if you accept a job, it is yours. As a matter of reference, the President is an ex-officio member of all committees except:

- Nominating*
- Elections*
- Internal Audit*

Ex-officio means "from the office", which means that the President holds a position or role by virtue of another office or position held. So, while I am always willing to help no matter what because we are a small chapter in reality, I should have been hands off entirely with this process and need to work harder at not taking on everything just to keep it moving. I hope this helps everyone to better understand why the decision that was made was made and address any concerns.

First Vice President/Membership Services (Hospitality and Courtesies): Soror Denise Arnold reported that there are 35 financial members. The names of the members are listed in the report. The new members listed for FY 2025 are Soror Rita Flowers, reclaimed Soror Genelda Stovall, and reclaimed Soror Nivia Williams. Visiting Soror Erin Jackson introduced herself. She was initiated into the Sorority at the University of Oklahoma in 2005. The **Thanksgiving luncheon** will take place immediately after the meeting today. The **Reclamation Challenge** is ongoing. The rules for the Reclamation Challenge are as follows:

1. Sorors must be current financial members of Hall County Alumnae Chapter (HCAC) to participate in the challenge.
2. The reclaimed soror must pay her dues during the contest period, which is September 10, 2024 – March 31, 2025.
3. Once the reclaimed soror becomes a member, she will receive a "Welcome Home" form and asked for the name of the HCAC member who invited her. Only the soror listed on this form will receive

credit for the Reclamation Challenge.

4. The chapter member who reclaims the most sorors will be the winner of the Reclamation Challenge. The winning soror will have her local dues paid for the FY 2026 by the Membership Services Committee. In the event of a tie, the tied sorors will have their names entered into a drawing. The soror whose name is drawn will be declared the contest winner.

Soror Denise Arnold also asked members to remember to sign in when they attend a chapter event. This will ensure that members receive a step in the **Joy in Our Sisterhood Program**. Committee chairs were reminded to email their monthly attendance reports to firstvp@hallcountydst.org.

Soror Denise Arnold submitted a report that is on file.

Second Vice President (Program Planning and Development): Soror Erica Glenn reviewed the chapter calendar for the months of November and December. She thanked everyone who participated in the Impact Day event. The committee met on Wednesday, November 6, 2024. Members in attendance were Soror Erica Glenn, Soror Jasmine Mays, Soror Denise Livingston, and Soror Sue Davis-Westmoreland. Soror Sue Davis-Westmoreland, the Physical and Mental Health Committee Chair, presented a **mental wellness and self-care teachable moment**. In January 2025, the Physical and Mental Health Committee plans to implement a “Stepping Sorors” initiative. Details are forthcoming. Soror Lisa Williams is the Economic Development Committee Chair. The Economic Development Committee’s upcoming event is for members to ring the bell for the **Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign** on Saturday, December 14, 2024, at the Kroger on Limestone Parkway in Gainesville, Georgia, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. A sign-up email will be sent to members in a couple of weeks. Soror Erica Glenn shared that the Adopt-A-Family with a Twist has been changed to **Santa’s Senior Holiday Helpers**. The committee has reached out to senior centers in Forsyth County and Hall County to inquire of their wish list that included, but was not limited to, the following: men/women disposable undergarments (S-XXL), adult body wipes, Ensure beverages, blankets, Poise pads, bed pads (washable or disposable), and socks. An email will be sent using SignUp Genius to select items to purchase. Sorors are asked to bring their purchased items to the December chapter meeting. Soror Denise Livingston is the International Awareness and Involvement Committee Chair. She shared that **World AIDS Day** will be December 1, 2024. She will give sorors red ribbons after the chapter meeting. She asked for sorors to take a photo showing themselves wearing the red ribbon. Soror Denise Livingston plans to create an infographic or a piece of framed art with the photos. Members may post pictures in BAND. She is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that is having a competition with chapters. An award will be given during the organization’s convention. Soror Sheriah Johnson informed Soror Denise Livingston that she must be included as the chapter president on all discussions, correspondence, etc. concerning World AIDS Day with the CDC. Soror Erica Glenn encouraged members to sign up for at least two committees to ensure that the chapter meets the program requirements. Soror Erica Glenn reminded committee chairs to include Soror President and her on their meeting invites. The next Program Planning and Development Committee meeting is scheduled for December 3, 2024.

MOTION: Soror Erica Glenn moved on behalf of the Program Planning and Development Committee and by recommendation of the Executive Board to add Sunday, December 1, 2024, World AIDS Day to the 2024 – 2025 Program Calendar. **SECOND:** N/A **ACTION:** Motion carried seventeen (17) in favor; zero (0) opposed.

Soror Erica Glenn submitted a report that is on file.

Corresponding Secretary: Soror Deborah Washington reported that she received a bank statement from the post office box.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Financial Secretary: Soror Denise Livingston reported the monies received for the period October 1, 2024 – October 31, 2024. The report shows that there are 35 financial members for FY 2024, and 34 financial members for FY 2025. Soror Denise Livingston submitted a report that is on file. The report is posted on the chapter website under financial documents.

Treasurer: Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson presented the accounting of general funds, fundraising, the CD investment, and restricted funds. The report shows deposits, transfers, expenses, balances, and restricted funds that covered the period October 1, 2024 – October 31, 2024. Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson shared that the certificate of deposit will expire in March 2025. Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson submitted a report that is on file. The report is posted on the chapter website under financial documents.

STANDING COMMITTEES REPORTS

Budget and Finance: Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson presented the proposed budget for January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025, via shared screen. The report shows the total administrative expenses, the shortage/dues minus expenses, and the total restricted expenses. Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson submitted the 2025 Proposed Budget, which is posted on the chapter website.

MOTION: Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson moved on behalf of the Budget and Finance Committee to approve the 2025 Chapter Budget as presented with an understanding that this will be an interval budget process going forward with the approval of the chapter prior to spending. **SECOND:** N/A **ACTION:** Motion carried fifteen (15) in favor; zero (0) opposed.

Fundraising: Soror Denise Arnold reported that at the October chapter meeting, the chapter voted to hold a Double Good Popcorn Fundraiser before the end of the year. The Fundraising Committee recommends that the chapter hold the popcorn fundraiser from Thursday, December 5, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. through Monday, December 9, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. All members are asked to contribute a net fundraising total of \$300. These funds can come from popcorn sales, donations, or a combination of the two. The chapter will raise at least \$9,000 if at least thirty members participate in the fundraiser and achieve the minimum fundraising goal. Soror Denise Arnold shared that since the chapter is small, administrative expenses exceed our dues. The chapter needs a successful fundraiser to cover the shortfall. No one person can do this alone, but together the chapter can achieve the goal.

MOTION: Soror Denise Arnold moved by the recommendation of the Fundraising Committee and the Executive Board that the chapter holds the Double Good Popcorn Fundraiser on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at 5 p.m. through Monday, December 9, 2024, at 5 p.m. **SECOND:** N/A **ACTION:** Motion carried thirteen (13) in favor; zero opposed.

The following information is included in Soror Denise Arnold’s report.

Projected Revenue for Popcorn Sale	30 Sorors @ \$300 each	\$9,000.00
Total Revenue		\$9,000.00
Total Expenses		\$0.00
Net Revenue Over (Under) Expenses		\$9,000.00
Net Profit Ratio		100%
Proceeds will be used as follows:		
Chapter Administrative	80%	\$8,100.00
Georgia mountain Food Bank	10%	\$900.00

Startup Money for Future Fundraising Events	10%	\$900.00
Total	100%	\$9,000.00

Soror Denise Arnold submitted a report that is on file.

Social Action/Political Awareness and Involvement: Soror Erica Glenn reported that the committee made a **one-time \$200 donation to New Georgia Project** on November 4, 2024, to assist with rides to the polls on Election Day. Members of the committee will continue to attend community meetings with the Newtown Florist Club, Fair Fight Georgia, and other non-partisan organizations to ensure that our communities are informed of social action issues that directly affect our service area. Soror Erica Glenn gave African-American voter turnout information noted by the Newtown Florist Club. **Stroll to the Polls** was held on October 19, 2024. Pictures were posted in BAND. The **DELTA Vote Yard Signs** were distributed after the October chapter meeting. Everyone was asked to post their yard sign pictures in BAND. Soror Erica Glenn shared that the committee was unable to finalize a safe distribution space to hand out water and snacks to voters on Election Day at the Fair Street Precinct. The issue was an uncertainty of the no campaigning property distance area. Notify the committee if you volunteered with any non-partisan organizations via phone banking, voter registration or canvassing. This is to ensure that the committee includes your **Get Out the Vote efforts** for the chapter’s final grant report. Continue to check emails from the regional director for upcoming social action efforts.

Soror Erica Glenn submitted a report that is on file.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Minerva Circle: Soror Denise Arnold reported that Soror Myesha Davis, the Georgia State Membership Intake Coordinator, required the Chapter President and Leader of the Minerva Circle of each chapter to schedule an appointment to meet with her to create a membership intake calendar and membership intake budget. After the meeting, Soror Denise Arnold shared that she drafted HCAC’s proposed calendar and budget as instructed. Soror Sheriah Johnson and Soror Denise Arnold are waiting for Soror Myesha Davis to review the documents. Soror Denise Arnold relayed that she will share the documents once they are ready for a chapter vote.

Soror Denise Arnold submitted a report that is on file.

Unfinished Business

- There was no unfinished business.

New Business

- **North Georgia Black Business Alliance (NGBBA) Membership:** Soror Sheriah Johnson shared information about the alliance. She relayed that the executive board voted to table the request for membership until further notice.

Announcement

- Proposed amendments for the Chapter Policies and Procedures are due by December 21, 2024.

Adjournment

- **MOTION:** Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:16 p.m.
SECOND: Soror Patricia Lee **ACTION:** Motion carried with no opposition.

Soror Sheriah Johnson closed the meeting and proceeded with the ritualistic closing.

Respectfully submitted,

Vallorie Coley, Recording Secretary

APPROVED: _____
Sheriah Johnson, President

DATE: _____

DRAFT