

HALL COUNTY ALUMNAE CHAPTER**Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.****Gainesville High School Hub****830 Century Place****Gainesville, GA 30501****Minutes of the January Chapter Meeting****Held on Saturday, January 18, 2025**

Pre-Meeting Safety Briefing: Soror Melanie Floyd gave the safety briefing and relayed that the Emergency Response Team has a new emergency kit bag.

Chapter Members Present: Denise Arnold, Vallorie Coley, C. Sue Davis-Westmoreland, Rita Flowers, Melanie Floyd, Bridgette Garnier, Erica Glenn, Sybil Ingram, Natasha Iszard, Sheriah Johnson, Patricia Lee, B. Denise Livingston, Whitney McDowell-Robinson, Wanda McRae, Alisha Moore, Keoz Moore, Audrey Simmons, Crystal Smith, Sheila Tabron, Francia Tolbert, Shirley Vereen, Deborah Washington, and Lisa Williams (**A quorum was present for the transaction of business.**)

Visiting Sorors: Selena Buffington, Erin Jackson, and Lameisha Smith

Call to Order: Soror Sheriah Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:11 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)

OFFICERS REPORTS

President's Message: Soror Sheriah Johnson stated that she hoped everyone had a good holiday and a happy New Year. Soror Sheriah Johnson gave updates from the **Exec Check of December 17, 2024**, as follows:

- **Collegiate Updates:** Soror Noel Seymour gave the collegiate updates.
- **Regional Update:** Soror Amaris Johnson gave a reminder about cluster dates and instructions on how to get on the waitlist. Plans are to clear the waitlist within the next two weeks. Advisor training links have been emailed. Soror Amaris Johnson answered questions about expired certifications and reading the notes at the top of the registration to know how she will prioritize the approvals.
- **National Finance Committee:** Soror Chante Obazee relayed as far as the 2025 dues, we are entering the reinstatement fee period, which is \$15 or \$30 after January 1, 2025. Dues are to be submitted via eCheck in the Red Zone. If a 2025 budget is not in place, any funds that are disbursed after January 1, 2025, would be deemed unauthorized funds. The 2024 Annual Financial Report (AFR) template is on the website. It is due by February 28, 2025. Any questions concerning the AFR should be sent via email to Soror Chante Obazee. The following items are located in the Members Only Area: chapter treasurer's reports, including budgets; internal audit reports; financial secretary's reports; and the membership directory/roster.
- **Protocol and Traditions:** Soror Daphne Monix Higgins reported that Founders Day is around the corner. The committee is available to help chapters to not only plan for Founders Day, but other

chapter events, which would include preparing for Delta dignitaries and other special guests. The Georgia contact person is Soror Elenor Rene Lovelace.

- Awards and Recognition: Soror Iris Stover shared that the awards and recognitions application is open. All applications must be submitted by December 23, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. Submissions should be for program and activities from the 2023-2024 sorority year. Things to remember when applying are to understand the award criteria, to articulate programs goals and objectives, to provide quantifiable outcomes, to highlight social action component, and to emphasize how program/activity aligns with the strategic plan.
- Advisor Coordinator Team: Soror Denise Gregory gave a reminder that the team serves as the liaison between the regional and state leadership teams and the collegiate chapter advisors. There should be one email address for the advisor council that all advisors have access to. The Advisor Coordinator Team will have regularly scheduled advisor town hall meetings. A new initiative that Soror Amaris Johnson asked the team to implement was a call with university officials, so the officials understand Delta concerns and the requirements of Delta collegiates.
- Communications and Public Relations: Soror Dominga Gardner reported that she has received several emails from sorors expressing that they are not getting emails. She noted that if you hit the unsubscribe button, that unsubscribes you for all communications from the region. Please do not unsubscribe, simply delete and move on. To prevent bounced emails, make sure to add dstsouthernregion.com domain to your Whitelist or Safe Sender List for your email account.
- Social Action: Soror Alfreda Coward asked for sorors to save the date for DDAC 2025 in Georgia, which is March 2-3, 2025. She reminded chapter presidents to update the chapter's Social Action Chair information.
- National Communications and Updates: The 'Tis the Season' fiscal compliance webinar was held on December 10, 2024. The Delta Red Carpet webinar took place on December 19, 2024. PP&D December updates were sent on December 5, 2024. The 2025 Call for Nominations webinar took place on January 5, 2025. The Collegiate Summit will be held on March 20-21, 2025. The Six Triple Eight webinar took place on Thursday, December 19, 2024.
- 2025 National Nominating Committee: Soror Katrina Myrics put a call out to the Southern Region members to register for open positions. She is looking for collegiates to run for office. They should reach out to the committee for assistance. The next webinar for the 2025 Call for Nominations is scheduled for January 5, 2025. Please register for it.

Soror Amaris Johnson wanted to address something that was trending on social media, which was the Sticky Challenge trending on Tik Tok. She shared that when you put it out there on the internet, it is public information. She asked if sorors think it is a good representation of our organization. She questioned how do we get to the place where one person creates this trend, and there is no counter message to it. Soror Amaris Johnson also questioned how did we get here. There was an open discussion with sorors on the call. Soror Amaris Johnson reminded sorors of the rules of the organization, representation of our brand on the internet, and the risk and impact to our organization. She noted that risks are being placed on the organization when we are not mindful of our individual actions. When we talk about sponsorships and internships, this impacts our brand reputation. She shared that we are a 60 million dollar organization, and the privilege of the brand that we are allowed to wear can be revoked at any time.

Please note that all Exec Check recordings are emailed to chapter members.

Soror Sheriah Johnson shared information about the Divine Nine Joint Founders Day Observance at St.

John Baptist Church with the local chapters of AKA and ZΦB that is scheduled for Sunday, January 19, 2025. Since the chapter's Rush event is scheduled on the same day, the Executive Board voted not to participate. A question was asked concerning co-branding with other organizations. Soror Sheriah Johnson noted that the chapter logo should not be used on any organizations' flyers without her permission.

Soror Sheriah Johnson would like to meet with the Executive Committee after the meeting today. Soror Sheriah Johnson submitted a detailed report that is on file.

First Vice President/Membership Services (Hospitality and Courtesies): Soror Denise Arnold greeted everyone with happy New Year. She reported that there are **37 financial chapter members**. The current chapter roster for FY 2025 is noted on the report. Soror Denise Arnold asked for the following new members in attendance to introduce themselves, and they are as follows: Rita Flowers, Bridgette Garnier*, Keoz Moore, and Crystal Smith. The other new members are Genelda Stovall*, and Niviea Williams* (*The asterisk denotes reclaimed.*) Avery Johnson Mitchell (1/15) was given as the only January birthday celebrant. **112th Founders Day** was celebrated on Monday, January 13, 2025, at the Recess Restaurant in Gainesville. Soror Denise Arnold shared that great fellowship was enjoyed by all in attendance. **Sisterhood Month** is rapidly approaching. The Membership Services Committee (MSC) will be publishing the Sisterhood Month calendar in the next few weeks. If you have any activities you would like the committee to consider, please email them to Soror Denise Arnold at firstvp@hallcountydst.org. MSC is inviting members to participate in the annual **Reclamation Challenge**. Each member is asked to help reclaim at least one soror. Please note, for a soror to count as reclaimed, she must be nonfinancial for both the current and the prior fiscal year. The **rules for the Reclamation Challenge** are as follows:

1. Sorors participating in the Reclamation Challenge must be current financial members of HCAC.
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 of HCAC, she will receive a Welcome Home form and will be asked for the name of the HCAC member who invited her. Please note, only the soror listed on this form will receive credit for the Reclamation Challenge.
4. The HCAC member who reclaims the most sorors will be the winner of the Reclamation Challenge. The winning soror will have her local dues paid for FY 2026 from MSC's budget. In the event of a tie between sorors, their names will be entered into a drawing. The soror whose name is drawn will be declared the contest winner.

Soror Denise Arnold gave the update that the chapter has six new members for the 2024 – 2025 program year, all in FY 2025. Three of the new members were reclaimed. Soror Denise Arnold advised sorors to remember to sign in when they attend a chapter event to ensure that the criteria steps for the Joy in Our Sisterhood Program are noted accurately. All committee chairs are asked to email their monthly attendance reports to Soror Denise Arnold at firstvp@hallcountydst.org. Soror Denise Arnold submitted a report that is on file.

Second Vice President (Program Planning and Development): Soror Erica Glenn reported that the committee met on January 28, 2025. She noted some calendar events for the months of January and February. She relayed that the Physical and Mental Health Committee Chair, Soror C. Sue Davis-Westmoreland, has planned a focus on a Healthy Mind, Body and Spirit initiative for our overall physical and mental well-being. The keep moving goal 10,000 steps per day. It is suggested to use your Apple Watch or Fitbit. Record hours by using the Map My Run/Walk. A handout was provided in the BANDS. She noted that the Economic Development Committee, chaired by Soror Lisa Williams, engaged chapter participation in the Red Kettle Campaign on December 14, 2024. Gainesville Salvation Army reported that during our time slots, the chapter raised \$270.66. The chapter received thanks from the Gainesville Salvation Army with hopes of partnering again during the 2025 holiday season. Santa's Senior Holiday Helpers delivered items that were requested by senior centers in Hall County and Forsyth County. A total

of 286 items were collected for the initiative, which included adult incontinence products, bed pads, socks, backpacks, packaged tuna and chicken, grooming products, and more. Soror Erica Glenn asked for members to sign up for at least two committees to ensure that HCAC meets the program requirements. Program chairs should extend invites to Soror President and to the PP&D Chair. The next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 28, 2025, via Zoom at 7 p.m. Soror Erica Glenn submitted a report that is on file.

Corresponding Secretary: Soror Deborah Washington reported that the following items were received from the chapter's post office box: two South State Bank statements, \$50 donation for HCAC fundraiser from Soror Madlyn, \$150 from Soror Sue Davis-Westmoreland for popcorn sale, \$300 from Soror Deborah Mack for popcorn donation, a thank-you card from the Senior Life Center for the donations of senior supplies, and correspondence concerning the Community Uplift Foundation Scholarship Brunch, which Soror Deborah Washington read to the chapter. Soror Sheriah Johnson shared that she and Soror Denise Arnold will purchase a bronze sponsorship for the chapter. After Soror Wanda McRae mentioned that members of Omega Psi Phi are a part of the organization and named other individual participants, chapter members volunteered to increase the amount with personal donations. The event flyer will be posted in BAND.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Financial Secretary: Soror Denise Livingston presented the financial secretary's report covering the period December 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024, which shows the general funds receipts for the current month and the year-to-date total receipts. The report shows that there are 36 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. Soror Denise Livingston asked for members to update their personal information in the Red Zone

Treasurer: Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson presented the general funds account and fundraising account. The report shows deposits, transfers, expenses, balances, and restricted funds that cover the period December 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024. The CD investment account was noted as well. 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

Arts and Letters: Soror Melanie Floyd shared that the committee is recommending for members to attend the following events during February for Black History Month:

- **Genealogic Research from Afro-American Historical Society (AAHS):** AAHS members will present their current research and share how individuals can conduct genealogy and what methods to use if encountering a roadblock in current search. The event will take place on February 20, 2025, at 7 p.m. at the Post Road Library in Forsyth County.
- **1912 The Forsyth County Expulsion and Its Aftermath:** In 1912, over 1000 Black residents were "expelled" from Forsyth County through fear and intimidation. Sophia Dodd, a digital storytelling production research manager at the Atlanta History Center, will take attendees on a deep dive into a personal story that changed the landscape of North Georgia forever. The event will take place on February 22, 2025, 2 p.m. at the Cumming Library.
- **An Afternoon of Jazz with Dwan Bosman:** Saxophonist Dwan Bosman will host a live jazz concert featuring the music of Charles Parker and Miles Davis. The event will be held on February 23, 2025, at 2 p.m. The event will be held at the Sharon Forks Library in Forsyth, Georgia.

- The 3rd Annual Gainesville Hall County Black History Society Gala Dinner: The themed “Taste of the Southside” event will take place on February 22, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at the Gainesville Civic Center. This is a black tie event. The cost is \$75.

Soror Melanie Floyd submitted a report that is on file.

Emergency Response Team: Soror Melanie Floyd shared ways members and their families can stay warm on a budget, which are to drink warm liquids like broth, hot chocolate or herbal tea; avoid caffeine and alcohol for they constrict blood vessels, which makes it harder for warm blood to circulate; keep heat in rooms that are being used by closing doors to empty rooms; push rolled towels under the doors to block drafts; open blinds on south-facing windows to capture sunlight and close them at night to keep the heat in; optimize ceiling fans by reversing ceiling fans to the clockwise direction. This helps to push hot air down and is especially useful if one is using a fireplace or another source of wood heat. Soror Melanie Floyd also noted that the Farwest Region is collecting donations for sorors and members impacted by the recent fires in Los Angeles. The link is <https://bit.ly/FarwestReliefFund>. Soror Melanie Floyd submitted a report that is on file.

Fundraising: Soror Denise Arnold reported that the chapter hosted a Double Good Popcorn Fundraiser on Thursday, December 5, 2024, through Monday, December 9, 2024. All chapter sorors were asked to contribute at least \$300 from popcorn sales and/or donations. The fundraising proceeds were due on December 21, 2024, but has been extended to January 10, 2025. As of today, 16 members of the chapter participated in the fundraiser. The chapter raised \$3,946.13. The proceeds will be divided with 95% of the proceeds going to the general funds account and 5% to community service initiatives. Soror Denise Arnold submitted a report that is on file.

Policies and Procedures: Soror Vallorie Coley reported that all documents pertaining to the chapter policies and procedures, i.e., the timeline for updates and approvals, the 2023 Chapter Policies and Procedures, 2023 Rules of Order, the 2023 P&P and ROOF Approval Letter, and the amendment form are posted on the chapter website. Proposed amendments were due on December 21, 2024. The date was extended to January 7, 2025. The committee will meet on January 22, 2025, to begin the group’s review of the submitted proposed amendments. She thanked everyone who has submitted suggested amendments. Soror Vallorie Coley submitted a report that is on file.

Social Action/Political Awareness and Involvement: Soror Erica Glenn shared that the 2025 King Holiday Planning Committee organized several events to honor Martin Luther King, Jr. Upcoming events are as follows:

- MLK March: The march will begin at 12 noon today, January 18, 2025, starting at the Peach State Bank downtown Gainesville
- 100 Men in Black Conversation: This event will take place at the Fair Street Neighborhood Center at 6 p.m. today, January 18, 2025.
- King Holiday Observance Program: This event is scheduled for Monday, January 20, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., taking place at Antioch Baptist Church, Gainesville, GA. The keynote speaker will be Reverend Rose Johnson Mackey.

Soror Erica Glenn submitted a report that is on file.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Minerva Circle: Soror Denise Arnold reported that the LMC on behalf of the Minerva Circle made a

recommendation for the chapter to approve the membership intake calendar and membership budget as presented on December 21, 2024. The motion was presented to the chapter and passed. A chapter call meeting was scheduled on January 3, 2025, to discuss a \$2,000 start-up budget for membership intake. The motion was presented and the motion passed. These expenses are included in the membership intake budget and will be reimbursed if the process moves forward, and fees are collected. The Rush is scheduled for Sunday, January 19, 2025, at 3:30 p.m. The event will take place at the Gainesville High School Hub on 830 Century Place, Gainesville, GA 30501. Wear red business attire with pearls. Soror Denise Arnold submitted a report that is on file.

Unfinished Business

- There was no unfinished business.

New Business

- There was no new business.

Announcement

- There were no announcements.

Adjournment

- **MOTION:** Soror Patricia Lee moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:26 a.m. **SECOND:** Soror Whitney McDowell-Robinson **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: