

National NAACP board certifies January elections

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

The verdict is in. The NAACP National Board of Directors Committee on Branches has issued a final decision in the controversy over the Jan. 9th Las Vegas NAACP election. The results will stand. On Saturday, Gene Collins will take the office of NAACP President. Eight people ran for the five officer posts and eight for the 24-member executive committee. Four executive committee candidates and treasurer-elect Alfred Wiggs declined to accept posts after the election because they said they were disgusted with how the election was conducted.

That isn't stopping Collins, however. "After we're sworn in, we're going to go through training and I plan to run it [the NAACP] like a business," said Collins. Although the branch office that was located in Nucleus Plaza is no longer open, he said that from now on, memberships can only be had by sending in checks or money orders, or you can pay in cash at the new satellite NAACP location on Martin L. King Dr. and Alexander in the Hidden Canyon Shopping Center. The remaining positions will be filled after the president offers recommendations for appointment and the current

board members vote on them. Edward Lewis, President of the Tri-State Conference, said that the first order of business after the inauguration and training will be to closely monitor the chapter in the areas of branch administration, financial reporting and membership processing. He will require that the new executive board submit reports in each of the three areas monthly. Secondly, Lewis will hold the Las Vegas branch responsible for half of the debt incurred for hosting a recent state conference. He said that the Las Vegas NAACP is in arrears for approximately \$6,000. Collins said that he will immediately have each board

member submit a budget to get the organization's finances on track. He plans to hold a rally in early April to give the community the chance to air their issues. "There've been too many killings by police, children being put out of school, and people being harassed and fired from their jobs. Our plates will be full, but we will address these things immediately," said Collins. As far as a strategy for bringing about change, Collins said that he plans to "take to the streets", bringing the civil rights struggle "to the people". He wouldn't be more specific about what the NAACP will do, as he has yet

to meet with the executive board members and the NAACP membership to determine a course of action. He did however add later, "The system only respects force or the threat of force" and that whatever must be done, "he's not afraid." But the election controversy may not be over just yet, according to Louis Overstreet, the most vocal of the protesters. He complained that the Committee never addressed the specific points of his written grievance in their "generic, blanket" response letter to him, but he keeps being told he was not a legitimate candidate because his membership had expired. "It's incredulous,"

Overstreet said, "that you would have sworn affidavits from branch officers stating that I was a member, yet that wasn't enough. I don't know what more evidence you could provide to prove my status!" Overstreet hasn't yet decided the next action he'll take, but he plans to meet on Saturday to discuss ideas with members who signed his petition in protest of the election. Rev. Jesse Scott, the second presidential candidate who also filed a complaint with the National Office said that he will abide by the decision of the Committee on Branches and will avail himself of opportunities to work with the NAACP.

Civil rights leaders press White House on police brutality

WASHINGTON (AP)— A group of civil rights leaders appealed to the Clinton administration for stronger, definitive and more visible action against police brutality, including a White House summit on criminal justice.



KWEISI MFUME

They also asked Attorney General Janet Reno to visit New York City, where officers shot at unarmed immigrant Amadou Diallo 41 times on Feb. 4, "at least to say no stone will be left unturned until justice is

done," said Jesse Jackson. "We need a face on justice." Nineteen bullets hit Diallo,

and the Pittsburgh area in recent years and growing use nationwide of practices that they said unfairly target minorities. Reno and White House Domestic Policy Council chief Bruce Reed promised to relay their concerns to President Clinton, Justice

problems in our country with respect to possible civil unrest around this issue of police brutality and excessive use of force and why it's very, very important that the Justice Department find a way to step up its involvement in this issue," Mfume said. "The president has to do more than make a radio address on this

subject," as he did earlier this month. Mfume, Jackson and leaders of groups representing Latinos, Asian-Americans, Jews, gays and lesbians and Native Americans cited controversial police killings or beatings of minorities in New York City, California

and the Pittsburgh area in recent years and growing use nationwide of practices that they said unfairly target minorities. Reno and White House Domestic Policy Council chief Bruce Reed promised to relay their concerns to President Clinton, Justice

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Legislative Update, March 15 – March 19

Sandra Douglass
Special to Sentinel-Voice
Week seven of the Nevada Legislature was hectic. More than 100 bills were introduced on Monday, March 15, the last day for individual sponsored bills to be introduced.

The Assembly floor session lasted "a very long time" according to Assemblyman Wendell Williams, D-Las Vegas. The floor session, usually one hour, lasted three hours. The deadline for committee sponsored bills was Monday.

Longer terms for lawmakers proposed
Senate Joint Resolution No. 17 would increase a State Assemblyman's term to four years instead of two years and a state senator's term to six years instead of four years.

Williams supports the resolution. "Legislators will be able to concentrate on their job instead of campaigning every two years."

Assemblyman Mark Manendo agreed. "More time on issues, less on campaigning" he said.

To voice your opinion on Senate Joint Resolution No. 17, call the legislative answering service at 384-2225.

Bill would defang Nevada's marijuana laws
Assembly Bill 577 would make the possession of less than one ounce of marijuana a misdemeanor with a fine of no more than \$100.

Possession of more than one ounce would result in imprisonment in the county jail for no more than six months, a fine of no more

than \$500, or a combination of a fine and imprisonment. The current law states that anyone under the age of 21 found with less than an ounce of marijuana would be guilty of a category E felony, which is a term of imprisonment of 1 to 4 years, a fine of no more than \$5,000, and a chance of probation. For the third and subsequent offense, the person could be charged with a category D felony, also 1 to 4 years of imprisonment with

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