

THE AFRICAN HERITAGE CULTURAL CLUB
General Meeting
March 3, 2026

Meeting was called to order at 10:34 am by Prentiss Gates, Vice-President.

WORDS OF INSPIRATION - Micheline Vosges

PRESIDENT'S REFLECTIONS - Ellie Graham, President acknowledged the women as we celebrate National Women's Month. Birthdays and anniversaries were acknowledged. She noted that this year's Mardi Gras was the best ever and expressed gratitude for all the members who contributed to making gumbo, jambalaya and baked goods. Special thanks to Michael Haggerty, Monica Osbourne, Marva Williams and the entire committee. She urged everyone to attend the Democratic Club meeting, wearing AHCC shirts, on March 11 when Jerry Demings will be a guest. Ballroom doors open at 6:00 pm and the meeting will begin at 6:30 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Motion was made to approve the February 2026 minutes by Laura Bennett and seconded by Akila Mashariki with one correction that 'volunteers were being sought for making gumbo not jambalaya'.

REPORTS -

- **Treasurer** - Sheila Samuel
 - Opening balance - \$7,873.00
 - Total revenue - \$2,177.00
 - Ending balance - \$10,050.00

- **Financial Secretary** - Kathy Griffin provided an update on the financials. The Holiday Gala generated \$13,000 with expenses of \$20,366.00. Boots on the Ground dance income of \$4,445.88 was used to offset the cost, resulting in \$2,920.68 cost to the club. Kwanzaa event income was \$940, with \$557.08 expenses and a profit of \$382.92. Mardi Gras sold food totaling \$1,927 with expenses of \$622 resulting in a profit of \$1,305.00.

- **Correspondence Secretary** - Margaret Graham read a thank you card from Gabby Thomas.

- **Membership** - Sheila Haire. To date there are 217 renewed members and 11 new for a total of 228. Today is the deadline for paying dues to renew membership. Non-paying members will be removed from the roster. She requested new members who signed up last month see her after the meeting to complete a new member form. Orientation for new members is scheduled for April 24 from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm at the Palms.

- **Program** - Yvonne Loney expressed thanks to the membership for reaching out during her recent bereavement. She thanked Marva Williams, Carolyn Small and Mary Bell for a job well done while she was away. The theme for the White Dance, scheduled for May 8, is ***The Roaring Twenties - Cotton Club***. Tickets will go on sale at the next meeting. ***Smooth Jazz*** is planned for August 7. Robin Wilson acknowledged the Juneteenth committee. Volunteers are needed for an hour commitment as well as golf carts for the parade. The event will be publicized in Reflections in April and May and featured on the June cover. Ellie appealed to members to show up on March 16 for Game Night as we are in danger of losing the room. She confirmed that the room can be used for other AHCC business.
- **Outreach** - Denise Johnson thanked Men of AHCC and the Sistahs who Bake. Brenda King is seeking volunteers for each month. She announced that Salik and Beverly, members of the club, were leaving Solivita and wants to stay in touch. Their number is 607-402-0551. The towel drive for the shelter in Winter Haven is ongoing through May 20. Volunteers for the Renaissance Fair at Palmetto Elementary School on April 10 can sign up today. Dress for Success is currently on hold. She has reached out to the Boys and Girls Club in Haines City but long term commitment is required. More exploration is necessary.
- **Parliamentarian** - Joan Hogarth announced that 2026 AHCC elections will be held in October. She asked for volunteers for both the Nominating and Elections committees. Robin Wilson volunteered for herself and Tia Anderson. Joan will be back next month with the same request.
- **Historian** - Bobby Vance showed a video as a tribute to the late Rev. Dr. Jesse Jackson.
- **Guest Speaker** - Akilah Mashariki introduced the guest speaker, her son, Dr. Amen RA Mashariki, Director of AI at Bezos Earth Fund. Dr. Mashariki discussed the role of AI to the consumer and its true value. It is important to see it as the ability to accomplish things that have never been done before. It is not simply automation, but a tool that allows us to do more. A lively question and answer session ensued.

- **Club Announcements**

Jim Edge gave an overview of recent HOA activities. The HOA has purchased the amenities except for the Golf Course and CDC for the ponds for \$13m. This will not cost homeowners anything. Castle and RealManage will continue to the end of the year when new contracts will be negotiated. He also discussed the damaged landscape from the recent cold spell.

Dr. Lois Duncan acknowledged donors to the scholarship fund. Contributors will be invited to the extravaganza on May 21, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the fund. Checks are accepted or donations can be made through the website. Mentors are needed for 20 scholarship recipients. Contact Victoria Chapman.

Page Turners - Page Turners Book Club, for women who like to read, meets on the 4th Thursday of each month, except November, in the Riviera at 2:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for March 26, 2026 and the book is ***Matriarch*** by Tina Knowles.

MEETING ADJOURNED - Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Chris Haywood and seconded by Rosann Carter. Meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Marion Hogarth

Recording Secretary

NEXT MEETING APRIL 7, 2026 - 10:30 AM STARLITE BALLROOM

WEBSITE: ahcc-Solivita.org

Username: ahcc2014

Password: weareahcc

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