



Tuesday, October 2, 2018

An official statement from the African-American Museum Board of Directors

RE: in response to unofficial inquiries and concerns and online comments:

We feel it is our duty to correct any misconceptions that have been sent out to the public concerning the role of board chair and the board members of the African-American Historical & Cultural Museum of the San Joaquin Valley:

Decisions are made collectively as a group and not as individuals, based on the appropriate consensus according to our ratified bylaws. Our chair is then the representative of our voice, based on any votes or communications.

We empathetically state that there have not been any embezzlement of funds by the board chair, Julia Dudley Najieb, and we have detailed accounting records and procedures to confirm this for checks and balances, including our last several years of taxes. These checks and balance are in place to prevent such an act from occurring.

Unfortunately we have had challenges with having qualified personnel and broken commitments from volunteers who have made their presence at our facility. Currently we do not have a budget for staffing nor do we have commitments from volunteers to keep the doors open daily.

Progress has been made and continues to be made in the area of grant fundraising, infrastructure building and outreach to the local schools and the community at large.

Financially it is difficult to upgrade the condition of our building as we would wish; that is why membership is so important as well as our fundraising events to keep the entity financially sound and physically stable. We find it frustrating that as we make sure things are in place, we stumble across unfounded hiccups from the community that set us back. We would instead like support from the community in the form of memberships, volunteers and financial support through event attendance.

The park has been an ongoing issue during the very hot summers due to the limited watering schedule; however, we do have current resolution through a financial donor to assist in the general maintenance often done by local volunteers.

In regards to the homeless situation, this remains a problem for all surrounding property owners and ourselves; we are constantly trying to resolve such issues such as installing the iron gates this past year that are at our front door (which cost us approximately \$1,800 at the beginning of this year; a donor who requested it and promised to help pay half of this cost breached the agreement.)