

Women for Good Government July 1, 2019

Women for Good Government held its July meeting at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Austin.

Announcements:

- Sue Stein recommended watching the Mueller Report being read on You Tube
- **Friday**, December 6th, Holiday Party and Annual Meeting
- Treasurer's Report: we took in \$60.00 in June. Currently have \$2,081.98 in the bank

Our Guest speaker was **Nelson Linder, President, NAACP Austin.**

Biography: Nelson Linder was born in Macon, Georgia in 1958. Linder entered the United States Army in 1976 and earned an honorable discharge. His great grandfather (George Linder) was a pivotal figure in the reconstruction period in Dublin, Georgia. George Linder is cited in the book "Splendid Failure" on reconstruction in Georgia.

Linder arrived in Austin in 1981 and graduated from Huston Tillotson in 1984 with B.A. Degree in personnel management and Industrial Relations. In 1985, he opened the first corporate insurance office in Northeast Austin with Allstate Insurance. He served that area from 1985 until 1992. He has operated and owned the Linder Insurance Agency since 2006.

In 1992, he founded the controversial Garvey/Allen/Washington project, an organization that combined the philosophies of Marcus Garvey, Richard Allen and Booker T. Washington. The organization primarily focused on self-empowerment and social justice for African Americans. The group also emphasized the importance of coalition building with other black organizations and like-minded people.

In the year 2000, Linder was elected as the President of the Austin NAACP. Linder has been interviewed on CNN, BET, the Washington Post, and local media all over the state of Texas. His work on Police brutality has received national applause and recognition. His critical role in establishing the African American Quality of Life Initiative in 2005, led to the creation of the African American Resource Advisory Commission in 2006 by the city of Austin.

He also has done important work on eradicating disparities in education and economics. He has published articles entitled unfinished business, the empowerment mode and the price of non-conformance, the need for police oversight and the fatal effects of discrimination. He was also a member of the city charter commission that paved the way for the current 10-1 political system. He is currently writing a book that will serve as a guideline for ending police brutality entitled "Minimum Force Necessary".

He has served as a radio talk show host on KAZI 88.7FM since 2006. The show combines stimulating music with current affairs and emphasizes putting more focus on civics as a basis for empowering African Americans. The show places emphasis on local participation as the key to political empowerment.

He has compared his work to a crusade and believes that valuable lessons learned from the past are the key to the future of the human rights movement.

NAACP Austin WEBpage: <http://www.naacpaustin.com/about-us.html>

Mr. Linder explained that the NAACP takes care of everyday problems with everyday people that no one knows about such as Reverse Mortgages. The problems keep recurring because we don't address them. He pointed to gentrification, the wealth gap, inequality in education, police brutality, understanding the Constitution, enforcing the

Constitution, knowing our history, and the need for a fair criminal justice system as some of the issues we need to address. He said that we all need to have the courage to have conversations about injustices in order to make policies that address them.

Q: Does Austin have a decreasing black population?

A: Black population is being displaced (primarily from East Austin) so dispersed and is moving to Manor, Pflugerville, etc. We need to talk about why we don't have a more balanced economy.

Q: What can we do about Texas Confederate Heros' Day

A: It would take a vote from the state legislature to get rid of it

General thoughts on:

- Civilian Oversight Board: oversight is no the answer
- Reparations: it is an international concept. Looking back in history we had it after the civil war until Andrew Johnson. Mr. Linder says yes to reparations and we need to understand inheritance.
- the 2020 election - Who one votes for is an individual choices based on policy, vision, experience.
- Voter suppression – Reauthorize the Voting Rights Act. Participate in the system: Register and Vote!
- Inequity in Austin: local leadership isn't looking at the economy and how it is inequitable and how to fix it. Too many task forces and not enough action. Example- Soccer Field is adding to the inequity and environmental problems
- The next version of CodeNext: he calls it Code Never and beat it in Court last year; he believes it will mean more gentrification especially in East Austin and will fight it. Government and industries go for the most marginalized first - we need to stand up for each other – Community Organization

After Mary Patrick and the group thanked Mr. Linder for his time and remarks, three candidates running for judicial offices spoke to the membership.

Beth Fagin Payan, a prosecutor with the Travis County District Attorney's Office for the past 23 years, is running for the seat in Criminal District Court 427. Important concerns of hers include parity and restorative justice. At this time she is also President of the Capital Area Democratic Women.

Selena Alvarenga is running for Judge for the 250th. This is a new felony bench that will serve all of Travis County. She is an openly gay candidate who has been working with indigent populations in Austin for 15 years. She is concerned about making resources open to new groups.

Also running for the 250th is **Amy Meredith** currently of the District Attorney's Office. Her concerns include current practices of sending people to jail for low level offenses and the need for well qualified judges to handle violent crimes such as homicide.

Mary Patrick also announced the next **Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar training** will be July 20th at 10:30 am at the Unitarian Church in the same hall as the WGG meeting.