



City of Greensboro

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

MINUTES

February 5, 2014

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) convened for its regular monthly meeting on the above date at 11:45 a.m. in the City Council Chamber on the 2nd floor of the Melvin Municipal Office Building with Chair Wendell Phillips presiding.

PRESENT: Chair Wendell Phillips, Vice Chair Janice Reaves; Commissioners Kurt Collins, Gary Grandon, Paul Ksieniewicz, Chantale Wesley-Lamin, Adam Marshall, Michael Picarelli, and Clarence Shuford; Executive Director Dr. Love Crossling; and HRD¹ Staff Allen Hunt, Lee Staton, and Donna Gray

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Commissioners Kevin Williams and Gale Murphy

ABSENT: Commissioners Margaret Arbuckle, Jean Brown, and Tonya Doane

Chair Phillips called the meeting to order; a moment of silence was observed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF VISITORS: City Councilwoman Marikay Abuzuaiter, Interim Assistant City Manager Christian Wilson, and Umar Awan, HRC International Advisory Committee Chair

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: HRC Minutes for November were reviewed.

- Names of Commissioners who made and/or seconded motions during the November meeting have been incorporated.
- Vice Chair Reaves asked that the Minutes reflect an excused absence for Commissioner Picarelli.
- Commissioner Shuford made a motion that the Minutes be received with the necessary corrections; Vice Chair Reaves seconded the motion.
- Commissioners voted unanimously; and the motion carried to approve the November 6, 2013 Minutes of the HRC Meeting as amended.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR: Chair Phillips welcomed Commissioner Picarelli's return following his illness. The Chair also

- introduced Umar Awan, the new Chair of the HRC's International Advisory Committee (IAC). Mr. Awan is not a member of the HRC. The IAC is the only HRC Committee for which the Chair does not have to be a member of the Commission.
- commented on the success of the MLK Breakfast, acknowledging the speaker and the program.
- noted that Evaluations from the MLK Breakfast were provided in Commissioners' folders (see attached).

STAFF REPORT: Dr. Crossling's report included:

- 1) Commending the HRC for its expedience in pulling the MLK program together in partnership with the HRD staff.
- 2) Emphasizing the importance of the community recognizing the purpose of the HRC;
- 3) Urging the HRC to engage with consistent action; i.e., activities, programs, and partnerships in addition to the MLK Breakfast.
- 4) Program Proposals - no proposals have been submitted. Staff support will be provided in any way, including refreshers on proposals. The HRC is not expected to tackle issues alone. Feedback is requested on what is hindering proposal submissions.
- 5) Reminders for proposals will be sent to Commissioners on a weekly basis for about a month.
- 6) Proposals should be submitted 30 days in advance so that staff can assist.
- 7) Commissioners may partner with staff; e.g., Montgomery/Well Housing Committee with HRD Fair Housing Investigator, etc.



8) Working with IAC Chair Awan to include the Language Access Plan (LAP)

Other information/suggestions for Commissioners:

Be aware of City Council's interests:

- a. Working with the HR Group to host diversity breakfasts; the first is to feature M/WBE and its revitalization
- b. Teens Downtown initiative
- c. An entrepreneurship being developed by United Way
- d. Watch or attend City Council Meetings

Also:

- A system will be developed to share invitations sent to the HRD/HRC from other organizations on a regular basis for Commissioners' information and/or participation.
- HRC Committees Chairs may contact HRD staff if assistance is needed in recruiting members and for outreach.

An ad hoc committee to engage the community was discussed.

- a. Vice Chair Reaves made a motion to have a subcommittee to better engage the community on programming and planning to determine certain avenues the HRC can take to include the community or to help the community in what the HRC is trying to do.
- b. Commissioner Grandon seconded the motion.
- c. Commissioners voted unanimously; the motion carried to create a community engagement committee.
- d. Commissioner Grandon will serve as committee chair, and Commissioner Reaves as Co-Chair. Staff will be called as needed to assist the committee.

Allen Hunt reported that City Council's CRC Enhancement Committee will host a meeting on February 12th from 5:30 – 7 pm to discuss the nature, objectives, and responsibilities of the HRC's Complaint Review Committee (CRC); the meeting will be televised. Council's CRC Enhancement Committee members are: Mayor Nancy Vaughn, Councilman Tony Wilkins, Councilman Jamal Fox, and Mayor Pro Tem Yvonne Johnson. The HRC is invited, but meeting attendance is not mandatory.

Chair Phillips invited Mr. Awan, recently appointed Chair of the IAC, to introduce himself. Mr. Awan is a recent graduate from George Mason University in Conflict Resolution and Mediterranean Security Studies. His work in those areas includes military experience in Afghanistan and Iraq. Mr. Awan also works with a World Relief International Organization in their efforts to combat human trafficking.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Complaint Review Committee (CRC) – Commissioner Shuford: The CRC met this morning. One case had unanswered questions and was sent to the Police Chief. CRC Community Representative, Dr. Abdel Nuriddin is serving on another City board/commission and has not attended several meetings. Discussions were held with Chair Phillips. In keeping with the rules of procedure, Dr. Nuriddin will be replaced on the CRC. A letter to that effect will be sent to him. A potential candidate to replace Dr. Nuriddin has been identified. An article concerning the CRC appeared in the January 29th edition of *Yes!Weekly*. The consensus of the CRC is that members will not comment on it at this time.

Human Services Committee – Chair Phillips: Evaluation results for the annual MLK Breakfast were discussed during the Chair's Report. It was suggested that, in the future, tickets are allotted specifically for Commissioners to sell in the community. Allen Hunt will schedule a meeting before the end of February to get an inventory of the staff function around MLK Breakfast sponsorships, etc. That, with input from the Human Services Committee in early March, will be the first steps toward planning for the next Breakfast.

Montgomery/Wells Housing Committee – Commissioner Ksieniewicz: This committee is still comprised of its Chair, Commissioner Ksieniewicz and Beth McKee-Huger, Executive Director of the *Greensboro Housing Coalition*. The two are scheduled to meet later this month and will put together a list of prospective new committee members. It is projected that the Committee will meet as a group in April.



International Advisory Committee (IAC) – Commissioner Phillips: Chair Phillips thanked Mr. Umar Awan, as the new Chair of the IAC, for his willingness to engage with the community. Mr. Awan plans to gather data and reach out to community organizations serving the immigrant population.

Education Committee – Commissioner Picarelli: With his health-related absences, Commissioner Picarelli reported that there had not been an opportunity to have a conversation about the committee. At this point, he thinks some revisions are needed. He asked that Chair Phillips and HRD staff meet with the committee to discuss revisions, etc.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilwoman Abuzuaiter, City Council’s HRC Liaison, clarified that when Council created its CRC Enhancement Committee, she did not request appointment because she had just been appointed to several other committees. She will try to attend the CRC Enhancement Committee meetings.

Vice Chair Reaves requested a look into the feasibility of holding the HRC meeting in the community in March. It was noted that no one is adverse to having periodic meetings in the community, but that community involvement is generally issue-driven, i.e., community members attend when there is a concern that speaks to them. Suggestion was made to hold meetings in conjunction with another group such as the information sessions which were held in conjunction with the Police Department’s Community Forums. Staff will look into accommodating this.

ACKNOWLEDGE ABSENCES:

Excused Absences were acknowledged.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Reaves; seconded by Commissioner Wesley-Lamin. The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Chairperson

Greensboro Human Relations Commission

Approved: _____
Date