



Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2016

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) convened for its regular monthly meeting at 6:08 p.m. on the above date at the Glenn McNairy Branch Library, with **Chair Zac Engle** presiding.

Present: *Commissioners* Burkart, Picarelli, Engle, King, Issifou, Murphy, Perry-Garnette, Wils, Hawkins

Human Relations Department Staff: Dr. Love Crossling, Director; Allen Hunt, Supervisor; Jodie Stanley, Education & Outreach Coordinator

Excused Absences: Commissioners Brown, Wesley-Lamin, Arbuckle

Absent:

I. Call to Order

Chair Engle called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

II. Moment of Silent Meditation

Chair Engle called for a moment of silent meditation.

III. Recognition of Visitors and Presentations

Chair Engle recognized visitors **Michelle Carello** and her guest, **Carrie**. They introduced themselves as representatives of YouthSafe, an organization that offers safe, supportive space for LGBT youth. Youth from all over the Triad meet at Higher Ground (part of the Triad Health Project) to build community, reduce isolation, bolster resiliency, affirm their identities and get connected. Many LGBT youth, some from the foster system, have mental health needs and struggle with anxiety and isolation. The work to strengthen youth is important, and you can't have the conversation without also talking about families. PFLAG, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and

Gays, is also doing important work around this same topic. Referencing the Human Relations Commission, Michelle emphasized the importance of knowing who is doing what, and where; connecting to existing resources, growing the coordinator base, and communicating throughout networks in an effort to provide more comprehensive community support and understanding.

Commissioner Perry-Garnette asked what Michelle and Carrie thought about Guilford Green's plan to create a center. Michelle responded by indicating that YouthSafe has been around for over a decade, and their position is to wait and see how it works out.

Chair Engle thanked Michelle and Carrie for the information, validated the important work they are doing and encouraged YouthSafe to reach out to the HRC in the future. He offered to support their efforts by marketing via our existing channels, and mentioned the potential of more intensive group support in the event of a major initiative.

Chair Engle welcomed **Maria Hicks-Few**, Human Resources Diversity and Inclusion Officer. This was Maria's second time to present the nationally recognized Heritage Calendar and Resolution. Chair Engle explained that the HRC did not have a quorum to vote in favor of the Calendar and Resolution when it was first presented, and that the goal was to vote during this meeting.

Chair Engle requested a motion to vote.

**Motion:
Support the Heritage Calendar and Resolution.**

- **Commissioner Wils** moved.
- Seconded by **Commissioner Murphy**.
- The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

IV. Committee Reports

Chair Report

Chair Engle advised staff that he would like to discuss the Native American Committee (NAC) at the April meeting. **Chair Engle** gave the chair report, sharing an update on the new Police Community Review Board and roster, an update on February activities which included Police/Community events, a ride along, City Council meetings, and the Mental Health Program. He thanked those involved with the first Mental Health Program and applauded its success. He also recognized the IAC for the good work it continues to do in the community. He encouraged commissioners to take part in the Fair Housing Month program planning. Staff member Jodie Stanley announced the next planning meeting would take place at 9:30 am, Tuesday, March 15.

Complaint Review Committee

Commissioner Wesley-Lamin was not present, no report given.

Human Services Committee

Commissioner King agreed that the Mental Health: Navigating Health Systems was a success, and the goal is to do a better job of marketing with the second session, Navigating Education Systems, which is planned for May 25. **Commissioner King** expressed appreciation for the City's coordination of the Navigating Juvenile Justice event she attended on March 8. It was a great event, well attended, and very needed.

International Advisory Committee (IAC)

Chair Engle invited **IAC Secretary Jose Oliva** and **IAC Chair Adamou Mohamed** to give the IAC Report. Chair Mohamed expressed an apology for missing the last two HRC meetings, and clarified that the IAC is working to devise an attendance and reporting schedule. Secretary Oliva shared the IAC report, which included an update on their leadership retreat, bylaws, and mention of the success of the Housing and the International Community event that took place on February 17. He invited commissioners to the Participatory Budgeting Expo on March 18, gave an update on the impact of HB318 on the community, spoke about the FaithAction ID program's success and expansion to neighboring counties, and shared about the known impact of recent anti-Syrian sentiments since the bombing in Paris. Together, Secretary Oliva and Chair Mohamed expressed their interest in the primaries and the potential of a candidate forum geared towards the international community, pointing out that Guilford County is 4th when it comes to the number of Latino voters, yet we don't see candidates approaching the Latino community. Chair Mohamed also updated commissioners on his work as liaison between the Parks and Recreation Department and the international community in establishing soccer field use at Hester Park.

Commissioner Hawkins commented on a graduation for new US Citizens, that it would be nice for commissioners to be in attendance. He promised to find more information and send it along to commissioners.

Discussion was held around the anti-Syrian sentiments and movements that came out of it. Chair Mohamed spoke about the first response meeting held at the New Garden Friends Meeting, Secretary Oliva spoke about the Every Campus a Refuge program, and staff member Jodie Stanley shared about the new group that was formed, Refugee Welcome.

Chair Mohamed thanked the HRC for their support of the IAC and its efforts to face problems head on, engage the community, encourage voter registration and remove barriers to involvement.

Chair Engle took a moment to recognize and welcome newly appointed PCRB Chair, **Ed Cobbler**, and asked him to introduce himself.

Chair Engle also recognized visitors **Omar Jones** and **Fritz Vaneus, Jr.** with United Quest Care Services, LLC. They shared about their agency, which is providing effective cultural and competent mental health care and services. They focused on their desire for excellence in their work, understanding the full person, taking into consideration the limitations as well as the strengths of treatment, the importance of meeting basic needs and understanding a patient's cultural background.

They listed their services, which are sometimes offered pro-bono, including language services, on site urine testing, peer support, daily living skills, medical appointments and psychiatric care, medication management, transportation and substance abuse treatment.

Commissioner Hawkins asked whether they provide services for veterans. Owner Fritz Vaneus Jr. explained the concern about veterans losing their VA benefits if they go to United Quest Care Services for treatment.

Dr. Love Crossling stressed the importance of providing comprehensive wraparound services, the need to support organizations like United Quest Care, and to show the community that this is the model to follow. She also mentioned the importance of partnering with law enforcement in this endeavor.

General discussion was held around the importance of securing qualified, empathetic, culturally savvy interpreters that understand medical technology and nuances.

V. Minutes

After a correction was requested for Commissioner Perry-Garnette's name, **Chair Engle** requested a motion to vote on the January minutes.

Motion: Approve January Minutes

- **Commissioner King** moved.
- Seconded by **Commissioner Perry-Garnette**.
- The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

After a correction was requested to mark Commissioner Freman present at the February meeting, **Chair Engle** requested a motion to vote on the February minutes.

Motion: Approve February Minutes

- **Commissioner Wils** moved.
- Seconded by **Commissioner Picarelli**.
- The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

VI. Meeting Location

Chair Engle began discussion about the issues with the meeting space at the Cultural Arts Center and his desire to use the Central Library as the permanent meeting space. He clarified rules that limit the Commission to using the room only 3 times in a row at a time. After a question from **Commissioner Wils** about having a back-up plan, **Chair Engle** identified the possibility of having to move to different libraries in different districts unless the rule could be circumvented. **Dr. Love Crossling** assured commissioners that staff would work with the chair to secure a viable location. Commissioners expressed general agreement.

Chair Engle requested a motion to approve Central Library, and other libraries as needed, as a permanent meeting space.

Motion:

Approve Central, and Other Libraries, as New Permanent Meeting Space

- **Commissioner Picarelli** moved.
- Seconded by **Commissioner Wils**.
- The motion was unanimously approved by the Commission.

VII. Staff Report

Jodie Stanley, with the support of **Commissioner King**, invited commissioners to join the Fair Housing Month Program planning meetings, and reminded them to register for the event to take place on April 14. **Commissioner Wils** posed a question about creating an online calendar containing community engagement opportunities. Jodie Stanley promised to look into that option.

Dr. Love Crossling thanked the visitors in attendance for their committed, effective community work, encouraging them to consider serving on a board or commission by submitting an interest form. commissioners to attend the TED talks taking place downtown, and shared about the committee doing the planning work and their desire to encourage engagement, inspire conversation and prompt critical thinking.

Allen Hunt shared an update on one case heard by the Complaint Review Committee (now the PCRB), stating their agreement with the findings of the Police Department. He spoke about the success of the landlord-tenant dispute program and how he is stepping up his partnership with UNCG, having heard about 30 housing activities and cases in the last two weeks.

Chair Engle invited **Council Member Marikay Abuzuaiter** to share any updates from Council, and she gave insight into her experience with the Violent Crimes Task Force, a compelling, successful initiative geared towards career criminals, a last ditch appeal to leave their life of crime. Council Member Abuzuaiter also thanked the HRC for passing the Heritage Calendar and Resolution. She also gave an update on council's recent examination of all boards and commissions, stating that the HRC numbers would be increased to 18 based on the needs they serve, including the IAC, Police Community Review Board (PCRB), and the anticipated NAC.

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Engle called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Motion:
To Adjourn the Meeting**

- **Commissioner King** motioned to adjourn.
- **Commissioner Murphy** seconded.
- The Commission unanimously approved the motion at 7:45 pm.
- End of meeting.

S/ _____

Chairperson

Greensboro Human Relations Commission

Approved: _____

Date