



Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2017

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) convened for its regular monthly meeting at 6:00 p.m. on the above date in the Board Room at the YWCA of Greensboro. **Chair Zac Engle** presided over the meeting.

Commissioners Present: Engle, King, Cobbler, Arbuckle, Hawkins, Issifou, Murphy, Phillips, Wils, Allen, Sevier

Commissioners Absent: Burkart, Perry-Garnette, Bhardwaj, Wesley-Lamin, Kennedy

Human Relations Department Staff: Love Crossling, Jodie Stanley, Quanisha Collins, Dotti DuLaney

City Manager's Office Staff: Barbara Harris

Legal Department Staff: Tom Carruthers, Rosetta Davidson

Council Liaison: Marikay Abuzuaiter

Visitors: Karen Rhodes, Allison Heisel, Jeremy Rinker

I. Call to Order

Chair Engle called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

II. Moment of Silent Meditation

Chair Engle called for a moment of silent meditation.

III. Chair Report

Chair Engle welcomed the new roster staff and invited them to introduce themselves. Quanisha Collins and Dotti DuLaney introduced themselves and shared briefly about their roles with the Human Relations Department.

Engle thanked all that participated in the success of the MLK Breakfast event. Engle asked staff to send a doodle poll for a commission retreat date. Human Relations Department Director Dr. Love

Crossling advised that a doodle poll was sent, but offered that staff could provide other dates in April if the commissioners preferred the alternative. Engle accepted Crossling's offer.

Engle passed along a reminder about absences and asked commissioners to be mindful. He added that in regards to their proposed meeting with Mayor Vaughan, it was his suggestion to break the group into two smaller groups, one to meet in the spring (on the scheduled date of February 20) and the second group to meet in the fall. Engle asked Jodie Stanley to also note in the minutes that he had attended the Safer City Summit.

Engle invited guest speaker Dr. Jeremy Rinker to share. Commissioner Arbuckle referred commissioners to the print out in their folders, which contained more information on the Counter Stories initiative. She advised that she invited Dr. Jeremy Rinker to speak on behalf of the project, adding that her church was hosting a special showing of a related video, and that she would have to leave soon.

Rinker thanked Arbuckle for the introduction and shared that the project had been in existence for about three years and was focused on police-community accountability. He added that the group was excited about incorporating local schools and young people. He invited all to attend upcoming trainings scheduled to take place on March 3 and 4, designed to teach participants how to facilitate difficult conversations. Rinker shared that he was very interested in restorative justice and in finding new ways to bring restorative justice to the community.

Commissioner Cobbler asked how they went about doing the work. Rinker shared that their approach was to start dialogues, which they perceived as necessary action and needed work. He added that there were many vested agencies and organizations in the City, and it was important to bring interested community members around this issue. He acknowledged there was certainly potential for other action items to come out of the dialogue, but this was their focus for now.

Arbuckle moved that the commission support the initiative and attach their name in support. Commissioner Wils seconded.

Commissioner Sevier asked what it meant that the commission attach their name to an event. Arbuckle explained that her understanding was that in this situation, they were not asking staff to provide significant support or be involved in planning, but that by attaching their logo, it would lend weight and support for the program. Rinker explained that it was their goal to reach out to numerous groups in Greensboro for support. Crossling asked if that would mean that the HRC logo would be added to a flyer or materials, and all agreed that yes, it would mean the use of the logo. Crossling also suggested that the commission consider which of the committees might house the program, that even though it was a request to the commission in general, it was a suggestion that they select a committee to endorse it. Engle suggested that the Committee for Social Equity would be a good option. Arbuckle also suggested that the Education Committee would be willing. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Committee for Social Equity would be selected for the task.

Commissioner King asked how diverse the facilitator group was. Rinker shared the name of the facilitator of the smaller groups would be those that went through the training on March 3 and 4, and stressed that the diversity would depend on the attendees. He added that David Booker, well known for his work in this field, would be conducting the training for the March 3 and 4 trainings.

Commissioner Murphy asked if they were open to community leaders, or were they casting for a wider audience. Rinker responded by stating that their desire was to reach all types of people, from all walks of life, as long as they had a desire to have the difficult conversation. Arbuckle added that the point of Counter Stories was that everyone would sit at the counter together.

Commissioner Hawkins commented that all ages should be considered. Sevier shared that as the newest commissioner, he still felt some reservation about completely backing a program without knowing more. Engle advised that he was well aware of the program and would vote in favor of it, but expressed understanding of Sevier's position and assured him that if he chose to abstain or vote against the motion, that was completely fine.

Motion to Support the Counter-Stories Initiative

Moved by: Commissioner Arbuckle

Seconded by: Commissioner Wils

The motion passed unanimously.

Engle shared that while he supported the effort, he would be out of town that weekend and unable to attend. He added that perhaps in the future it would be helpful to provide information well in advance of the program.

Crossling advised that staff would handle communications and would support in any way possible.

Chair Engle welcomed the newest commissioner to the team, Commissioner Irving Allen. Commissioner Allen thanked all, and shared that he was still catching up with the news discussed in the meeting.

Commissioner Hawkins motioned that they should split the meetings with the Mayor in two, one in the Spring, one in the fall. Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion. Chair Engle thanked the commissioners for the motion, explaining that the goal was to enhance communication with the Mayor, in addition to the communication they were already holding with their own council members.

Motion to Meet with Mayor Vaughan in Two Smaller Groups

Moved by: Commissioner Hawkins

Seconded by: Commissioner Phillips

The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Education

Commissioner Wils shared that he and Commissioner Arbuckle attended a training through the Guilford Educational Alliance that covered equity issues and disparities around housing, income. Commissioner Wils shared that while it was a challenge to know how to disperse the information, it was needed. He also shared that he, Human Relations Department Director Dr.

Love Crossling, Staff Member Jodie Stanley, and Commissioner Arbuckle met the day before to discuss planning for the Educational Equity Summit around issues of policy, outcome disparities, socio-emotional issues, tuition disparities, and the immigrant experience. He invited all to the next planning meeting, which was scheduled for 4 pm on March 9 at the YWCA.

Chair Engle congratulated Commissioner Wils on being nominated for Teacher of the Year. All expressed their support and well wishes.

Police Community Review Board

Commissioner Cobbler advised that their meeting on the previous night was very engaging and long, one person left the meeting early, and that the case was to be tabled until the next meeting.

Employment Committee

Commissioner Burkart was not in attendance. In her absence, Chair Engle shared that she had been working

Human Services Committee

Commissioner King thanked those that attended the MLK breakfast, adding that the comments they had received were very positive. She was very pleased and hoped to work with the next planning team. Commissioner King also shared that she would be meeting with Staff Member Jodie Stanley and Human Relations Department Director Dr. Love Crossling to plan an upcoming Mental Health Fair.

Montgomery/Wells Housing Committee

Commissioner Issifou updated all on the success of the January 26 event that was focused on how food and furniture make a difference in the housing experience. They had many service providers there, the event was well attended, and many questions were fielded. He shared that he looked forward to the next Thrive GSO event on March 2.

Committee for Social Equity

Commissioner Hawkins shared that they had an upcoming event on March 2 at the Greensboro History Museum that would be focused on housing. Their next committee meeting was scheduled for February 1 at Central Library, and on February 18 the CSE was partnering with other agencies for a reading of the book “Resisting Arrest” and a following discussion at Scuppernong Books. He added his thanks to Commissioner King for her work on the MLK breakfast, and shared that he looked forward to expanding her work.

International Advisory Committee

Staff Member Jodie Stanley highlighted the success of the IAC event with the Police department. About 200 people attended and many members of the Muslim community left the event feeling reassured that the Police department was aware of their concerns and took a public stand that they would not become immigration enforcers. Stanley also encouraged commissioners to volunteer for the International Advisory Committee election and promised to send a link for them to sign up.

Chair Engle invited Council Member Abuzuaiter to share. Council Member Abuzuaiter simply shared that the members of council who attended were very happy with the outcome of the

MLK Breakfast. She received many positive comments from attendees and commended Commissioner King for her planning.

Staff Report

Human Relations Department Director Dr. Love Crossling commended the commission committees, pointing out that this was the first time that every subcommittee was now active, highlighting the importance of staying active in order to engage the community. She congratulated the commissioners for their hard work.

Human Relations Department Director Dr. Love Crossling agreed with Commissioner Issifou that the Food and Furniture event on January 26 was a success and well attended, and a good reflection of the work of the Housing committee. Human Relations Department Director Dr. Love Crossling shared that the “Police and the International Community” event was successful, in part because there were many faces in the crowd that were not from the immigrant experience. This showed a care and concern on the part of the community to support immigrants on their journey in this country.

Thrive GSO and the PCRB outreach progress was going well. Human Relations Department Director Dr. Love Crossling shared that with the combined vision of the CSE and Commissioner Samuel Hawkins, City Attorney Tom Carruthers, and Commissioner Irving Allen, the program was moving forward productively and already showing fruit.

Human Relations Department Director Dr. Love Crossling assured the commissioners that another date would be offered for an April commission retreat, pointed out that several upcoming events were listed on the staff report, and again thanked commissioners for their visibility in the community.

Additional Comments

Chair Engle welcomed City Attorneys Tom Carruthers and Rosetta Davidson, and acknowledged Assistant City Manager Barbara Harris. He invited guests to speak, they declined.

VI. Review of Meeting Minutes

Motion to Approve January Meeting Minutes

Moved by: Commissioner Cobbler

Seconded by: Commissioner Phillips

The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn.

Moved by: Commissioner Cobbler

Seconded by: Commissioner Phillips
The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm.

Minutes Approved by:

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Greensboro Human Relations Commission

_____/_____/_____

Date