



## **Meeting Minutes**

**March 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:** Issifou, Engle, Arbuckle, Kennedy, Hawkins, Perry-Garnette, Burkart, Wils, Phillips, Sevier, Cobbler, Murphy

**Commissioners Absent:** Wesley-Lamin, King, Bhardwaj, Allen

**Human Relations Department Staff:** Love Crossling, Jodie Stanley, Dotteenya DuLaney

**Legal Department Staff:** Rosetta Davidson

**Council Liaison:** Marikay Abuzuaiter

**Visitors:** Barbara Harris (Assistant City Manager), Franca Jalloh (International Advisory Committee)

### **I. Call to Order**

Chair Engle called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

### **II. Moment of Silent Meditation**

Chair Engle called for a moment of silent meditation.

### **III. Chair Report**

Chair Engle offered that he would provide a verbal report, starting with a reminder to provide requested feedback on suggested topics of discussion about the upcoming retreat to be held on April 8, with a special request to staff to include succession planning in the retreat. He explained that if a staff member left, the work of the commission should be able to continue with minimal setbacks.

Engle continued with a report on the meeting with Mayor Vaughan and provided a very brief summary of the meeting, stating that it was agreed that it was important for commissioners to communicate regularly to Council, and that the HRC was in a perfect position to carry out the work

of Council (he used the example of HB2 and the public reaction to it, and offered that the HRC could have helped buffer some of that attention).

Commissioner Arbuckle asked if there would be another meeting for the rest of the members. Engle responded that yes, there would be another meeting in September or October of this year. He suggested that it would be good to consider the work schedules of commissioners and try to schedule the next meeting at a time when it would best suit commissioners.

Arbuckle stated that she very much appreciated Council Member Abuzuaiter's initiative with the Council's development of the legislative agenda. She expressed awareness of upcoming State legislature and offered that it was important for the commission to be informed about policy change. She suggested that perhaps staff could pass along more information about this as it became available.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Education**

Commissioner Wils shared that the Education Committee was planning to partner with several others to plan an educational equity summit, adding that the planning team would meet the following Wednesday at 4pm. They planned to cover racial disparities, federal policy about funding, and tuition equity. He also mentioned that he had just received an email from Say Yes, whose model for scholarships resulted in paying out significantly more money than they expected and that they planned to make modifications to their original plans. Commissioner Perry-Garnette asked what it was attributed to. Commissioner Phillips offered that the Rhino Times published a story stating that they had had a much higher percentage of eligible students that needed full assistance than was originally projected. Perry-Garnette expressed disappointment in a system that came with so much expectation. General discussion was held around the model in Buffalo, why it worked, how the funding worked and different considerations between the models. Commissioner Arbuckle stated that it was a complicated issue, and Wils offered to do research and find out more about what happened.

### **Police Community Review Board**

Commissioner Cobbler shared that they had a very good meeting the night before, that many people attended and many spoke on behalf of the complainant. They deliberated in closed session and came to a conclusion on the case, and concluded the meeting at 10pm. He shared that channels 10 and 12 covered the story. Cobbler expressed thanks to Rosetta Davidson for her support.

### **Employment Committee**

Commissioner Burkart shared that she was working with Commission on the Status of Women's Deborah Goddard, adding that they were working on an upcoming program on May 20 that would focus on women and re-entry issues. They planned to meet the following week.

### **Human Services Committee**

Commissioner King was absent. Chair Engle shared that he had spoken with King, and she offered that she was still working on plans for the mental health fair.

### **Montgomery/Wells Housing Committee**

Commissioner Issifou deferred to Jodie Stanley for an update on the housing event. Stanley shared that the Thrive GSO and Housing event on March 2 was successful, though attendance was low. The next housing event being planned by staff was the Fair Housing Month luncheon, to take place on April 26 at Revolution Mill.

### **International Advisory Committee**

Franca Jalloh shared the IAC's report, which began with Chair Adamou's experience attending the Counter Stories event at Holy Trinity Church on January 12. On January 29, the IAC joined resettlement agencies and faith leaders in an event to show support for the immigrant and refugee populations in light of the President's recent executive orders.

On February 3, Vice Chair Yacine Kout attended a UNCG Muslim student association meeting and heard from muslim students who were concerned daily about their safety. February 4, the IAC, in partnership with the Islamic Center of Greensboro and the Greensboro Police Department, hosted a panel discussion called Police and the International Community. Jalloh finished with an announcement about the We Are All America initiative and offered an update on the upcoming election. Jodie Stanley directed commissioner's attention to the list of candidates in their folders.

Engle asked if it was required that the leadership committee members be of non-US origin. Crossling shared that it was a City connected committee, so while staff or leadership was unable to screen the nominees who chose to run for office, the election was designed to allow the members of the immigrant community to choose their own leadership. Jalloh continued with the report, adding that the election had to be postponed from March 12 to March 26 due to inclement weather.

Jalloh added that a group named Faith in Action reached out to the IAC so that they could implement a similar model in Harrisonburg, VA. Engle praised the IAC for their hard work and diligence.

### **Committee for Social Equity**

Commissioner Hawkins shared that the last Thrive GSO initiative was a success. He added that the Committee was working with FaithAction International's group that was focused on developing responsive mechanisms to the latest legislative actions. He attended the two-day Counter Stories training seminar, which was announced in the previous HRC meeting, which had another component to be added. Commissioner Arbuckle asked how many people attended, that she had heard reports of about 75 attendees. Hawkins concurred on attendance and stated that the focus of the conversation was to have productive work, not just to meet for the sake of meeting.

Commissioner Kennedy asked Jodie Stanley to remind her of the date for the upcoming Thrive GSO and Voting event. Stanley shared that it was scheduled for April 20 at the Interactive Resource Center starting at 6pm.

### **Additional Comments**

Chair Engle asked Council Member Abuzuaiter if she had anything to add. Abuzuaiter shared that per Commissioner Arbuckle's earlier comments, Abuzuaiter expressed that she had had some difficulty getting the tuition equity piece back on the legislative agenda. She announced her concern about the upcoming HB 62, the Citizens Protective Act. In her perspective as a Council Member, knowing how much positive came out of the use of the Faith Action ID (in the solving of crimes and enhancing relationships between the immigrant community and the Faith Action ID), the fact that the Police Chief in Austin, TX was looking at it, and that Cincinnati OH was already using a program very similar to FaithAction's, she was concerned that the bill would cause harm. She did not ask that the Commission take any action at this time, but wanted them to be aware. She encouraged commissioners to tune in to WRAL at 1pm the following Tuesday. Commissioner Phillips asked for clarification. Abuzuaiter responded that if the bill passed, and she was found holding a FaithAction ID card, that she could be charged with a crime. She stated that she had seen firsthand the good it had done in the community. FaithAction had issued about 7000 ID's. She stressed that it was a vetted ID, and that it had to be renewed each year.

Engle stated from memory that the commission was on record supporting the Faith Action ID program. He asked that Abuzuaiter send details about the bill and asked for updates. Engle asked who was sponsoring the bill. Abuzuaiter responded that Warren, Collins, and Jordan were the primary sponsors. Commissioner Wils asked for the sponsors' rationale behind the bill prohibiting the use of the ID. General discussion was held around the role of sanctuary cities, the current administration and philosophies about welcoming immigrants. Abuzuaiter reminded them that the City was on board and supportive of the ID, that departments were at one point accepting the ID until HB 318 prohibited their use of it. Engle wondered why the Water Department needed to have identification to start a water account. Phillips shared that previously, bills came out quarterly, and could accumulate a large sum before anyone could have water turned off.

Arbuckle suggested that they pull up the resolution in support of the Faith Action ID. Engle stated that there were two resolutions in 2015, one about tuition equity and another in response to HB 318. Love Crossling suggested that they could pull up the resolutions, circulate them to the commissioners, and that would help them decide whether they wanted to pass another resolution or create something new.

Commissioner Issifou stated that at the press conference several weeks prior, the Mayor took a strong stand against the Greensboro Police Department becoming an extension of immigration. Abuzuaiter agreed that yes, Greensboro's status was a Welcoming City and a Stranger to Neighbor City, but not a Sanctuary City.

Commissioner Cobbler addressed Abuzuaiter, asking if he could petition Council to enhance the PCRB's position to become more investigative and perhaps even have subpoena power. He understood that no one else in the State had that power but that it was something that council could vote on. Phillips mentioned that he didn't think the entire PCRB was on board with that request. Engle addressed the topic, stating that at the next meeting they would conduct a gap analysis, and that they would then discuss how to proceed. He shared that he was not certain at this time how much support they might get from the State if they proceeded with their requests during this climate, that their best bet would be to approach the issue strategically.

Arbuckle asked if Cobbler had written procedures that PCRB was following that he could distribute to the HRC via email. Crossling shared that once documents including rules, procedures and updates were solidified and voted on, staff would circulate the document to the HRC. Arbuckle requested the current rules and procedures that were posted on the website. Crossling assured her that the link would be sent out.

Commissioner Murphy asked for clarity on whether the document was being updated. Crossling responded that yes, the rules and procedures were being updated to reflect needed changes to the public portion of the meeting.

### **Staff Report**

Love Crossling asked commissioners to consider the distinction between weekend and weeknight programming, which limited staff availability and office hours, and suggested that they may want to consider daytime programs when possible to ensure sufficient support. Crossling requested that commissioners not schedule programs before July 1, as the programming schedule was very full.

She continued by stating that there was a possibility to embark on a new programming model, to include a larger program that included overlapping programs and topics. She offered that the topic could be pursued further at the commission retreat.

Crossling echoed Engle's request that commissioners share ideas for the commission retreat, and also shared that there was discussion about possibly changing protocol around the way committees functioned in an effort to streamline and better support the work of the committees.

Crossling offered an update on the PCRB outreach, sharing that it was suggested that the HRC host the outreach series for the PCRB. Engle offered that he wanted to head up the planning of the series and asked if anyone on the commission had an issue with that. Commissioner Issifou suggested that they take it to a vote and moved that Chair Engle become the primary contact for the planning of the PCRB series.

### **Motion to Approve Chair Engle Becoming the Primary HRC Contact For the Planning of the PCRB Outreach Series**

Moved by: Commissioner Issifou

Seconded by: Commissioner Hawkins

The motion passed unanimously.

## **VI. Review of Meeting Minutes**

### **Motion to Approve February Meeting Minutes**

Moved by: Commissioner Arbuckle

Seconded by: Commissioner Wils  
The motion passed unanimously.

**Additional Comments**

Wils asked if the tuition equity part of the legislative agenda passed. Council Member Abuzuaiter suggested that it was difficult to get it back on the agenda, but that she had been successful in doing so. Engle asked Rosetta Davidson if she had anything else to add. Davidson declined.

**IX. Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn.**

Moved by: Commissioner Phillips  
Seconded by: Commissioner Wils  
The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Minutes Approved by:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson**

**Greensboro Human Relations Commission**

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**Date**