



## **Meeting Minutes**

**September 7, 2017**

**The Human Relations Commission (HRC)** convened for their 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:** Chair Zac Engle, Moussa Issifou, Lindy Perry-Garnette, Lindsay Burkart, Margaret Arbuckle, Ed Cobbler, Samuel Hawkins

**Commissioners Absent:** Tom Phillips, David Sevier, David Wils, Kumar Bhardwaj, Michelle Kennedy, Irving Allen

**Human Relations Department Staff:** Love Crossling

**Legal Department Staff:**

**Council Liaison:**

**City Manager's Office:** Barbara Harris

**Visitors:** Addy Jeffrey, Giovanna Hurtado, Adamou Mohamed, Irving Zavaleta, Saroj Patnaik, Jonathan Vargas, Kevin Williams, Kathy Hinshaw, Anna Fesmire, Zaynah Afada

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

Chair Engle called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

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

Chair Engle called for a moment of silent meditation.

### **III. Introduction of Visitors and Speakers**

Addy Jeffrey opened up by sharing information about the recent legislative changes to DACA and its impact on residents, noting the importance of hearing directly from impacted persons and thanking the HRC for putting this on their agenda. Giovanna Hurtado introduced herself as a DACA recipient who arrived in the country at the age of 6. She was currently employed at Deuterman Law Group,

had received North Carolina's Paralegal Certification and handled 40-50 cases. She pointed out what recension meant for her: she will not be documented as of January 2019. She pointed out that she was the primary income provider in her household. She had completed her degree in 2016 taking 10 classes in one semester and graduated with a 4.0. The loss of DACA status put her family's future in jeopardy. She asked the HRC to consider putting DACA on the agenda for legislative action.

Commissioner Arbuckle referenced the former HRC resolution regarding Tuition Equity and asked that the HRC submit a letter to city council and congressional delegations to support DACA residents in Guilford County.

Chair Engle further emphasized that in addition there needed to be the ability for DACA residents to have a direct path to citizenship. Arbuckle stressed that immigration reform as a whole may not happen so a first step would be raise protection for DACA residents to be protected in the short term on the legislative agenda. She expressed minimal confidence for full immigration reform in the time period Congress was given to address DACA recension.

Audience members commented that there needed to be a request for the "Clean Dream Act."

Irving Zavaleta, a DACA recipient, stated that he would not remember how to get back to the town that he lived in up to age 13, pointing out that he knew more about US than Mexican history. He considered himself fortunate to have graduated from college and appreciated the social justice movements that were a part of Greensboro's history. He emphasized the impact of the recension of DACA on students as a higher education professional. He asserted that he was American, and just desired to be recognized as such. His request for action was for the HRC to support DACA by writing letters, making calls, and urging Council to act. Zavaleta reviewed data about the benefits of DACA beneficiaries' contributions to the workforce and overall economy.

Johnathan Vargas, a DACA beneficiary since 2012, was afforded the opportunity to enroll in college. He and his brother were RNs at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. He spoke of deterred plans such as a delay in engagement to his girlfriend, who was American. He stated that he and his brother saved American lives on a regular basis. He asserted that he paid for school out of his pocket without any aid, and desired to fully engage in life as an American. Vargas further asserted that he learned nursing in English, and would not be able to perform as a nurse elsewhere.

Hawkins inquired about policies surrounding protocol in messaging. Dr. Crossling confirmed that previous actions taken, i.e. resolutions or letters to the state, were based on individual volition. Engle asserted the ability to write direct letters to congress representatives. Jeffrey also charged the HRC to address the business community considering the impact to DACA representation in the workforce.

Hawkins stated the ability to also reach out to universities and include the chamber of commerce.

Kevin Williams also referenced the tuition equity resolution, noting that the Greensboro delegation was reluctant, and therefore urged that there also be connection to other HRCs in the state to create a state-wide unified message.

**Motion to send a letter supporting the non-recension of DACA (supporting legislation for the Dream Act at the Federal level with no strings attached) to the following:**

- congressional delegations
- university communities
- business communities
- City Council
- Neighboring Human Relations Commissions

Moved by: Commissioner Arbuckle  
 Seconded by: Commissioner Hawkins  
 The motion passed unanimously.

Adamou Mohamed suggested a timeline, requesting that it take place at the next council meeting. He also asked that the HRC petition Council to strengthen the resolution supporting DACA youth. He also requested that the HRC be willing to stand in support of this request at the next council meeting.

Commissioner Perry-Garnette asked if there was additional support that the HRC could offer. Zavaleta suggested that he would desire that the HRC act as allies, to use their citizen privilege to have the discussion, educate others and raise the awareness of those who had influence. He discussed the snowball effect of the fear that came with DACA rescission. Kathy Hinshaw also requested that the work to support DACA be an ongoing effort, and stated that depression was returning. Hinshaw also highlighted that she'd been approached to participate in programming at the Civil Rights Museum around this issue.

Discussion was raised about IAC collaboration on the issue of education. Franca Jalloh confirmed that the focus of the next IAC meeting would address DACA concerns regarding tuition equity on September 20 at the Cultural Arts Center at 5 pm. Patnaik suggested the importance of building on arguments.

**Motion to support the request for Council to strengthen 2015 Welcoming City Resolution to include specific support of undocumented youth by of supporting DACA and DREAM Act.**

Moved by: Commissioner Perry-Garnette  
 Seconded by: Commissioner Cobbler  
 The motion passed unanimously.

Perry-Garnette suggested that it was important to engage the Chamber. Cobbler agreed, adding that the Merchant's Association also needed to be contacted. Additional suggestions were made to increase media coverage. Jeffrey highlighted a piece that was done in the News and Record about the fact that policy would still permit sanctuary farming but not allow undocumented workers, despite education achievements, to work in any other industry, noting that this country was built cheap labor and this issues could not be ignored any longer.

**Motion to support the drafting of a letter to the chamber of Commerce and Merchant's Association addressing the impact of DACA rescission on economic as well as workforce development, and to urge business owners to support the reinstatement of DACA.**

Moved by: Commissioner Perry-Garnette  
Seconded by: Commissioner Cobbler  
The motion passed unanimously.

Kevin Williams suggested that an ad-hoc committee might be assembled to address the issues but Chair Engle referenced that the IAC would address the issue on an on-going basis.

Perry-Garnette and Adamou Mohammed addressed the need for the Greensboro Police Department to uphold the commitment not to enforce ICE policies and to keep those apprehended for any reason within the parameters of Guilford County. Engle asked if the IAC would follow up addressing policies of deportation. Patnaik referenced GPD Captain Nathaniel Davis' assertion that GPD would not participate in or enforce deportation. Mohamed followed up about concerns about the actions of the Guilford County Sherriff's willingness to engage in deportation actions as a county function. Cobbler urged the IAC to contact GPD Chief Scott, GPD Chief Hinson, and Guilford County Sherriff BJ Barnes and invite them to the upcoming meeting.

Jeffrey stated that she would be sharing a letter addressed to Jeff Sessions about the issue of being detained by ICE agents when testifying in court as victims of crime, which resulted in the decline of the reports of domestic violence by Hispanic/Latino community members.

Perry-Garnette addressed the public safety concerns, discussing the fact that undocumented people who were victims of crime would not report them to the Police because of undocumented status. Robberies increased due to undocumented individuals being cash heavy because they did not wish to, or could not, establish bank accounts. She suggested that there was a need for community education around the issue.

Engle asked staff to collaborate with the IAC and Addy Jeffrey in the crafting of the letters, and thanked guests for coming.

### **Chair Report**

Chair Engle stated that it was his desire to go through committee reports and follow through on standard meeting procedure.

### **PCRB**

Commissioner Cobbler announced that their next meeting was scheduled for September 20.

### **Education Committee**

Commissioner Arbuckle stated that Dr. Contreras recently spoke up and addressed DACA concerns, also noting that the graduation schedule was changed to accommodate the observance of a Muslim holiday. She stated that it would be addressed at the school board meeting that evening.

### **Human Services**

Chair Engle stated that this committee was in need of a chair and he encouraged commissioners to consider serving in this capacity.

### **Montgomery-Wells Housing Committee**

Commissioner Issifou stated that the series was underway.

### **International Advisory Committee**

Zaynah Afada, IAC Executive Member, reporting that the IAC Lunch and Learn on August 16 was a success, and that the next meeting on September 15 would address DACA concerns as they related to education equity.

### **Committee for Social Equity**

Commissioner Hawkins shared about his participation in the DACA protest as well as the International Overdose Awareness Day event. The restorative justice efforts and a counter stories event was also mentioned (commissioner were asked to review the flyer in their packets).

Commissioner Hawkins mentioned a City council candidate forum on September 10.

### **Staff Report**

Dr. Crossling stated that planning for the housing series was underway. She provided a brief update about the MLK bust modification in response to questions raised about its removal and replacement, referring to maps of the old and new locations. She noted that the bust would be enhanced with a backdrop and recessed lighting, and would be a feature on the Greenway.

Commissioner Perry-Garnette highlighted that the *process* for the bust removal was more of a concern than the fact that it was being revitalized, that considering community climate, paying attention to what the bust removal would mean to people was critical. Overall the way people felt influenced the way in which people behaved. She noted that she saw the HRC as having a more significant role. Commissioner Arbuckle asked who was responsible for making the decision, pointing out that there was not public acknowledgement. She referenced the sale of the Bardolph building which was designed to serve those in need. Commissioner Hawkins confirmed that the Bardolph property was going to be converted to condominiums and shops.

Dr. Crossling responded to Arbuckle's inquiry, stating that the decision began with Downtown Greensboro, Inc. with the purchase of a new piece of art. Discussion was held around location for the placement of the artwork, and the primary deciding factor was the dimensions of the space.

Arbuckle again noted that making decisions without public input strained relationships.

Dr. Crossling continued with information about the upcoming commission retreat, noting the recent doodle that was sent to select their preferred date. There was a planning meeting September 19 for the MLK breakfast. She noted the upcoming events on the staff report and finished by sharing that

the Women's Equality Day Breakfast was a huge success with 270 tickets sold and 141 evaluations, all positive.

**VI. Review of Meeting Minutes**

Hawkins noted that Commissioner King was listed. Chair Engle stated that her term ended in August.

**Motion to Approve August 10 Meeting Minutes**

Moved by: Commissioner Arbuckle  
Seconded by: Commissioner Burkart  
The motion passed unanimously.

**IX. Election**

An election was held. Dr. Crossling reported the results and congratulations were extended to the new chair, Samuel Hawkins, and the new vice chair, Moussa Issifou.

**IX. Adjournment**

Chair Samuel Hawkins encouraged commissioners to be respectful in the closing of meetings.

**Motion to adjourn.**

Moved by: Commissioner Engle  
Seconded by: Commissioner Burkart  
The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 pm.

Minutes Approved by:

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

**Chairperson**

**Greensboro Human Relations Commission**

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**Date**