



## **Meeting Minutes**

**March 25, 2019**

**The Human Relations Commission (HRC)** convened for a special meeting at 12p.m. on the above date at City of Greensboro Plaza Level Conference Room.

**Commissioners Present:** Issifou, Coleman, Lowe,

**Commissioners Absent:** Bryant

**Human Relations Department Staff:** Love Crossling, Jodie Stanley (absent)

**Legal Department Staff:** Rosetta Davidson (absent)

**Council Liaison:** Marikay Abuzuaiter (absent)

**CSW Liaison:**

**Visitors:** John Hammer, Reporter at Rhino Times

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

Chair called the meeting to order 12:20 pm.

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

**Speaker: None**

Chair Issifou welcomed everyone to the special meeting, reminding the members that the goal was to follow up from the retreat and plan for the general monthly meeting in April. Chair Issifou then deferred to the Human Relations Director, Dr. Love Jones to provide a retreat recap, as well as provide information to support future plans of the HRC for the 19-20FY.

Dr. Jones provided a recap of the topics covered in the HRC retreat on February 16 to include: budget, communications standards, the role of support staff, public meeting laws, conflicts of interest, and commission structure.

At the request of the HRC members, Dr. Jones covered the topic of visioning and planning, the focus of the special meeting. She did a presentation, which addressed:

**An overview of departmental areas of support.** Dr. Jones offered that the core departmental functions included general office management, Fair housing/ Landlord-tenant dispute, Education and Outreach, and Commission Management. Dr. Jones reiterated that the department was in the process of hiring a position that would provide additional support for commissions, and thanked members for their understanding. Dr. Jones also emphasized her availability for one-on-one support while on-boarding new staff.

**Annual Report FY17-18 program measures, and FY18-19 projections.** Dr. Jones highlighted that the HRC, because they were recalibrating across FY 18-19, their program measures may be lower. Dr. Jones also emphasized two highlights for FY17-18 to include a total of 54 programs, and reaching 4,576 residents in Greensboro, and the securing of 236 partners for Thrive GSO (the reentry hub managed by the Human Relations Department). Dr. Jones also provided an overview of two upcoming initiatives of the reentry efforts; Thrive Latino/International, and Thrive EDU. Commissioners Lowe and Coleman requested to be added to the Thrive GSO list-serve so that they could represent the Human Services and Education subcommittees of the HRC (respectively).

**The relationship between Council and Departmental priorities.** Dr. Jones stated that due to a reduction in capacity, the HRD had the opportunity to reassess the focus of the department. The goal was to find ways to sustain excellence in customer service, and provide the most critical services to residence related to Human Rights. She stated that the goal was to create synergy between the Human Rights challenges that Council wanted to address, with those of the department in order to leverage support and resources. Council priorities included eradicating homelessness, public safety, employment access, and general inclusion of marginalized populations. These were related to departmental focus areas which included fair housing, reentry efforts, international community support, and commission support.

**An observed model for Council's approach to Human Rights work.** Dr. Jones offered that after observation during Town-Hall City Council Meetings, she observed that Council's approach to human rights concerns was based on learning the needs of the community, whether or not those needs were connected to a policy, convening in order to gain different perspectives regarding the policy, and *then* engaging in decision-making based on the scope of authority. She offered that commissioners as *liaisons* between the community and council, would need to understand this model in order to make effective recommendations to Council.

**A recommendation for a new Commission Engagement Model.** Dr. Jones presented a trifecta engagement model, which emphasized the relationship between community needs, policy development, and council priorities. She covered the current engagement models to include collaborative programming, organic programming, and community presence. She reiterated that this model would support all three approaches to engagement, and that with departmental support, there would be an increase in relevance, and a decrease in the duplication of efforts. She also offered that the simpler the connection between city leadership efforts and those of the commission, the more seamless the support may be from City Council.

**A sample programming model applied to Thrive GSO.** Dr. Jones presented a sample of a Human Relations Commission programming that could be connected to the Thrive initiative. The reason, she offered, for offering the sample through the lens of Thrive, is because it had enough components that linked community needs to council priorities. However, she reiterated that it was merely a sample, and that the real goal was to offer a model that connected all of the HRC subcommittees to programming that focused on community need, policy, and council focus areas. She requested that whatever the topics of programming, that the HRC consider the structure of the trifecta engagement model. After review of the program sample topics, the commissioners confirmed their interest in the model. Commissioner Lowe suggested that the group move forward with not only the model, but with the topics connected to Thrive GSO. The discussion resulted in the following:

**Motion to adopt the programming model complete with Thrive GSO for FY19-20.**

Moved by: Commissioner Lowe

Seconded by: Chair Issifou

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Issifou raised the issue of commission leadership. There was consensus that Commissioner Lowe had reached out individually to members to express her interest in the role as vice chair. She inquired of Dr. Jones as to whether or not there would be an opportunity for leadership orientation in order to know how to conduct meetings. Dr. Jones confirmed that there would be. The discussion resulted in the following motion:

**Motion to vote to instill Commissioner Lowe as the Vice Chair of the Human Relations Commission.**

Moved by: Chair Issifou

Seconded by: Commissioner Coleman

The motion passed unanimously.

Members of the HRC discussed the importance of new membership understanding the plans for FY19-20. Dr. Jones program planning portion of the presentation would be shared with new commissioners during orientation.

Commissioner Lowe requested that one additional program be offered in preparation for FY19-20. She suggested that a meet and greet be hosted by the HRC, since new appointments were being made, and the community needed a chance to meet the revived body. Dr. Jones confirmed that she and the education and outreach coordinator would explore ways in which to support the program.

Commissioner Coleman inquired as to whether or not there was an update to the attendance policy for commissioners. Dr. Jones offered that the City's Legal Department was in the process of reviewing Boards and Commissions process in general, and would provide an update once completed by Legal.

**Motion to adjourn.**  
Moved by: Chair Issifou  
Seconded by: Vice Chair Lowe  
The motion passed unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned 2:02 pm.**

Minutes Approved by:

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

**Chairperson**

**Greensboro Human Relations Commission**

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**Date**