

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

May 21, 2015

Commission Members Present:

Ivette Lopez
Bianca Chang
Frank V. Eastham, Jr.
Catherine Hyde
Ilene Kessler
Tim Johnson
Giovanna Guarnieri

Commission Members Absent:

H. Taylor Walls
Genevieve Walker-Lightfoot
Rev. Turner
Opel T. Jones, I

Staff:

Stephanie M. Chapple, Recording Secretary
Dr. Barbara J. Sands, OHR Administrator
Barry Sanders, HRC Legal Counsel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

2. PUBLIC FORUM – Welcome Jack Connelley from River Hill High School. Jack has been attending the HRC meetings for several months as an observer; he is interested in working with other students to advocate for human rights in Howard County.

3. HRC CASES UPDATE – LEGAL COUNSEL – N/A

4. APPROVE MINUTES

April meeting minutes were approved.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT – Genevieve was unable to attend. Ivette, HRC Vice Chair, chaired the meeting. Regarding County Council meeting on May 4th - HRC members comments were taken into account; both Gen and Ivette attended the meeting; Gen made comments on behalf of HRC; CB4-2015 was approved; there were no additional responsibilities for HRC members.

6. COMMITTEES/ REPORTS

- *Finance and Fair Lending – Genevieve* – No report.
 - *Legislation – Ivette and Genevieve* – No report.
 - *Education & Community Outreach – Frank, Rev. Turner* – The African American Roundtable and the Howard County Police Department will host “Collaborative Community” roundtable on June 20th. Young men in the Alpha Achievers program, along with other African-American youth will ask questions and dialogue with officers to discuss their concerns, experiences, and share suggestions for building improved relationships between citizens, youth, and officers within Howard County. (2) The African-American Roundtable will sponsor a Parent Group session in August to assist parents with concerns with the Howard County Public School System, as well as share alternative solutions to address those concerns. (3) Per the approval of all members present, Frank will invite John Krownapple, Coordinator for Cultural Proficiency in Howard County, to an upcoming meeting. Currently, Montgomery County facilitated a program for students entitled “Student Voice.” Positive feedback from this program may now be introduced to Howard County students.
 - *Law Enforcement – Opel & Tim* – No report.
 - *HRC Awards Program – Ivette and Bianca* – Ivette and Bianca are collaborating on various new ideas to recognize and highlight Howard County citizens by partnering with other organizations during their award program. Ivette will draft introduction letter (template) to explain the role of the HRC, the mission, and possibly propose participating in that organization's award program. Some other suggestions from Frank were to award a student during graduation and/or recognize a teacher during *Welcome Back* faculty meeting in August. Ivette and Bianca will meet in the upcoming weeks to follow up.
 - *Human Trafficking Task Force* – Dr. Sands participated in an 8-hour webinar on Human Trafficking. Training will be offered, Dr. Sands will forward information once date is set.
- LGBTQ Committee – Catherine** – OHR has partnered with PFLAG (Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays) to host several showings of the award-winning documentary, “The New Black.” Directed, produced and written by Yoruba Richen, the film tells the story of the historic fight to win marriage equality in Maryland and charts the evolution of this divisive issue within the black community. The first screening of the film will take place on Tuesday, June 9 from 7:15 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Owen Brown Interfaith Center, 7246 Cradlerock Way. More details will follow. (2) June is Pride Month. (3) PFLAG now has an official partnership with HCPSS. (4) Two important bills for the LGBT community waiting for signatures are (a) insurance coverage for same sex marriages to have access to invitro-fertilization, (b) ability to update your gender marker on birth certificate in Maryland without having to have proof of surgery. (4) Petition on Whitehouse.gov received enough signatures against conversion therapy to get a response from the White House. (5) Ted

Lieu, Representative from California put forth federal bill to prevent reparative therapy. (6) Gender Conference East will be held November 13-14. Catherine will forward more information.

- **Housing – Ivette and Ilene**- Ilene attended National Association of Realtors conference in Washington, D.C. Economist tracked those families who lost their homes due to the housing market crisis; it is predicted that many of these families may be eligible to buy another home within the next 2 years. More education and assistance will be provided to “Boomerang Buyers” during this new cycle, and the housing market will focus more on cultural diversity in housing, as well as providing more information in many languages for potential new homeowners.
- **Aging & Disability Matters – Bianca, Genevieve** – No report
- **Health Care Access – Bianca** – “Healthy Howard” event will be held on Sunday, June 7th, 10a – 3p at Centennial Park. 60-70 vendors will participate in this free event. Families are encouraged to attend.
- **Student Life (New Committee) Taylor** – No report.

7. **STUDENT REPORT** – A viewing of “Girls Rising” film will be held at Reservoir High School on Tuesday, June 9th. Giovanna will forward flier and/or more information.

8. **STAFF REPORT/UPDATES** – (1) MLK Commissioners have all been assigned and on board – next MLK meeting will be held on June 10th. Martin Luther King pioneers, a senior group of Howard Countians are working together to identify those forerunners who have made a significant contribution and accomplishments within the county. (2) MAHRA (Maryland Association of Human Rights Agencies) purchased the film “The New Black” which will be shown throughout the county. (3) OHR Intake Investigator being re-trained; OHR Investigators being re-trained by OHR Legal Counsel, Faith Adelman; OHR Outreach Coordinators working with various organizations and groups on several community outreach projects/initiatives. (4) A total of 4 HBI cases were reported.

9. **NEW BUSINESS** – Explore various organizations / websites that may assist citizens to better understand the procedures or process when possibly pursuing making a formal complaint.

10. **ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES** –

II. **ADJOURNMENT** – Meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.