

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

April 21, 2016

Commission Members Absent:

Reverend Turner
Frank Eastham
Catherine Hyde

Commission Members Present:

Opel T. Jones, I
Ivette Lopez
Ivan Betancourt
Bianca Chang
Peter Hwang
Joan Hash
Shiraz Ahmed
Eli Sauerwalt
Ilene Kessler

Staff:

Dr. Barbara J. Sands, HRC Executive Secretary
Stephanie Chapple, HRC Recording Secretary
Barry Sanders, HRC Legal Counsel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. Vice Chair Opel Jones chaired the meeting in Reverend Turner's absence.

2. PUBLIC FORUM –

Police Chief Gardner and Captain Meyers presented slide presentation on the following topics including but not limited to:

- Overall Demographics of Howard County Police Department
- Promoting Diversity within the Howard County Police Department
- Youth and County-wide Initiatives
- President Obama's 21st Century Policing Report

Stephanie will forward the complete presentation to Commissioners via email.

3. HRC CASES UPDATE – LEGAL COUNSEL –

Although a quorum was present, 2 newest Commissioners were given initial instructions on overview of case packets, appeal process, etc. from HRC Legal Counsel. HRC Case No. 16-02-001 will be discussed at the May meeting after newest Commissioners review the case.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

March minutes were approved pending amendments regarding attendance (correction) for Ilene Kessler and Catherine Hyde.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT –

- Orientation for new commissioners will be forthcoming, per Reverend Turner. Reverend Turner will circulate information on a Resolution via email to Commissioners, however, more details will be sent within the next few weeks. No specific details were mentioned. HRC Chair will work with Dr. Sands regarding HRC fiscal budget for next year.

6. COMMITTEES/ REPORTS

There was a unanimous vote to merge several committees; new committees are as follows:

- Finance & Fair Lending with Housing – Ivette and Ilene – Ilene shared historical note...this month in 1960 the President of the Md Association of Realtors (Mal Sherman) disrupted the National Association of Realtors meeting in Kansas City to announce "We need Fair Housing!" Mr. Sherman and 2 other brokers from Baltimore City lobbied Congress & Fair Housing. Mr. Sherman and Jim Rouse were friends. Following that meeting, shortly thereafter, the Fair Housing Law was passed. This was significant specifically as it relates to the development of Columbia, and one of the reasons why Fair Housing exists in Howard County to date.
- Legislation – *Ivette* – No report
- Education, Public Safety and Student Life Committee – No report
- HRC Awards Committee – *Bianca & Opel* – Opel agreed to assist Bianca with awards program. Program will be held June 2nd. Location tbd. Commissioners will recognize both 2015 and 2016 award recipients. PFLAG was selected as 2015 recipient. Mediation Conflict & Resolution Center at HCC was selected as recipient for 2016.
- Human Trafficking Committee – *Ivan* – No report
- LGBTQ Committee - *Catherine* – No report

- Aging, Disability and Health Care Committee – *Bianca* – Bianca will forward filer/announcements of upcoming health care outreach programs to HRC members via email.

7. STUDENT REPORT – No report

8. STAFF REPORT/UPDATES – See Executive Secretary’s report. Dr. Sands will follow up with individuals in 3 HBI cases. New committee formed from students who participated in the Conversation with Students on Hate and Bias will fall under Ivette’s committee. Upcoming youth programs and Human Trafficking will fall under Citizen Services. OHR will continue to work with non-profit groups.

There will be a culturally sensitive training for all Commissioners during the June meeting. Sensitivity trainings will be held quarterly.

Pre-hearing submission booklet will fall under HRC; current booklet is outdated, will be updated to reflect changes. OHR will continue to distribute on behalf of HRC. Commissioners voted to have OHR make the necessary changes to the booklet and continue to have OHR distribute booklet. All approved.

With HRC appeal cases, a standard form letter will be sent to Respondent, if their submission is received **after the deadline**. Commissioners discussed and reviewed the letter, made minor changes, and voted to approve the letter with those changes.

9. NEW BUSINESS –

Per HRC Chair, Committee chairs will **now submit a written report to Stephanie on the Monday prior to the Thursday HRC meeting.**

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES – N/A

II. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.