

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

October 15, 2015

Commission Members Absent:

Ivan Betancourt
*Bianca Chang
Catherine Hyde

Commission Members Present:

Frank Eastham
Opel T. Jones, I
Tim Johnson
Rev. Turner
H. Taylor Walls
Ivette Lopez
Shiraz Ahmed
Ilene Kessler

Staff:

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m.

2. PUBLIC FORUM –

3. HRC CASES UPDATE – LEGAL COUNSEL – Appeal was denied for HRC Case No. 15-07-008

4. APPROVE MINUTES

September meeting minutes were approved.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT – Ivette thanked fellow Commissioners Taylor, Catherine and Frank for assisting with interviews for the HRC Student position. A student from Hammond High School was forwarded to the County Executive's Office for selection by the HRC. A thank you card was mailed to former HRC Student Commissioner Giovanna Guarnieri, and she will receive a certificate of service from the County Executive's Office. As indicated in the Howard County Code, the student serving in this position cannot be 18 years old or older.

- **Discussion** - Ivette opened discussion regarding Code amendments, fulfilling the role of Chair in the event the current Chair is unable to fulfill those duties, updating the process for transition of Vice Chair to Chair in extenuating circumstances, etc. Rev. Turner put forth motion to elect Vice Chair, all approved. Tim put forth motion to confirm Ivette's position as Chair, upon the replacement of the former Chair whose term had expired. All approved. Rev. Turner nominated Opel Jones as Vice Chair – all approved.

6. COMMITTEES/ REPORTS

- *Finance and Fair Lending* – No report.
- *Legislation* – *Ivette*– Ivette reviews the County and State websites for legislation as it relates to human rights, and will continue to share updates monthly.
- *Education & Community Outreach* – *Frank, Rev. Turner* – Rev. Turner shared success of African American Roundtable's Fall Forum. Dr. Gwendolyn Boyd, President of Alabama State University was the guest presenter. 400+ parents and students attended the program. Break-out sessions were offered to elementary, middle and high school students/parents. These forums work toward continuing the Roundtable's efforts to move forward with more parent engagement in the success of the student.
- *Law Enforcement* – *Opel & Tim* – Tim will work with the Howard County Police Dept. to conduct sensitivity training in November. More details will follow.
- *HRC Awards Program* – *Ivette and Bianca* – No report.
- *Human Trafficking Task Force* – *Dr. Sands* – Ivette and Dr. Sands discussed upcoming initiatives in Howard County that will be shared at the November meeting. Several agencies, along with Law enforcement are working together to assist victims in various ways.
- LGBTQ Committee – *Catherine* – No report.
- *Housing* – *Ivette and Ilene*– No report.
- *Aging & Disability Matters* – *Bianca* – Stephanie will participate in the 50+ Expo on 10/16 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. This annual program will be held at Wilde Lake High School. Attendees will receive beneficial information as it relates to health, wellness, and other services offered through various county agencies and non-profit organizations.
- *Health Care Access* – *Bianca* – No report.
- *Student Life (New Committee) Taylor* – No report.

7. STUDENT REPORT – N/A

8. **STAFF REPORT/UPDATES** – Please review Dr. Sands written report submitted on 10/15/15. Electronic copies will be sent to Commissioners who are absent from tonight’s meeting.

9. **NEW BUSINESS** – Frank requested permission to speak on behalf of the HRC to the Police Department to discuss concerns brought to his attention by two school Custodians on the basis of race. Frank’s purpose is education, and hopes that the night Commanders would notify the night shift that it is logical for Custodian staff to be leaving a school parking late in the evening (11 p.m. or later) Frank will share more information following that meeting.

10. **ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES** –

II. **ADJOURNMENT** – Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

*Please note – Bianca arrived to the meeting after adjournment. We appreciate her efforts for trying to get there.