

# HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

## *Minutes*

December 20, 2018

### Commission Members Present:

Reverend Turner  
Joan Hash  
Bianca Chang  
Bob Ford  
Kui Zhao  
Shiraz  
Scott Markow

### Commission Members Absent:

Peter Hwang  
Hector Garcia

### Staff:

Stephanie Chapple, Recording Secretary  
Dr. Barbara J. Sands, HRC Executive Secretary

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

#### 2. PUBLIC FORUM – Steve Charing, Howard County citizen

#### 3. APPROVE MINUTES – September and October minutes approved.

#### 4. CHAIR'S REPORT – Chair Turner thanked Dr. Sands for sending the letter to the editor, written by Chair Turner, regarding the election results. Chair Turner expressed his condolences after the passing of former Commissioner Shivani Aghera. A sympathy card will be sent on behalf of HRC. As this is the last meeting of 2018, Chair Turner hopes that the Nominating Committee is prepared to conduct election of new officers for HRC for 2019. Commissioner Joan suggested that the entire body can vote for new officers during New Business, not during the committee report. Chair Turner, and all members agreed.

#### 5. COMMITTEE REPORTS - Please review reports prior to the meeting. If you have any questions regarding the reports submitted, please bring your questions to the meeting. (\*\*Reports submitted)

- ❖ Finance and Fair Lending with Housing – Scott/Shiraz – No report. Per Dr. Sands, OHR is reviewing information regarding FHAP (Fair Housing Assistance Program). OHR's discussion with Office of Law will consider what the advantages are if OHR participates in the program, and (2) Office of Law will look at benefits of being a member versus disadvantages.
- ❖ \*\*Legislation – Bob/Kui – Kui submitted hard copy report. On her report, Kui highlighted HB0183 and HB223. Re. HB0183 – Prince Georges County has an Environmental Justice Commission. Kui stated that this commission is very important with planning and zoning. HB223 is state legislation that was approved. Kui stated "in September, Scott asked me about 1 of the Bills at the state level, which was SB029 about foreign language accesses to the website, and Scott asked me specifically what foreign languages would be available. I went back to that Bill and there was nothing specific about foreign languages that the state government could use to translate English to other languages." Per Dr. Sands, if the Commission would like to have that done on the state website, HRC could contact the Legislative Aid and find out the Senator who put forth the bill, and make recommendations to have the bill amended.
- ❖ Education, Public Safety and Student Life Committee – Reverend Turner – Chair Turner attended the HCPSS Board of education meeting last night. The Superintendent presented his budget for the next fiscal year, which is considerably higher than the current year budget. More discussion will be take place in the months ahead.
- ❖ HRC Awards Committee – Bianca/Hector – To date, there are no nominations, and no updates. Commissioner Bianca encouraged all members to circulate the nomination form to your community and professional groups.
- ❖ Human Trafficking Committee – Peter, Shiraz and Joan – No report. Dr. Sands will forward information to members of the committee for upcoming Human Trafficking Awareness meetings and training sessions.
- ❖ \*\*LGBTQ Committee – Bob – Please see Bob's written report for October and November. Meeting was cancelled in Nov due to inclement weather. There will be an LGBTQ Day in Savage Mill on 1/26/19. Bob will share more information next month.
- ❖ \*\*Aging, Disability and Health Care Committee – Bianca – Commissioner Bianca submitted hard copy report. The deadline date to register for healthcare has closed. Per Dr. Sands, there will be a Disability Awareness Conference in Texas. Maryland Civil Rights Commission (MCRC) will host its Inclusion regional conference on 1/20/19. More information will follow. Dr. Sands encouraged members to attend both conferences, if possible.

Both conferences are 3-day conferences. Registration costs can be paid through the HRC budget if Commissioners plan to participate/attend.

- ❖ \*\*HRC Goals Committee – Peter, Bianca, Reverend Turner – Bianca stated that it was a mission for the Goals committee was to prepare a list of events, costs of the event, conferences, and programs for Commissioners to attend. Some of the conferences are held annually, other conferences are planned in response to current events. Bianca will forward a copy of the list that was circulated in previous years. Commissioners would like Stephanie to create a yearly calendar where members can review upcoming events, as well as, add event information that may be occurring in their community. Bianca is collecting photos from previous programs and events where Commissioners volunteered and/or participated in, to add to the website. Please forward your pictures to Bianca.
- ❖ Ad-Hoc / Nominating Committee – Peter, Joan – No report. Per Joan, Commissioner Peter sent a note to all members regarding discussion of the procedures for Boards and Commissions vacancies. Peter suggested in the note to members, that the Nominating Committee will wait to convene. Chair Turner requested that Dr. Sands speak with the new County Executive at an upcoming cabinet meeting regarding this.
- ❖ Community Outreach Sub-Committee – (formed following CR-180 Study) – Peter, Hector – Per Stephanie, 3 responses to Peter’s invitation have been received from FOLA, PFLAG and Rabbi Sonya Starr. Dr. Sands suggested that, if 1 Commissioner could attend 2 community meetings per year, 20+ community groups will engage in open dialogue with the HRC member(s) to know (1) who we are; (2) what we do; (3) what can HRC to help your community. Per Dr. Sands, OHR/HRC brochures will be translated in 4 languages. Dr. Sands thanked Bianca for translating the brochure. Per Commissioner Joan, at a previous meeting there was discussion for an action plan that Chair Turner would discuss with Commissioner Peter. Members would like to have a standard set of talking points to take to their assigned community group meeting. Chair Turner tasked this mission for Commissioner Peter and the new Chair beginning next month. Commissioners Bob, Scott and Hector will contact the 3 organizations that they work closely with an initial telephone call. Discussion for scheduling a meeting will be determined at the January meeting.

5. STUDENT REPORT – No report.

6. STAFF REPORT – See Dr. Sands written report. OHR is in the process of hiring a new Investigator. Eight interviews were held, 2 applicants stood out as the best. Reverend Sands asked Commissioners their thoughts on a hiring a Hearing Examiner. Discussion was held. Commissioner Joan made the motion to “not hire a hearing examiner.” Bob seconded the motion. Vote was taken. All approved not to hire a Hearing Examiner.

7. CLOSED SESSION – **N/A**

8. NEW BUSINESS – Elections for 2019 officers were held. Commissioner Joan nominated Bianca as Chair, Scott seconded the motion. Commissioner Bianca declined the nomination. Chair Turner nominated Shiraz as Chair, Bob seconded the motion. Commissioner Joan nominated Bob as Chair. Commissioner Kui nominated Scott for Chair. Scott respectfully declined. Scott and Kui seconded Bob’s nomination. Bob accepted nomination. Shiraz accepted nomination. Before vote was taken, Shiraz removed his name from Chair’s nomination. No other nominations were made. Vote was taken. All approved Bob for Chairperson 2019. Chair Turner nominated Shiraz as Vice Chair, Joan seconded. Vote was taken; all approved Shiraz for Vice Chair for 2019. Chair Turner thanked the Commission for his two years of service as Chair.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS –

Howard County 4<sup>th</sup> annual Kwanzaa program will be held on 12/26/18 at the G. Howard Building. This is a free event. Families, children and citizens are all welcome to attend. 51 Seniors between the ages of 90 – 107 will be honored, and will receive certificates.

Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. program and Day of Service will be held on 1/20/19 and 1/21/19. Fliers will be circulated to all members. Commissioner Kui’s dance group will also perform during the program.

IOAHRA (International Association of Human Rights Agencies) modeled *Courageous Conversations – Howard County’s Longest Table* in Texas. This program was a great success.

Commissioner Joan thanked Stephanie for all her hard work. Commissioner Joan also thanked Dr. Sands and Reverend turner for their service to the Commission, and wished everyone a happy holiday, and happy new year.

10. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.