

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes December 19, 2019

Mr. Ford called meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Bob Ford, Chair, Bianca Chang, Vice Chair, Kui Zhao, Joan Hash, Peter Hwang, Scott Markow, Leslie Salgado-Tamayo, Lynda Earle, Mabrooka Chaudhry, Joshua Kaufman

Student Present: Musa Jafri

Staff Present: Chaunta Taylor, Recording Secretary, and Yolanda F. Sonnier, Esquire, Executive Secretary

Public Forum: None

Commission members approved unanimously the **October 16, 2019** (with Leslie requested changes) meeting. **November** and **December** minutes will be approved at the January 16, 2020 meeting.

Reports

CHAIR:

Bob wished everyone happy holidays and thanks to the Special committee for all their hard work.

Executive Secretary Report:

Yolanda discussed the following

- County Executive Report case stats
- 3 HBI's reported in November
- OHR Administrator Technician position closed November 29, 2019, and an offer will be made by New Year
- 2 Commissioner attended Fair Housing training
- 3 Commissioners attended Human Trafficking training
- Save the date for Kwanzaa Event, 12/26/2019, need volunteers for welcome table
 - Joan volunteered
- LGBTQ work group upcoming 1st meeting 1/14/2019 @ 6pm
- OHR and the County Executive did video and posted on social media for Human Rights Day

Commissioner asked: What were the 3 HBI for November, Yolanda stated she will research and let them now. However, OHR is still working with the Police Dept. to modify the MOU (memorandum of understanding) to determine our office responsibilities. Yolanda clarified it was only 1 and it was Anti-Jewish.

Elections (December):

Chair

Bianca opened the floor for Chair nominees, Joan asked that Bob Ford be nominated as Chair again, he has done a great job and has taken the Commission through 3 major transition without any issues. More importantly she felt that he can not only lead but listen which is important to the Commission as the Chair. Peter 2nd the nomination. Bianca gave a 30 second window for additional nominees. All was in favor, Bob was re-elected as Chair.

Bob, thank the Commission for the nomination and stated the Commission does such a great job, it makes the Chair responsibilities easy.

Vice Chair

Bob opened the floor for Vice Chair nominees, Joan nominated Lynda Earle, a new Commissioner although she doesn't know her that well, she feels that she does a great job with researching. She also thanked Bianca for all she has done as

Vice Chair but she understands that Bianca is busy with the Chinese school. Mabrooka 2nd the nomination, Lynda excepted the nomination and thanked the Commissioner. Yolanda asked were there anymore nomination and Leslie responded she would like to nominate Scott for his hard work doing research and willing to support the Commission, Peter 2nd the nomination. Yolanda asked Scott was he willing to accept the nomination, Scott responded yes. Bob asked was there any more nomination? Yolanda asked do we do a close when there is a contestant, the Commission responded we never had one. The Commissioner agreed to do a paper vote and Yolanda stated we should be in compliance if do a tally and say how many votes each nominee received. The Commission did their paper vote, and the votes was tilled and both Commissioner received 5 votes each. Scott stated he would withdraw and let Lynda be Chair because he agrees with Joan and we should have a new Commissioner as Vice Chair to learn the ropes from Bob. Yolanda stated I believe we can have two chairs. The Commissioner motioned to have two Vice Chairs, all unanimously agreed. Scott and Lynda were elected as Co-Vice Chairs.

Scott thanked the Commission and stated he was honored and will try to do a great job.

Lynda thanked the Commissioner and stated she feels privilege to be a part of this Commission and it's important that the ensure our body as a Commission that the whole comes before the one and work together in Unity and support each other.

Retreat:

Bob asked do we have any dates, Yolanda stated two dates were sent. Josh asked can you please remind us what the dates were? Yolanda responded yes, both days fall on a Saturday they were January 11 and February 1, they both tied on the Doodle as far as participants, they retreat will be at our 9820 Patuxent Woods Drive location at 10am-2pm. Josh stated that the disadvantage is both days are coming up soon and the Commissioner still need to lay out a plan. Yolanda stated things to think about are speakers what on the agenda, we (OHR) will make sure the room is available and lunch is provided. Josh asked the Commission if they felt January is enough time to plan or should we wait until February? Peter stated either way we need to discuss what will the retreat look like, so we can be prepared so February would be ideally. Leslie asked is it possible having it at our next HRC meeting on January 16, 2020 and come earlier and make it a longer day. Peter said that may be a lot depending on what's on the agenda.

The Commission motion for February 1, 2020 all unanimously agreed.

Josh asked if the retreat could be discussed and placed on January 16th agenda. The discussion should include how to prep, And can we facilitate now so all can come to January meeting with proposals? Yolanda asked for clarification who would come with the proposal next meeting? Josh and Mabrooka both agreed they will facilitate the proposal.

Committees 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)

Special Committee on Immigration Issues:

Joan, we a have committee of 5 and we are currently looking at two issues the County Code and Ice Contract, the members are Peter, Scott, myself, Linda, and Leslie and we all are doing research. Peter and I took the lead on doing preliminary interviews. While Lynda, Scott and Leslie are doing research around other issues. Myself, Peter and Scott did an interview with Rev. Louis Green, 2 and me myself did an interview at Howard County Department of Corrections. Prior to these interview we had 2 visits from the Coalition to speak at our meetings during the public forum. The following interviews are meeting with CEX about the code, the plan is to have interviews done by January 17, 2020. Based on the research that Linda and Scott are doing we have determined that more interviews are needed, and we hope to be finished by the end of January 2020 that's our target. After interviews are done the plan is to sit together as a team to share notes and decide what the intern report will entail. The interim report will be submitted at our February meeting. We looking to have the final report by the end of March and submitted to the Commissioner for review so as a whole we can decide the next steps. When we meet in April we should have a clear understanding of what to do next. Now I am turning it over to Peter, Scott and Lynda.

Peter, we are currently waiting on data therefore the date Joan just discussed are subject to us receiving the data. We spoke with Chief Myers and we have a meeting with HTPE on January 7, 2020. Yolanda confirmed you have a meeting with the Police Dept. on January 7th, Peter responded yes, and a meeting with Jennifer Jones (CEX) on

January 8th. Yolanda asked is that about Legislation? Joan stated it's about the County code, Yolanda asked if Jennifer Jones was the correct person? Joan stated she spoke with Jennifer and it did not matter who they meet with to discuss the matter, but Jennifer was the one who set the appointment. Yolanda added because Jennifer Sager who handle legislation. Joan stated she discussed with Jennifer the two issues and informed her that she had meet with DOC so hopefully she will have us meet with the appropriate person. Yolanda addressed Joan and Scott to let them know she has the Prince Georges County one that she can forward to them. However, the one she has is still in draft format. Scott asked is there one in Anne Arundel County as well, Yolanda stated yes to her understanding, and she has requested a copy, but she has not received it yet. The one in Prince Georges County is only specific to housing not to employment. Scott stated New York has one it's called alienation citizenship status and it applies to employment, housing and public accommodation. The Office of Human Rights in New York have a guidance document and he is trying to reach out to the Commission to find out how that was done.

Lynda discussed speaking with the Chief Executive in Montgomery County specifically to what her and Scott are working on and they did it by Executive Order as you know it was a lot of controversy about it. They feel like the Executive Order was faster and stronger and they got the support of Counsel so when it came down to signing County Counsel was all in. She also provided a map of what local jurisdictions are doing that I shared with the Commission. It seems that most of them are doing Executive Orders. We are all putting in a lot of work and it will all come together. Bob asked Leslie if she had anything to add. Leslie had nothing to add at this time. Leslie stated not at this time.

Outreach Committee:

Kui, discussed the HC Nature Conservatory Report

Awards Committee

Yolanda, discussed that Bianca and herself will meet to narrow down a date for the ceremony and she asked OHR staff support to reach out to different venues we are currently looking at the month of April we need to start reserving a place any recommendations? Joan asked about the Conservatory and Yolanda responded yes, that on our list. Scott stated normally we do it on a date as our meeting. Bianca stated we should not have it around any County event. Yolanda asked to let her know of any suggestions and we will have more information at the January meeting. Leslie asked are we looking for place that we have to pay, Yolanda responded we are wearing all our options, we are looking at timeframe 5pm-9pm. Leslie responded she will check.

Bob stated he had two questions, 1) what the reappointment process we have 3 Commissioner coming up in March. Yolanda stated our office emailed Kim Pruiim CEX who is in charge of the Board and Commissions. We are still waiting on a response.

Peter recommend that we move to motion nomination for reappointment for Bianca, Joshua and Kui. The Commissioners unanimously agreed.

2) Bob, asked Yolanda we have a member who's been absent 3 months in a row, in the past we waiting 6 months and I don't think we want to wait that long, how should we handle it? Yolanda responded Bob as the Chair according to the code after they miss 3 consecutive meeting they have been deemed to voluntarily resign from their position. The Commission asked who was missing, someone stated Hector and it was stated he was here last month (November) Yolanda responded he wasn't here November, but he did attend in October. It must be 3 consecutive months and here was here in October we had a meeting in the other building. Joan bought up its 3 consecutives but if someone has an emergency they can stay and its not counted against them. However, the burden is on them to inform the Commission. Peter bought up but it has to be voted on to be excused. Yolanda stressed we have not had anyone who has missed 3 consecutive months at this time.

Student:

Musa submitted and gave brief discussion of his report.

+ Fair Housing:

Lynda spoke about the Fair Housing training and how they went back in time to when Martin Luther King was fighting for fair housing for all people including African American people and they pointed out that the Fair housing didn't start kicking off until his death. They also talked about the elements needed for fair housing issues.

Yolanda discussed the fair housing training with the OHR investigator will accrue in January but can possibly be done at the February retreat, the Commissioners agree to defer it until further notice.

+ Legislation:

Kui provide the report in odd months, Leslie stated that she would like to meet with Kui to learn more about it. Lynda discussed the hate crime statute change to include the word Threat, State Law passed. It also included groups as well not just individual.

+ Education:

Mabrooka attended a local chapter March for Our Lives to End Gun Violence in schools, did a workshop with Hopeworks to recognize the signs of unhealthy relationship.

+ Human Trafficking Committee:

Josh shared one of the sessions on 11/8 all day workshop, State legislation. One of the movements in 46 states if you are a victim of prostitution you can get your record expunge.

Staff:

New Business:

- Luna New Year 1/25/2020 @ Columbia Mall 1pm-3pm volunteers are needed
- CEX Minora lighting at the GHB at 5:30pm
- Bystander Intervention Training

Announcements:

CLOSED SESSION: No cases to discussed

Meeting Adjourned: Mr. Ford adjourned at 8:28pm