

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes

November 20, 2014

Commission Members Present:

H. Taylor Walls
Tim Johnson
Frank Eastham
Opel T. Jones, I
Ilene Kessler
Bianca Chang
Giovanna Guarnieri

Commission Members Absent:

Sal Hussain
Genevieve Walker-Lightfoot
Ivette Lopez
Rev. Turner

Staff:

Stephanie M. Chapple, Recording Secretary
C. Vernon Gray
Barry Sanders, HRC Legal Counsel

1. **PUBLIC FORUM** – Howard County Police Chief Gary Gardner, Sergeant Stephanie Walls, and Officer Randy Davis were invited to the meeting and spoke on: building stronger community partnerships, advanced training for mental health issues, traffic safety & education, and facilities.
2. **CALL TO ORDER**
Meeting was called to order at 8:37 pm.
3. **APPROVE MINUTES**
October meeting minutes were approved.
4. **Chair's Report** –
 - Elections will be held in December. Additionally, due to being the last meeting of the year, as well as shortly before the holiday, Taylor encouraged all Commissioners to attend the next meeting. If the 3rd Thursday of the month is becoming a problem for all or the majority of Commissioners to attend, please consider another evening during the month to meet, and forward to Taylor.
 - HRC's holiday gathering will be held at the December meeting to thank everyone for their dedication and work serving on the commission.
5. **HRC CASES UPDATE – LEGAL COUNSEL – N/A**
6. **NEW COMMITTEES/ REPORTS**
 - Finance and Fair Lending – Genevieve – N/A*
 - Legislation – Ivette and Genevieve – N/A*
 - Education & Community Outreach – Frank, Rev. Turner* – Frank attended the MSA Celebration sponsored by the Council of Elders of the Black Community of Howard County, MD. Twelve hundred middle school students were recognized for Advanced Achievement which is the highest level of in the Maryland State Assessment.
 - Law Enforcement* – No report.
 - HRC Awards Program – Genevieve* – Taylor thanked everyone who participated in the program – Gen, Ivette, Frank, Stephanie & Opel for the hard work and dedication put forth in planning another successful annual awards program.
 - Human Trafficking Task Force* – Genevieve - No report
 - LGBT Committee – Catherine* – Today is Transgender Day of Remembrance to pause and remember those Transgender family members who lost their lives to Hate Violence. No formal activities in Howard County have been planned on this date yet. Closest locations where programs are held for this day of remembrance are in Baltimore City and Silver Spring. Catherine also thanked Dr. Gray and the HRC for co-sponsoring the Gender Conference East held in Baltimore.
 - Housing – Ivette and Catherine* – No report.
7. **STUDENT REPORT** – Giovanna attended a Task Force meeting in response to the incident involving River Hill and Glenelg High schools. The incident had an impact on students at all of the Howard County high schools. Students voiced their concerns and shared their ideas on this issue.
8. **STAFF REPORT/UPDATES** – Dr. Gray and OHR conducted a brief orientation for the three new Commissioners on 11/17. Investigators will attend a future HRC meeting to meet all members, and share information beneficial to the Commission. Human Trafficking Task Force will share important information and submit final report to the Council on Monday, 12/8 at 8:30 a.m. Human Rights Day will be held on 2/10/15 in Annapolis. Date will be set for spring 2015 for Fair Housing seminar.
9. **NEW BUSINESS** – Taylor will draft letter to invite Superintendent Foose to attend the January or February meeting.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES – We will invite former HRC Commissioner Al Bracey to join us for holiday cheer at the December meeting to thank him for providing musical selections each year during our annual awards program.

11. ADJOURNMENT – The Chair adjourned meeting at 8:55 p.m.