Meeting occurred via WebEx Teleconferencing

Chair Scott Markow called meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Scott Markow, (Chair), Bianca Chang (Vice Chair), Mabrooka Chaudhry, Bob Ford, Kui Zhao, Gabriel Terrasa, Sahara Ukaegbu (Student Commissioner)

Absent: Jonah Hornum, Lynda Earle, Peter Hwang, Joan Hash

Staff Present: Fatina Jackson

Legal Counsel: Melissa Goldmeier

I. PUBLIC FORUM
No attendees for the public forum.

II. APPROVAL OF JUNE MINUTES
Scott asked if everyone had the opportunity to review the minutes or any further edits or comments. Kui noted she sent her edits to Fatina.

Bob moved to approve the June minutes which was seconded by Kui and Gab. The June minutes were approved without opposition.

III. PRESENTATION ABOUT THE LUMINUS NETWORK FOR NEW AMERICANS
Mike Mitchell, Executive Director and CEO of The Luminus Network for New Americans (formerly known as FIRN) began the presentation with an overview of the work of Luminus and noted the reasons for the change in name from FIRN to Luminus. The services Luminus provides include legal services, social services such as eviction preventing and language services, the Language Prose program and advocacy for immigrants. Mike Mitchell talked about internships at Luminus and concluded the presentation by talking about the support Luminus has received from the Howard County Government and expressing his desire to keep in contact with the Human Rights Commission.

IV. CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT
Welcome, Sahara as new student commissioner, appointment confirmed last week by County Council. Sahara officially introduced herself to the commissioners and spoke regarding her interest in government and politics. Scott thanked Kui for coordinating with speakers and discussed hosting next month’s speaker from La Alianza. Scott noted that the roster needs to be updated with the new Student Commissioner. Scott spoke
about a hearing to be scheduled regarding a case that was not resolved by conciliation by the Office of Human Rights & Equity, which will be assigned to the panel chaired by Bob. Scott introduced and thanked Fatina, who will serve as the new recording secretary. Fatina mentioned that two case files will be transferred to the HRC.

V. STUDENT COMMISSIONER REPORT
No student report was presented at this meeting. This time was taken by Scott to introduce Sahara to more of the Student Commissioner’s responsibilities which included a student’s viewpoint on any issues discussed by HRC.

VI. WORKGROUPS

a. LA ALIANZA LATINA:
Gab stated he had nothing to report. Gab also gave an overview for Sahara of the work done by La Alianza and their efforts in healthcare, workforce development and education.

b. AAPI
Mabrooka reported that AAPI did meet as a workgroup on Thursday, July 8th. Honorary Chair Senator Clarence Lam attended the meeting and spoke about a new bill (Senate Bill 46) which prevents what is called a “panic defense”. There was also a presentation by Dr. Teresa Colella and Ms. Sarah Gravlin regarding discrepancies in AAPI COVID-19 data and recording and asked the group to help recruit volunteers for their initiative. Mabrooka mentioned other discussions included Heritage month events and the various committees including business and economic development, government access, community engagement, and health and wellness committee. Mabrooka also mentioned it was proposed from Dr. Ball’s office for AAPI to consider having a safety committee.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Legislative Committee:
Scott mentioned two bills that made progress.
County bills passed this month:
  1) CB49 2021 making it illegal to discriminate on the basis of any of the protected Human Rights codes in any Recreation and Parks facilities.
  2) Elder Abuse Protection Act of 2021, passed the House and is now in Senate, aimed at helping elders deal with abuse, neglect and financial fraud and requires a national elder fraud hotline to be able to report it to the department of justice.

b. Nominations Committee:
Peter was not present. Bob stated that the County Executive nominated a new commissioner, Tiffany R.
c. Outreach:
Kui and Mabrooka will continue work on pamphlets they have been designing, and Mabrooka discussed the AAPI work which was noted on the workgroup report.

d. Awards Committee:
Awards ceremony will be held on October 19th. The regular monthly meeting will be held on October 21st at 7pm. Gab reported on the tasks in progress which were discussed in those meeting: Contacting awards namesakes, coordinating catering and logistics. A capacity of 100-200 people is expected. Nomination forms have been sent out. Nominations close August 15th. Kui discussed outreach, and Scott asked Sahara to spread the news about nominations to student groups.

e. Hate Crimes:
Mabrooka noted that there was no report for this meeting, and that there will be a lot to report regarding hate/bias incidents for the September meeting. Mabrooka also gave an overview of the committee’s work for Sahara, such as investigating how hate/bias incidents are reported in schools and examining how hate/biases incidents are dealt within schools of adjoining counties.

f. Social and Economic Justice:
Kui gave an overview of the committee’s background to Sahara, explaining that for the past months the committee has invited speakers to discuss equity issues in the domain with the HRC. For the September 14th meeting, Kui stated that a speaker from La Alianza Latina was invited.

g. Immigration:
Joan was not present. Bob explained to Sahara that the committee was created to investigate adding immigration status to the protected classes classification in Howard County. Bob discussed that a meeting will occur the following week, and Scott explained that the committee had worked to advise the county executive in the decision to terminate the County’s contract with ICE. Scott suggested to Bob that the committee could expand cooperation with the Luminus Network for New Americans.
VIII. NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
Scott asked whether the HRC commissioners would be open to in-person meetings. Scott expressed his hesitance to reach a consensus at this meeting due to the absences of four commissioners. Scott will send out another survey to collect opinions.

Kui mentioned that the Baltimore County Libraries has asked for her help in facilitating a discussion for the book *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*.

Mabrooka reminded the commission of the annual National Night Out on August 3rd from 6 – 9 PM.

Fatina added that the OHRE will have two new interns.

Bianca expressed her desire to share that she was appointed by the Governor to be on the Maryland State Board of Education.

IX. ADJOURNMENT
The meeting adjourned after Gab’s motion, and the motion was seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 PM.

*Next Meeting will be on Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 7 pm*