HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING

APPROVED Minutes
December 16, 2021

Meeting occurred via WebEx Teleconferencing

Chair Scott Markow called meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Scott Markow, (Chair), Bianca Chang (Vice Chair), Mabrooka Chaudhry, Kui Zhao, Gabriel Terrasa (Corresponding Secretary), Peter Hwang, Joan Hash, Jonah Hornum, Bob Ford, Lynda Earle, Tiffany Releford (Sahara Ukaegbu, Student Commissioner)

Absent:

Staff Present: Fatina Jackson and Yolanda Sonnier

Legal Counsel: Melissa Goldmeier

I. PUBLIC FORUM
No attendees for the public forum.

II. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 2021 MINUTES
Scott asked if everyone had the opportunity to review the minutes or if anyone had any other changes to the November minutes. Joan moved to approve the November minutes, seconded by Bob. Motion passes. The November minutes were approved without opposition.

III. PRESENTATION ON NATIVE AMERICANS IN HOWARD COUNTY
Mr. Kiros Auld, spoke about Native Americans, their history and the different tribes. Mr. Auld provided background about himself and his recognitions. Mr. Auld stated Native Americans tend to do a lot of moving around due to legacy issues from over 400 years of contact to going onto Modern issues, the common era being the start of the twentieth century. There’s a lot of people from around the world, and from Indian Country who call this county, state, and region home. Mr. Auld spoke about tribal governments and local and state governments and legacy issues with displaced people. Overall keeping the memory of people and their connections to place alive.

Mr. Auld stated one of the modern challenges faced is data collection, education, and honoring treaty obligations. A concern is that people get erased through data. A history of using a false racial binary of white and black, everyone who does not fit in that box is destroyed on paper, what is known as “paper genocide”.

Lynda asked how many tribes are in the Howard County area, Mr. Auld responded he does not have exact number but there are three state recognized tribes, and seven federal acknowledged tribes.

Joan asked about the tribes that visit the Howard County Fairgrounds, if that would be a place where a representative from the tribes in Howard County area would be. Mr. Auld
stated it’s the “Pow Wow” event run by one of the local tribal representatives. Mr. Auld stated the Maryland Commission of Indian affairs established by the state of Maryland has a wealth of resources.

IV. **CHAIR’S REPORT**
Scott mentioned the upcoming annual retreat and suggested at the retreat they discuss what areas to focus on for the coming year, what they are hoping to achieve and arrange the committees around the goals trying to be achieved. Joan agreed on setting goals and looking at Ad hoc committees and work groups to see what needs to be accomplished. Comments were sent to the County Council in support of CB85 which was passed. Mabrooka mentioned not seeking reappointment in March when her terms end. Joan asked about the forms or community survey that were not equitable with regards to the Native Community. Yolanda stated she followed up with County admin after that meeting to address the survey and had another recent follow up conversation and currently this matter is still in the works of being addressed.

V. **STUDENT REPORT**
Sahara mentioned she sent out the December update and the project description to the committee members. The scheduled meeting that was planned with the head of SRO department was canceled and in turn received a written response to questions Sahara submitted to Sargent John Lloyd. Sahara mentioned while disappointed it was not an actual meeting or virtual discussion as she had additional questions, she was appreciative of the responses she received from the questions asked. Sahara discussed some of the take away’s she learned from the responses received from Sgt. Lloyd. Sahara will continue to work on the pamphlet.

VI. **EXECUTIVE SECRETARY REPORT**
Yolanda spoke about vacant positions within the office, provided updates on officeoutreach programs, and virtual offerings, upcoming book discussions and provided status of the equity audit. Yolanda mentioned the partnership with the Howard County food bankand Jack and Jill Columbia Chapter seeking donations and volunteers and asked if the committee was inclined to make a donation that would help with packaging of the items and in turn would be delivered to Grassroots. Lynda asked if the office has received any HBI’s, Yolanda mentioned the office received something in the mail stating four was reported but currently have no detailed information. Bob asked about the LGBTQ work group, Yolanda stated she has not heard thing but will inquire again.

VII. **WORKGROUPS**
a. **LA ALIANZA LATINA:**
Gab reported that the workgroup met on November 30th, there will be one more meeting before the workgroup expires in February. There is consensus in the workgroup that recommendations will be made for some permanent form of the workgroup. Each committee is finishing drafting the recommendation and will be put together for a final
review in February. There maybe also additional recommendations in addition to the existence of this group for the county to institute within this committee.

b. AAPI:
   The committee met on November 30th. The committee discussed the survey results and the report. Mabrooka discussed what is being done with the report. Looking at the responses from AAPI regarding health, wellness and safety and based on the data, a meeting with Sahara, County Executive’s Office and Office Lee, the vision is to have a training for a program called “Champions” of the AAPI community. Leaders from numerous organizations in the AAPI community are invited for an all-day workshop, and seminar, training. The survey showed the AAPI community were not aware of all the tools and resources that are available. If the AAPI community had access to these tools and resources, they weren’t aware how to access them and there was a concern if they had language, translation interpretation available as well. The workshop will possibly take place at the end of February or March. Representatives will be there to train the “Champions” how to do outreach within their communities. This program is currently in the implementation phase.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS
   a. Outreach:
      Mabrooka reminded everyone to send her anything they have for the Annual report. Scott asked Mabrooka to include all guest speakers from the HRC meetings.

   b. Awards Committee:
      Lynda stated the committee has no updates.

   c. Nominations Committee:
      Peter stated he would coordinate when time comes for a new commissioner to replace Mabrooka. Yolanda advised Peter January would be the recruitment time and would need to be pre-filed in January to go before council for the new commissioner to start in March when Mabrooka stops. If Peter is ok with not having and wait until April, then pre-file would be in February for the March council meeting. Peter asked Yolanda if she would be coordinating with the county to send out the solicitations for applications. Yolanda stated she reached out to Kim but will follow back up.

   c. Legislative Committee:
      County bills passed this month:

      1) CB82 new minimum wage law passed. Minimum wage increasing to $14.00 hr. starting April 2022 and goes up $1.00 per hour per year thereafter and will automatically go up based on inflation.
      2) CB85 housing bill passed. An amendment was introduced during the legislative workgroup at the county council which added immigration and citizenship status as a protected class to the housing code.
3) CB83 the police accountability board that was mandated by the state was tabled at the last county council meeting.

IX. **ADHOC COMMITTEE REPORTS**
   a. **Social and Economic Justice:**
      Kui mentioned Mr. Auld being invited to present before the commission regarding the Native American and Alaskan Native community in Howard County. Kui mentioned she will think about topics for 2022.
   
   c. **Hate Crimes:**
      Mabrooka stated the committee was unable to meet in December. Mabrooka sent a link and spreadsheet to the commissioners detailing their work, data and research.
   
   b. **Immigration:**
      Joan stated the committee continue to look for other areas in the code where immigration and citizenship status can be added. Joan stated Angela suggested the council may want to be in supportive testimony when those areas go before the council.

X. **NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**
   Nominations were made for the Commissioners. Scott accepted the nomination as Chair, Jonah accepted the nomination as Vice Chair, Gab accepted the nomination as Corresponding Secretary.
   
   Lynda mentioned the NAACP held a press conference regarding an incident at Howard High School where an altercation took place between a student and an SRO. The conference was held to articulate their concerns that the student was charged with an offense while the SRO was not charged. The investigation is continuing.

XI. **CLOSED SESSION**
   Scott mentioned having to move to close session to discuss HRC Case# 21-11-010. Tiffany moved meeting be closed to discuss case and consulting legal counsel. Jonah seconded. Motion passed without opposition. Yolanda stopped recording and handed over host duties to Scott.

Open session ended at 8:56 pm.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 7pm