Meeting occurred via WebEx Teleconferencing

Chair Scott Markow called meeting to order at 7:01 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 (Sahara Ukaegbu, Student Commissioner)

Absent: Tiffany Releford

Staff Present:

Legal Counsel: Melissa Goldmeier

I. PUBLIC FORUM
No attendees for the public forum.

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

III. PRESENTATION ON HATE BIAS CRIMES AND INCIDENTS
Officer Lee, Officer Mitzel and SGT Honablew, from the Howard County Police Department spoke about HBI’s and how statistics are reported, monitored and investigated. The difference between HBI incidents and a Hate Bias Crime. The chart presented separated incidents into different motivations and groups. If the incident is an HBI, a notification letter is sent to OHRE.

Sahara asked about Anti-Gay HBI’s being separated from the other categories. Officer Lee stated he will check with the records section which made the classification to see if he could get the answer. Sahara also asked if SRO’s in school are trained to recognize and assess reports of HBI’s and Hate crimes. Officer Lee stated, Officers go through HBI trainings every year to make sure they are up to date on the handling of HBI’s.

Scott asked about statistics OHRE reports on the Executive Secretary Report, that it does not provide the level of detail that is in the letter presented to OHRE. Yolanda responded, OHRE receives an email with limited information. However, in past conversations with officers, it was confidential information due to them investigating.

Bob asked if incidents in schools are required to be reported to the police or if it could be covered up using privacy, if the student notifies school staff or administration.
Officer Lee responded it would be up to the schools and their policy but there is an SRO at every high school. Yolanda asked about there being a mandate for the School administration to make a report and if kids are aware that they can make a report with the SRO’s. Yolanda recommend SRO’s attend PTA meetings and do presentation so parents can inform their children as well. Officer Lee stated the mandate is a question for the schools, he can check with the SRO Unit to see what information is being offered in schools.

Bianca asked Sahara what information she has received about SRO’s while in HS. Sahara stated she’s never been spoke to by SRO or given any information on the role an SRO play in the school. Scott asked what outreach is done by the police department, so the community is aware to report HBI’s to the police department. The police department has a liaison that works with community groups to provide presentations and meetings to make sure the community is aware. Mabrooka asked who makes the determination if it’s an HBI vs HBI crime. SGT Honablew provided an example of an HBI incident vs an HBI crime. Lynda Earle stated a new law went into effect in October 2020 that makes it a crime to place an item or symbol on the personal or private property of another without the owner’s permission if there is an intent to intimate or threat without consent of the owner of that property.

Scott thanked the Officers for their presentation and working with Human Rights Commission.

IV. **CHAIR’S REPORT**

Elections are in December; three officers need to be elected. The Chair, Vice Chair and Corresponding Secretary. Nominations can be emailed between now and the December meeting to Fatina or Yolanda, or you can nominate someone at the meeting.

Upcoming Annual Retreat to discuss the mission, vision, and purpose statement and decide what area to focus on for the coming year. Scott suggested the retreat be in person on a Saturday morning from 9a-12p. Scott asked if Claudia could possibly be the facilitator for the retreat. Yolanda stated Claudia would not be available, if she cannot find a facilitator, she would be it. Joan moved to have the retreat on January 8th which was seconded by Gab. The January 8th date was approved without opposition.

Yolanda asked if food will be part of the retreat. Scott asked to have a motion to have food or not have food. This would be a continental breakfast. Gab motioned to have food and drinks, seconded by Joan. Food and drinks were approved without opposition. Scott, Mabrooka and Yolanda, will work on the planning.

Two Pre-Hearing Conferences were held this month, neither case settled, both will be going to Public Hearings scheduled to take place in January.

V. **STUDENT REPORT**

Sahara mentioned reaching out to the SRO department within the Howard County Police Department and continuing to research and work on the pamphlet. Sahara stated she will
have a written report with a description of the pamphlet, what has been accomplished in the past month, and going forward what she’s looking forward to.

VI. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY REPORT
Yolanda spoke about the pending Legislation that is before the County Council. Council Bill 85, which deals with several revisions to the Humans Rights Code. The State passed a Source of Income Law last year, as a result, OHRE’s code was not in compliance due to the wording of OHRE’s code. The change was made to be in compliance with the State code. Additionally, cleanup of code 12.207 regarding housing. There was not a commercial leasing discrimination clause in OHRE’s code, the office modeled a provision after the States provision.
The nonexclusive remedy, when someone files in the Circuit Court for Howard county, it closes the administrative process, more people are going to Federal Court. According to the code if one goes to the Circuit Court for Howard County that’s when OHRE should close unless the complainant withdraws their complaint. The change would be to add Circuit Court for Howard County or any court of competent jurisdiction.

Yolanda gave public testimony in front of County Council. Yolanda stated OHRE cannot investigate if someone was discriminated against in a commercial leasing matter. Scott asked if HRC should consider written testimony in support of adopting the commercial leasing. Yolanda stated yes! Scott put in a motion to support it, Gab moved to support making a testimony to the Council, Mabrooka seconded, the written support was approved without opposition.
Yolanda provided general office updates and upcoming events. Bob asked about the LGBTQ workgroup. Yolanda stated the recommendations were sent but will follow up for any movement. Bianca asked if GARE trainings would be available to the commissioners, Yolanda stated she will check and get back to Bianca.

VII. WORKGROUPS
a. LA ALIANZA LATINA:
Gab reported that the Workgroup is continuing to prepare the report and recommendations for the County Executive. The meeting scheduled for November 9th was moved to November 30th.

b. AAPI:
Mabrooka mentioned no new development. The next meeting is November 30th.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS
a. Outreach:
Mabrooka reminded everyone to send her anything they have for the Annual report. Mabrooka would like the first copy finished by the 2nd or 3rd week of December.

b. Nominations Committee:
Peter stated no updates.

c. Awards Committee:
Lynda stated the committee met on November 17th for a debriefing about the HRC Awards Ceremony. The committee discussed what went well and how to improve for next year.

d. Legislative Committee:
County bill CB83 was introduced in County Council, an act to create a police accountability board. Mandated by Maryland police accountability Act, a way of processing allegations of police misconduct and overseeing the police department and their conduct in the community.

The Minimum wage act was also introduced this month. New minimum wage increasing to $14.00 an hr. starting in April and go up $1.00 per hr. each January thereafter. Smaller employers start at $13.00 an hr. and County employees $15.00 an hour.

IX. ADHOC COMMITTEE REPORTS
a. Social and Economic Justice:
Kui mentioned the Social and Economic committee invited Officer Lee which did the presentation on Hate Bias Crimes and Incidents, next speaker for December 16th HRC meeting might be Kiros Auld from the Native American community; discussion was still on going.

b. Immigration:
Joan stated the legislative team is working through the pervasive technical details, and their goal is to be able to have the draft in December.

c. Hate Crimes:
Mabrooka spoke on research the committee is currently working on. What the local school systems are doing related to HBI’s, the system they have in place, and how the local media has covered HBI’s in schools.

X. NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
Jonah stated no new announcements or business.

XI. CLOSED SESSION
Scott mentioned having to move to close session to discuss OHRE CASE 21-04-011. Bianca moved meeting be closed to discuss case and consulting legal counsel. Joan seconded. Motion passed without opposition. Yolanda stopped recording and handed over host duties to Scott.

Open session ended at 8:45 pm.

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 16, 2021 at 7pm