Human Rights Commission
2022 Virtual Retreat Minutes
Saturday, January 8, 2022 9:30 AM-12:00 PM

In Attendance:

Scott Markow (Chair), Bianca Chang, Joan Hash, Robert Ford, Mabrooka Chaudhry, Lynda Earle, Gabriel Terrasa, Kui Zhao, Peter Hwang and Yolanda Sonnier, Executive Secretary.

Welcome

Scott welcomed all the commissioners to the 2022 retreat. He expressed regrets that the retreat couldn’t be in person and requested everyone turn their cameras on to encourage greater participation.

Icebreaker/Check In

Mabrooka led the commission in an icebreaker where each person shared their 1st job and how they would explain to a 5-year-old what their profession is or was prior to retirement. The members all shared.

2022 Goals and Committee Discussion

Scott started the discussion by reviewing the commission’s adopted Vision, Mission and Purpose.

Vision: To Create a county where the human rights of all are respected and protected.

Mission: To cultivate a community where the ideas of equity, inclusion, respect and non-discrimination are interwoven into everyday life.

Purpose: HRC will protect and promote human rights by:

1. Engaging and educating the community;
2. Studying and investigating human rights issues;
3. Proposing and improving policies on human rights; and
4. Interpreting and enforcing the Howard County Human Rights Code.

Scott shared that at the retreat each year, the commission decides what the goals for the upcoming year will be as well as decide on the Ad Hoc Committees. The commission members will be put in breakout rooms with 3 commissioners in each to discuss their recommendations for the goals and ad hoc committees for 2022. Scott indicated that each group should have a person who will report to the commission their small group recommendation.
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The commissioners returned to the main session to share the recommendations from each group. Below is a synopsis of the recommendations from each group:

Group 1:
- Whatever Ad Hoc committees are created, there should be clearly defined goals.
- Social and Economic Justice committee can possibly be integrated into outreach
- Retain Hate Crime committee
- Could be doing more of public education and processes/laws governing HRC
- Create a Public Education Committee

Group 2:
- Mission of Immigration committee has been achieved and can be archived.
- Recommend creating 2 Ad Hoc: Fair Housing and Public Health
- Retain Hate Crime Committee
- Social and Economic Justice Committee should be kept and should include voting rights.

Group 3:
- Immigration committee can be archived because legislation created for both objectives.
- Social and Economic Committee could go under outreach.
- Hate crime and Criminal Justice committee should continue with 2 focuses: students/schools and adult hate crimes.
- Create a Housing/finance/homelessness
- Not sure how prevalent human trafficking is in HoCo and need more information. Speaker was suggested to discuss this.
- Voting – not sure where it should go- outreach or social and economic justice, but it is needed.

Voting of 2022 Goals & Ad Hoc Committees
The commission agreed to have 3 Ad Hoc committees and the options the commission voted on were: Hate Crime, Fair Housing, Social & Economic Justice, Public Health, and Public Education.

After the commissioners voted on the Ad Hoc Committees, it was decided that the 3 Ad Hoc committees are: Hate Crimes, Social and Economic Justice, and Public Education. The Standing Committees of Outreach, Awards, Legislation and Nominating will remain.

Committee Sign Ups
- The commissioners signed up for 1 Standing Committee and 1 Ad Hoc Committee.
- The commissioners who were not present were assigned to committees, if they had not already expressed an interest.
- See the attached 2022 HRC Committee Assignments for the committee rosters.
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Ad Hoc Committees met
- Each Ad Hoc Committee met briefly to elect a chair and possibly select a meeting day and time.
- The chair designation for each committee is included on the attached 2022 HRC Committee Assignments.
- The Public Education Committee will meet the Monday before the HRC Commission meeting at 7:30 pm.

Standing Committees Met
- Each Standing Committee met briefly to elect a chair and possibly select a meeting day and time.
- The chairs are included on the attached 2022 HRC Committee Assignments.
- The Outreach Committee will meet on January 12th at 7:30 pm. A virtual link was requested for the committee members.
- The Awards Committee will meet on January 25th at 7:30 pm. A virtual link was requested for the committee members.

HRC Testimony regarding CB2-2022
Scott indicated the public hearing on CB2 will occur before the HRC monthly meeting and he wanted to ensure the commission was in agreement to support the bill and to have him provide written and oral testimony. CB2 adds Immigration and Citizenship status as protected classes in the Howard County Human Rights Code. Scott will circulate the written testimony for feedback before submission.

Bob made the motion for HRC to support CB2 and for Scott to submit written testimony and oral testimony on behalf of HRC. Kui 2nd the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

Closing Remarks
Scott thanked everyone for their participation today. Scott thanked the retreat planning committee. Scott shared a Jewish phrase that is spoken after Passover each year that translates to “Next Year in Jerusalem” and Scott shared that to say he is hopeful to see everyone in person at the retreat next year.

Yolanda reminded the commissioners to complete the DocuSign document acknowledging receipt of the gift card.

Adjournment
Lynda moved to adjourn the meeting and Gab 2nd the motion. Commissioners unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 12:18pm