

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes

October 13, 2015

6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Darnel Frost.

Present:

Robert Boyd
Morris Fletcher
Darnel Frost, Chair
Denis Hart
Ron Hodges
Josh Lewis
William Winter

Absent:

Romona Miller

City Council Liaison:

Council Member Bob Sears - absent

Other:

Chief Administrative Officer Russell Hawes
Kathie Valentine, City of Kirkwood Administration Department
Pastor David Bennett, Kirkwood United Methodist Church
Gayle McHenry, Executive Director, Shepherd's Center
Geneva Powell, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors, Shepherd's Center

Roll Call

Darnel Frost called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken with attendance reflected above.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Denis Hart and seconded by Morris Fletcher to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2015 meeting as amended. All in favor, motion carried.

Report of City Council Liaison

None.

CAO Comments

None.

Commission Training

Pastor David Bennett introduced himself and provided background information on how he became involved in the meetings held with the Department of Justice in 2008, his role in helping to draft the mediation agreement, and subsequent involvement with the HRC. The mediation agreement provided clarity of purpose and developed a new direction for the HRC. He explained that it was thought that it might be time for the HRC to revision. Two sessions will be held, in November and December, which he will facilitate with the intention of clarifying the role and the task of the HRC. The topics of “what does here look like” and “what does there look like” will be discussed. Copies of the book “Community” by Peter Block were distributed. Commission members were asked to read the book prior to the November meeting. Russ Hawes added that the book was an excellent guide regarding ways to better a community.

Morris Fletcher stated that he felt it was important to have women and minority members on the HRC and that he felt potential new members should participate in the upcoming training sessions.

Shepherd’s Center

(Gayle McHenry, Executive Director, Geneva Powell, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors)

Gayle McHenry and Geneva Powell attended the meeting and spoke on the services the center provides such as transportation to doctor appointments, minor home repairs, classes, trips, etc. They also help people connect with services the center does not provide and are always seeking more volunteers. Their goal is to help seniors be able to stay in their homes.

During the meeting it was suggested that Gayle contact Public Information Officer Beth von Behren Behren and ask that information regarding the center be placed in the city’s E-Newsletter.

Strategic Plan Reports

A.1 – More information needs to be placed on the HRC Facebook page. Darnel Frost intends to post HRC meeting dates.

B.1 – The Strategic Plan will be reviewed/updated in the near future. The 4th Annual Missouri Human Rights Conference will be held on November 6 at the St. Louis University Law School. HRC members were encouraged to attend.

B.3 – Noted that Shepherd’s Center staff had been invited to attend the meeting. The HRC would like to invite Barbara Gadon to attend the February meeting.

C.1 – Darnel Frost suggested that they wordsmith the topics “what does here look like” and “what does there look like” and use that for the essay contest. Robert Boyd distributed copies of the HRC third quarter report at the meeting.

D.1 – Darnel Frost reported that he had met with the Chair of the St. Charles HRC and noted that they are interested in Kirkwood’s LGBT legislation. Denis Hart advised that multiple communities were represented at the Regional HRC meeting (Bellefontaine Neighbors, Ferguson, St. Peters, St. Charles, University City, Kirkwood) who were also interested in the LGBT legislation. Copies of the Kirkwood LGBT legislation were provided. Robert Boyd

asked if Kirkwood's city ordinances or Charter dealt with religious discrimination. Russ Hawes advised that it is federally regulated.

Other

- Russ Hawes reported that the Meacham Park Community Day event was held on Saturday, October 10 and that it was felt it was productive.
- William Winter distributed copies of revised HRC Awards Guidelines and also copies of a petition that he would like residents to sign requesting bus transportation to Nipher Middle School be added by the school district. After discussion, approval the revised guidelines was delayed to the November meeting. Darnel Frost advised that the school district would be more likely to add a bus if the request came from parents of the children in the Meacham Park area and that the number of children affected should be provided to Tom Williams (Superintendent of Schools, R7). Morris Fletcher reminded the Commission that there are other dangerous areas in the city.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on November 10, 2015.

Adjourn

Motion was made by Josh Lewis and seconded by Ron Hodges to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

Robert Boyd, Secretary