

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes

October 11, 2016

6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Denis Hart.

Present:

Robert Boyd, Vice Chair
Morris Fletcher
Denis Hart, Chair
Ron Hodges
Jill Johnson
Amanda Sher, Secretary
William Winter

Absent:

Josh Lewis
Judy Moticka

City Council Liaison:

Council Member Bob Sears - Absent

Chief Administrative Officer:

Russ Hawes

Other:

Kathie Valentine, Administration

Visitors:

Mary Flanery, Jeannie Webdell, Geoff Morrison, Tricia Copeland, Melissa Sandbothe, Steve Mennerick, Don Owen, Lary Mohl, Ben Burkemper, Larry Long, Drew Ehrhardt, Darnel Frost, Dr. Bryan Painter

Roll Call

Roll call was taken with attendance reflected above.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by William Winter and seconded by Amanda Sher to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2016 meeting as amended by Morris Fletcher. All in favor, motion carried.

Introduction of Visitors

Visitors who attended the meeting were asked to introduce themselves.

Waking Up White

Jill Johnson distributed information to the Commission Members on a book entitled "Waking Up White" by Debby Irving that was given to her by Mary Flanery who was in attendance at the meeting.

Strategic Plan Reports

A.1 – Amanda Sher advised that a citizen had commented on the Facebook page that they did not know why the HRC is needed in Kirkwood and that she had responded by mentioning the comments students had made in their essays.

A.4 – Jill Johnson reported that the Neighborhood Caretaker Alert Forms are available and easily seen in all locations in the city, and that she had contacted Russ Hawes requesting copies of forms that had been submitted to the city which she had received.

B.1 – Denis Hart reported that he is attempting to contact the Ferguson HRC to get the date of their next meeting. Morris Fletcher advised that Commission members are also involved with the Eliot Chapel Policing Committee as well as Kirkwood Neighbors United.

B.3 – Commission Members continue to invite community leaders to present at their monthly meetings. It is anticipated that Assistant Principals and students from Kirkwood High School will attend the November meeting.

C.1 – Jill Johnson and Judy Moticka had compiled information identifying six groups and their needs: Women: equal pay, LBGTO, Disabled: housing, transportation, employment, voting access, Youth: achievement gap, hunger, literacy, voter registration, employment, computer access, Elderly: voting access, housing, transportation, computer access, Immigrants: ESL, voter registration, housing, employment. A handout was provided. It was suggested that the Commission Members take time to review the information provided which will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

D.1 – Collaboration is ongoing with other local Human Rights Commissions such as the Ferguson HRC and the Missouri Commission on Human Rights, as well as other groups.

E.3 – Bob Boyd distributed a draft of the HRC third quarter report and requested that Commission Members review it prior to the November meeting. He intends to e-mail all Commissioners a copy of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd report for their review and comments.

Update on High School Involvement with the HRC

Denis Hart reported that Romona Miller and Mike Griffin (Kirkwood High School Assistant Principals) had identified students at Kirkwood High School that were interested in involvement with the HRC, and that they prefer to be immersed in an “issue or topic” such as assisting in the preparation of a report on police stops.

Kirkwood School District Task Force Report to Eliminate the Achievement Gap Report

Presented by Dr. Bryan Painter, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, and Darnel Frost, President of the Kirkwood R7 School Board.

Co-Chairs of the task force, Dr. Bryan Painter and Darnel Frost, presented a report on the achievement gap in the Kirkwood R7 School District. Some things identified in the report were:

- Importance of working together as a community
- Sense of urgency, people have to know they are serious and committed
- Seeking achievement at high levels with peers
- A task force plan with 7 objectives has been developed
- Equity walks/audits, 3 times per year
- Early learning opportunities
- Training for principals and teachers

- A book entitled “Despite the Best Intentions, How Racial Inequality Thrives in Good Schools” – speaks on discipline differences between black and white students
- Striving to hire a diverse staff, as well as providing mentors

Dr. Painter asked Commission Members to contact him if they were interested in participating in the equity walks/audits. Several HRC members expressed an interest in doing so with motion being made by Denis Hart and seconded by Amanda Sher that the HRC participate in the audit. All in favor, motion carried.

Dr. Painter and Darnel Frost responded to numerous questions from guests and Commissioners. They also discussed a recent incident at the high school regarding a student and how the situation was handled by school staff and Administration.

Morris Fletcher complimented Dr. Painter and Darnel Frost on the report.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 9, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

- Disability Seminar Discussion
- HRC presentation and guest speaker topics for 2017

Adjourn

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

Amanda Sher, Secretary