

Human Relations Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 17, 2016

Members Present: Alice Lewis, Parrish Stahl, Jessica Embury, John Hawthorne, Lynn Isaacson-Zolman, and Suzanne Mure.

Members Absent: Rev. John Clemons – excused, and Simon Foster

Ex Officio Present: Valerie Cochran-Toops

Also Present: Jonathan Greene Staff, 2nd Ward City Councilmember Freddie Dancy, and Vice Mayor Derek Dobies

- I. **Call To Order:** By Chairwoman Alice Lewis at 6:30 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:**
- III. **Adoption of the Agenda:** Motion to adopt the Agenda was made by Parrish Stahl, and supported by Jessica Embury. Motion carried.
- IV. **Citizen Comments (3-Minute Limit):** None
- V. **Guest:** None
- VI. **Approval of the Meeting Minutes for July 20, 2016:** Motion made by John Hawthorne to accept the July 20, 2016, meeting minutes as submitted, and supported by Jessica Embury. Motion carried.
- VII. **Community Liason Police Officer:** None
- VIII. **Community Update/Chairperson’s Correspondence:** Chairwoman Lewis spoke with Mayor and City Manager to question issues in the city, and asked them to be at the meeting. However, they were unavailable, but will be at the September meeting. Chairwoman Lewis requested commissioners have their questions ready for them. She will also invite the police chief and councilmembers. Also, she is working on outreach with her church to reach more out the community. Chairwoman Lewis also stated she would be attending the MKL breakfast.
- IX. **Staff Report:** Jonathan Greene stated no complaints were received. He started to work on finance report, but decided to put that on hold since he wants information with and from the study group and agenda to be set before he puts numbers out.
- X. **Committee Reports:**
 - A. Public Relations and Information – Parrish Stahl spoke to the HRC about the Community Picnic on Saturday, August 20, 2016, at Ella Sharp Park. The flier is

out and there is a Media release. He urged members to share also on social media such as facebook to get people out. There will be available a variety of good resources. Parrish asked about the newsletter since it is not on the City's website. Jonathan Greene also mentioned that he will bring copies to the picnic, and will have it on the website. Sue Mure asked if HRC was able to use the Blackboard to announce the picnic and Jonathan Green stated no, but can be addressed. Jessica Embury asked about creating an event on facebook and Parrish stated he will create it.

- B. Policy Committee - John Clemons - none.
- C. Nominating Committee - John Clemons - Chairwoman Lewis stated that a letter was sent to Simon Foster asking him to come to the meeting, and has not received any contact or response from Simon Foster. Parrish Stahl asked if there were any applicants in the "hopper" and Chairwoman Lewis stated yes. John Hawthorne asked about the action to be taken to remove Simon Foster and create an opening on the commission.

A motion was made by John Hawthorne and supported by Parrish Stahl to remove Simon Foster from the HRC membership due to three unexcused absences. The motion carried.

Alice Lewis stated there are two applications on file, and interviews will be held.

- D. Events Committee - Jessica Embury: None.
 - 1. Picnic Committee - Alice Lewis: The committee met and worked hard, and all is set the food, donations. Approximately eight tables assigned, \$500 in donations and 10 cases of water donated. She asked all to bring a passing dish. The clown is reserved, games from the King Center, a bounce house and dunk tank are all reserved. The Welcoming Ceremony and start is at 12 p.m. Chairwoman Lewis asked that Commissioners try to be at the park by 9:30 a.m. to set up. Sack races, Police car and Fire truck will also be there. Also, entertainment and music. This year's event came in under budget.

XI. **Old Business:**

Vice Mayor Dobies discussed the Study Group idea in place to better handle and be involved with the community and city. Vice Mayor Dobies questioned intent of groups with City Council. John Hawthorne stated the intent was to have a few commissioners and councilmembers meet on topics thereby being able to build bridges and help HRC get information to the City Council and bring others in for

input. Explore strategic plan between HRC and City Council in September. Deal with issues and ordinances. Learn from Council what they expect and need from HRC and what HRC to council needs. Financial needs with discussion for the HRC/Council. Jessica Embury asked for a possible separate meeting for discussion prior to September HRC meeting. Vice Mayor Dobies went on to discuss diversity, but the ordinance may need to be updated and equity updates making it more reflective of the community. He also mentioned a diversity plan within City Hall, that \$10,000 was budgeted for HRC. Still an option on the table for possible to hire a contractor. Human Relations between public and City, (i.e., three ways to breakdown such as good and better communications with the newsletter, website, public officer, outreach.) Problem solving with in City Hall, the means, methods who to resolve also an online report with information back that issues was resolved. Organization and relationship building. Incentive for projects. Information access to information and people in need and open data policy. Sue Mure suggested notice of neighborhood meeting by Council for us to try to be there also. Also mentioned concerns that not having information for CBDG funds due to many questions asked why and where funds are going to and why not in their own neighborhoods. Parrish mentioned that HRC used to get the information. John Hawthorne suggested collegial accountability for such issues. Vice Mayor Dobies made several recommendations to HRC also such as neighborhood group/watch. Getting the neighborhoods more fully involved. Alice Lewis to set a date up and was suggested by Jonathan Greene to work with Sharon for max participation.

XII. New Business:

Chairwoman Lewis spoke about the Harold White Breakfast set a date in October. Jessica Embury will call for rates and locations. Looking for date during the week usually at 7:30 a.m.

XIII. Commissioner's Comments:

Jessica Embury: was at emergency needs meeting and that Poverty Exemption that the City has based 100 percent of poverty level, and that people can apply and may qualify for assistance or possible exemption. Will provide further information to the commission. John Hawthorne also mentioned a book on poverty and low income is called Evicted.

XIV. Ex-Officio Comments: none

XV. Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Mure
Secretary