

Human Right Commission Minutes 2020 Retreat

DATE: February 3, 2020

LOCATION: 7 Rockbrook Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22901

Shantell Bingham called the meeting to order at 10:15 am.

ROLL CALL: Lyndele Von Schill, Andy Orban, Ann Smith, Jeanette Abi-Nader, Sue Lewis, Ernest Chambers, Kathryn Laughon, Matthew Tenant, Shantell Bingham, Rob Woodside

Facilitated discussion by Cristine Nardi and Mary Davis from the Center for Non-profit Excellence

- High Functioning Meeting Norms
 - Ms. Nardi led an exercise during which Commissioners identified hopes and fears
 - Hopes
 - More support from the City regarding the office and our relationship.
 - We have one clear policy change presented.
 - Greater clarity and efficiency in our process.
 - To be a meaningful voice for change, heard and respected by City Council and City Manager
 - More visibility with City officials regarding policy recommendations
 - More visibility with the public regarding an interactive dialogue on issues that citizens care about.
 - Get more community members to attend meetings by contacting neighborhood associations, church leaders, and representatives from the underserved populations of Charlottesville.
 - Find ways to be more effective and vocal in our advocacy before City officials.
 - Follow outcomes of individuals bringing issues to the OHR; find out what are the roadblocks to effective remedies (what happens after referrals).
 - Attention and positive response from CPD.
 - Continued/increased opportunity to collaborate among HRC Commissioners on human rights issues.
 - More people attend regularly.
 - We get our policies passed with the help of City Council going along with us.
 - More resolutions.
 - Public and private sector partnerships.
 - Fears
 - Four more years of the Trump Administration.
 - The dance of the Police Review Board.
 - Charlene is leaving. That was an important hub for our work.
 - Policy review(s) are never heard by Council.
 - Continued lack of impact on critically important policies, especially related to L.E.
 - Bogged down in minutiae.
 - NRAO and local services

- Not pursuing the more difficult options for fear of not succeeding.
- Not aiming high enough.
- The end of our impact because of the Council and City Manager.
- Weakening of the OHR role and the Commissions voice and partnership potential.
- Boggled down in minutiae by neo-liberal do-gooders who are worried about making true change.
- Meandering aimlessly from idea to idea.
- That the City doesn't give us the wrong Director.
- The we become more militant.
- Ms. Davis led several discussions and activities that explored team function
- Review of HRC role and responsibilities
 - Ms. Nardi led a discussion around the primary mission and function of the HRC
 - A key theme emerged of improving the effectiveness and impact of policy review and recommendations
- Meeting agenda structure
 - Ms. Nardi led an exercise to review the HRC Regular Meeting agenda structure
 - She shared the following key principles
 - You drive the agenda. The agenda does not drive you.
 - Look forward vs. backwards
 - Watch for signals
 - Commissioners suggested the following recommendations for the Regular Meeting agenda
 - Things to add
 - Board packets should go out to Commissioners one week in advance of meeting
 - Agenda items that are informational only and require no action should be noted as such
 - Agenda items that require action should be noted as such
 - An agenda item that offers the option of creating new ad hoc committees
 - An agenda item to review next steps and actions
 - A moment of silence
 - State the mission at the top of the agenda
 - Things to keep
 - Matters by the public (required)
 - Written staff reports and short discussion
 - Other business (where Commissioners share updates about other meetings)
 - Updates from the Ad hoc committees
 - Materials should be included in board packets in advance
 - Things to lose or improve
 - Other business
 - Some Commissioners felt that this did not contribute toward moving the HRC forward
 - The agenda and attachments should be provided a week beforehand
 - Clarify the difference between business matters and work sessions
 - Move announcements to the end of the meeting
 - Put the most important items first

Review of hopes and fears raised by Commissioners and identification of goals – Charlene Green

- Key themes that emerged from a review of the Hopes

- More City support
- More visibility and attendance at meetings
- Policy effectiveness
- Ideas for 2020 Goals
 - Continue writing letters of support
 - Coupled with a better understanding of the supported groups
 - Grounded in the background work of the HRC
 - Motivate City Council and the City Manager to support the HRC
 - Pursue FEPA status
 - Advocate for response and action the City when providing recommendations
 - Increased public awareness
 - Improved HRC member attendance at meetings
 - Have clear priority City policy issue areas
 - ADA access for deaf and hard of hearing at City Council
 - LGBTQ+ employee rights and benefits
 - Equitable policing
 - Explore relationship with to the Civilian Review Board
 - Explore collaboration with the People’s Coalition
 - Explore HRC’s role in community/police relations
 - Housing
 - Potential advocacy around HB6 and HB357
 - Explore relationship with the Charlottesville Low-income Housing Coalition
 - Explore relationship with the Housing Advisory Committee

Discussion regarding report to City Council on February 18, 2020

- Review of key achievements by the HRC – Shantell Bingham
- Review of education & awareness and facilitation & leadership actions – Charlene Green
- Review of service provision data and emerging trends – Todd Niemeier

Status of the OHR and Charlene’s departure

- Charlene provided a summary of her reasons for moving on

HRC Chair leads closed discussion

Meeting Adjourned: 3:10 pm.

ACTION ITEMS

- **All Commissioners**
 - **Follow-up meeting to continue retreat discussion**
 - **Wednesday, February 5, 2020, from 6pm to 8pm**
 - **Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church (Aldersgate Room)**
 - **1901 Thomson Road**
- **Todd**
 - **Post public notice for 2/5 meeting on Monday, February 3.**
 - **Type minutes from retreat and return to HRC before 2/5 meeting.**