HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL

Board Minutes

June 24, 2019

Members Present: Mr. Paul Bradley, Ms. Cherish Cronmiller, Rev. Dr. Sherry Gale, Mr. Brian LaDuca, Petey Peterson, and Mr. Tom Wahlrab

Members Absent: Ms. Pamela Cone, Ms. Wanda Sloan, Ms. Yvette Kelly-Fields

HRC Staff Present: Ms. Julia Acosta-Grommon, Ms. Erica Fields, Ms. Chrisondra Goodwine, Ms. Monica Harris, Ms. Adrienne Heard, Mr. Jared Grandy

City Staff Present: Mr. Martin Gehres, Law Department; Ms. Ariel Walker, Director of City Commission Offices

ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Roll was called and a motion was made by Mr. Paul Bradley and seconded by Mr. Tom Wahlrab to approve the minutes from June 3, 2019.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A motion was made by Ms. Cherish Cronmiller and seconded by Mr. Brian LaDuca to open the Executive Session of the HRC Board Meeting to discuss pending litigation. Motion carried. Roll was called for this purpose, with the following members responding with “YES” to roll call: Mr. Paul Bradley, Ms. Cherish Cronmiller, Rev. Dr. Sherry Gale, Mr. Brian LaDuca, Petey Peterson, and Mr. Tom Wahlrab.

- Following discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Cherish Cronmiller and seconded by Mr. Paul Bradley to close the Executive Session of the HRC Board meeting. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried. The regular business of the HRC Board was continued.

- In the Case of Miami Valley Fair Housing, Inc. v. Pinnacle Dayton, Mr. Dennis Tatkovic, Owner, and Melody, Agent, Case No. 3831H, a motion was made by Ms. Cherish Cronmiller and seconded by Mr. Brian DaLuca to accept the recommendation the Board approves the “Probable Cause” finding. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

- Erica Fields provided the Board with an update on HRC activities/programs:
Tom asked about the amount of cases we have per year and what was considered a good number. Erica advised him that the number of cases HUD wants you to close is based on the population of the City and it hasn’t changed for a while but we are due for a Performance Assessment Review. HUD monitors everything through HEMS and we will be given a report which will be shared with the Board.

- Erica discussed the Executive Session portion of the Board meetings:
  - The Board discussed at length their ability to enter into Executive Session to discuss civil right cases. Erica Fields has a call into HUD to get further assistance and guidance on a confidentiality requirement for FHAP cases and the ability of the HRC Board to enter into Executive Session.
  - Per the Ohio Sunshine Law, Ohio Boards and Commissioners are only permitted to enter into Executive Session for particular reasons.
  - Martin Gehres from the City’s law Department advised that the HRC is a public board so because of that our decision ability and our deliberations are required to be public; however, the investigation is confidential. The Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC) operates the same way.
  - As the Board agreed that it is imperative we can assure confidentiality of aggrieved parties and details of their cases.
  - Cherish Cronmiller noted that not being able to enter into Executive Session to discuss complaints will limit people from coming forward and there should be exceptions for entities such as the HRC.
  - Martin Gehres said that Ohio’s Sunshine Laws are liberally construed to allow public access.
  - Tom Wahlrab and Rev. Dr. Sherry Gale expressed interested in HUD or the City Law Department providing guidance on how to move forward and if restructuring of the Board would be required.
  - Paul Bradley asked if we could have quasi-judicial board hearings at 11:30 and the Board committee meetings starting at noon. Martin Gehres will look into it for him.
  - Erica Fields will continue to do research on how other HRC’s conduct their meetings.

- Erica provided an update on the Board By-laws and Rules and Regulations:
  - A revised version will be provided for Board Review at the August 5th meeting.
  - The Board discussed at length the ongoing role of the Board as it relates to the City, HRC and overall community.
  - Brian LaDuca offered to facilitate a special meeting with the Board to discuss their overall vision and provide clarity on role and objectives.
  - Erica will work Jo to coordinate a time and place.

- Erica facilitated a conversation with the Board regarding a report prepared for the Dayton Public School Board by community members supporting English Language Learners (ELL) students:
  - The report outlines challenges and concerns regarding the inclusion and support of immigrant and refugee students within DPS.
  - The Board was asked to review and sign to show support of the recommendations.
The Board discussed at length the report and next steps. They are interested in further discussions with DPS and Welcome Dayton to learn more regarding both the challenges and recommendations. The Board expressed the importance of being careful not to give the impression that English language learners take priority over every other student in need of additional resources and support from the district. Equitable treatment must look at all students to include those that are displaced by the tornados, minorities, and students residing in areas of high concentrated poverty.

Erica wants the Board to have more information before making any decisions. She will send the report for Board review and asked that feedback be provided for a follow up conversation.

- Chrisondra Goodwine provided a policy update for the Affirmative Action Assurance Program. Updates include:
  - The length of the Affirmation Action Certification was expanded from one to three years.
  - The Board voted on the Affirmative Action Certification update. A motion was made by Paul Bradley and seconded by Brian LaDuca. The vote was unanimous. Motion passed.

- Erica Fields provided an update on Board membership and elections for the upcoming New Chairperson
  - Rev. Dr. Sherry Gale’s term expires August 20, 2019
  - Paul Bradley expressed his interest on becoming the Chairperson and having a larger conversation on the election and Chairperson role at the next meeting
  - The Board will vote at the August 5th meeting

- **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.