

## HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL

### Board Minutes

August 3, 2020

**Members Present:** Mr. Paul Bradley, Ms. Wanda Sloan, Mr. Tom Wahlrab, Zachary Zugelder and D. Lynn Demmings

**Members Absent:** Ms. Pamela Cone and Brian LaDuca,

**Staff Present:** Ms. Chrisondra Goodwine, Ms. Joann Mawasha, Mr. Senay Semere, Jacob Davis and Lezlee Gerren

### **ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Roll was called, and a motion was made by Mr. Zachary Zugelder and seconded by Mr. Tom Wahlrab to approve the minutes from June 4, 2020. The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

### **CASES**

No cases to present at this time. Jacob Davis, Senior Civil Rights Investigator gave a brief overview of the cases currently being in progress. There are fourteen active cases: six in public hearing; two in conciliation; and six in the investigation process. In addition, there are two cases under consideration pending further investigation and formal complaint signed.

Board Comment: The spreadsheet provided is a good way to track the cases. Residents in the City of Dayton should continue to feel confident they could file complaint with HRC concerning housing, employment, credit and public accommodations discrimination.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE:**

- In Erica's absence, Joann Mawasha provided an update on the Board about a partnership we have with NCCJ and Gem City Market to sponsor events entitled Collective Community Conversations:
  - Zoom was utilized to provide these town-hall style meetings due to COVID-19 and social distancing.
  - The Community Conversation series presented time-sensitive topics due to the community racial unrest. The topics included alternative policing, self-care, and how to deal with trauma during these times, and race as a public health crisis.
  - The first one was held on June 25, the second one was on July 8, and the final session brought everyone back to do a report out of the recommendations, next steps, and calls for action for tangible change.
  - More than 100 participants in total attended the town-hall meetings.
  - There was an overall good turnout with excellent information shared.
  - The plan is to continue these conversations on Zoom.

- Joann reported that the City of Dayton cut its budget due to COVID. This caused five vacant positions in the HRC. The HRC will use vacancy saving dollars in order to continue to provide two temporary workers hired until the end of the year. At which point, justifications for new permanent hires will be submitted.
- Joann provided the Board with an update on additional funding received by HUD:
  - It is for education and outreach in this new normal around fair housing.
  - Marketing dollars to develop an app for folks to call in with housing, employment, credit or public accommodation complaints. Many of the population we work with do not have access to computers but they have phones so this will enhance their ability to obtain services.
  - HUD wants to make sure that agencies such as ours are educated the community and especially COVID affected communities.
  - The grant activities will be launched this month.
- Joann provided updates to the Board about Welcome Dayton:
  - The staff from Welcome Dayton have been busy steering folks into resources in the community. With people at home more, there are specific needs that have been identified. One of which is mental health needs. People seem to be less reluctant to ask for help. Our work and communication with the YMCA has identified and increase in cases.
  - Comments/discussion from the Board: With school enrollment mostly on-line at this time, what can we do to help with the different learning formats? This is especially concerning with children with IEPs that have special needs. It appears that more people are volunteering which is a good commentary about our humanity in helping others. We need to learn more about how we can reach each other in these times.
- Ms. Wanda Sloan gave an informal contribution concerning the services for the Blind. The national Federation for the Blind just had a convention and there are quite a few services/materials available especially due to the COVID outbreak. HRC needs to have referral information concerning services for the blind to provide to those in need. Wanda will send the link and contact information to Joann.
- Chris gave an update on the BTA Program:
  - Chrisondra stated that HRC is waiting on approval for the personal net worth increase in the Procurement Enhancement Program.
  - There is a presentation forthcoming at the next board meeting on the BTA Program. Chrisondra asked the Board to review the PowerPoint provided in the board packet for next month.
  - There has been a loss of staff from three to one. The Senior Compliance Officer is gone however; there will be temporary workers to help soon.
  - There are three HUD Projects, twenty-four PEP Projects and five Compliance of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. Anything the city can pay for is what they are working on.
  - The City Bot System, which shows payment in real time, catches compliance issues early.
  - Board Comment: Good report, good information and commendations to you for your good work.

- Senay gave an update on MBAC:
  - MBAC will present their program at a later board meeting. Brian wanted to learn more about the different areas of HRC but he is not present at this meeting so this presentation has been postponed.
  - Senay is planning with Chrisondra to provide digital workshops and trainings on how to be certified and go to the next level. This is an effort to bring expertise from state and local presenters.
  - Senay wanted to promote and celebrate a Micro-Enterprise Minority Based Grant from Development Ohio for \$10,000. This is an opportunity to provide grants and loans, which will be available through MBAC.
  - Mask distribution with the Downtown Dayton Coop has been very successful.
  - There is a grant for the trucking coop up to \$5,000. This is to build and promote the coop.
  - Board Comment: The on-line workshop information sessions are an excellent idea to reach more people. In addition, it was recommended that it might be good idea to contact Senator Sherrod Brown for federal expertise on small business information presentations.
  
- Joann presented that Erica would like to plan a Board/Staff Strategic Planning Session:
  - This would be designed to investigate how we want to position ourselves as a connector to the community and city.
  - Moving forward, what are our roles as an agency and board?
  - Board Comment: Lezlee please identify a time for planning this session.

Any questions or concerns from the Board? None

Any Citizens Comments? None

Comments from the Board for the Good of the Order: Staff is working very hard in difficult times. Those left in the office are stepping up in this edgy time, poised to continue and providing necessary services. Thank you for collaborating locally and advancing the cause gracefully. Staff steps into the gaps and reaches out to partner agencies. An example of staying active and involved during time sensitive moments is the staff participation in the 5-Point Plan on Police Reform.

## ADJOURNMENT

- With no more business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.