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.
- Bogged 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
  o Continue writing letters of support
    • Coupled with a better understanding of the supported groups
    • Grounded in the background work of the HRC
  o Motivate City Council and the City Manager to support the HRC
  o Pursue FEPA status
  o Advocate for response and action the City when providing recommendations
  o Increased public awareness
  o Improved HRC member attendance at meetings
  o 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
  o 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
  o Follow-up meeting to continue retreat discussion
  o Wednesday, February 5, 2020, from 6pm to 8pm
  o Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church (Aldersgate Room)
  o 1901 Thomson Road
• Todd
  o Post public notice for 2/5 meeting on Monday, February 3.
  o Type minutes from retreat and return to HRC before 2/5 meeting.