

DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

The Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) met on December 16, 2025, at 6:32 p.m., with Chairman Mishoe Sudler presiding. Members present were Ms. Brinkley, Ms. White, Ms. Mullen, and Mr. Lott. Mr. Fleming and Mr. Faust were present.

Staff members present were Ms. Wheeler.

OPEN FORUM

The Open Forum was held at 6:32 p.m., prior to commencement of the Dover Human Relations Meeting.

There was no one present wishing to speak during the Open Forum.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Ms. Brinkley moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Faust, and unanimously carried.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Mr. Faust moved to adopt the minutes from the Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) meeting on October 21 2025. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mullen and unanimously carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATES

Assessment

Dr. Mishoe Sudler distributed an Intake Form to members (**Attachment #1**) and explained that the Dover Human Relations Commission was required to complete an annual assessment of the Commission and its committees. He noted that the Assessment Committee was responsible for the tools and measurements used to evaluate Commission activities. He stated that the annual assessment was due and should be reported to City Council at the second meeting in January. He acknowledged that the Commission was relatively new following COVID-19 and recent member transitions, but emphasized the importance of continuing the Commission's work. He reviewed the annual assessment template, noting that the form would list the Dover Human Relations Commission, its members, Ms. Hall as liaison, and Ms. Crystal Wheeler as committee secretary. The assessment would include the Commission's mission and vision, as well as goals for each committee, including the Assessment Committee, School Programs Committee, and other standing committees. He noted that he and Commissioner Mullen would work on the Assessment Committee and that Commissioner Brinkley may also join pending confirmation.

Ms. Mullen stated that there was no report.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. Brinkley clarified that she would be joining the Assessment Committee.

Community Programs

Dr. Mishoe Sudler reported that he had met with residents of Barrister's Place and had continued

communication with residents, who expressed interest in ongoing engagement and sharing ideas to improve their neighborhood. He stated that he would coordinate with District Commissioners Ms. White and Mr. Faust to continue outreach and offered to share contact information with residents. He discussed community concerns regarding individuals utilizing medians for panhandling, noting the need for compassionate and respectful engagement with underrepresented populations. He referenced discussions within the Second District and City Council about exploring non-enforcement approaches that focus on connecting individuals with immediate resources rather than exerting authority. He explained that providing on-site access to existing resource information, similar to the resource cards distributed by Commissioner Fleming, could help individuals receive assistance at the time of need. He stated that City Council may look to the Commission to assist with this effort and emphasized the importance of addressing community distress in ways that support both physical and mental well-being while uplifting the city.

Mr. Faust stated that approximately four (4) weeks prior, 211 resource cards were distributed to commissioners and City Council members. He noted that additional cards were available as needed and encouraged members to contact him by phone or email to request more. He emphasized that distributing the 211 cards was a positive way to provide resources to individuals experiencing homelessness and panhandling. He added that the cards were available in both English and Spanish.

Ms. Mullen suggested reaching out to the Bridge Clinic at the James Williams State Service Center, noting that its mobile unit conducts outreach to tent communities and could help distribute information and resources.

Dr. Mishoe Sudler noted that the Department of Health and Social Services operates a mobile unit that provides resources and conducts assessments in communities, and stated that he would reach out to them when possible.

Ms. Mullen requested 211 resource cards, noting that she has a contact with whom she could share the information.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. Mullen stated that the name of the business was the Bridge Clinic.

Mr. Fleming stated that he continues to distribute 211 resource cards to individuals he encounters and asks whether they are familiar with the service, providing cards as needed.

Ms. Mullen noted that while the 211 resource cards are a helpful tool, challenges remain in ensuring individuals fully understand and can access the services when they call.

Mr. Lott stated that in helping the homeless, a system similar to the one used for expanding foster homes could be duplicated, focusing on finding homes for homeless individuals. He mentioned that some people would be willing to open their homes if compensated and believed that such a program could greatly reduce the homeless population.

Mr. Faust stated that Wesley's Church provides items for the homeless for pickup. He suggested the city place a small box outside City Hall stocked with hygiene items, snacks, and other essentials, allowing individuals to access them freely without requiring assistance from city employees.

Mr. Lott stated that while the city has limited capacity to address homelessness, a state-run program could significantly reduce the homeless population. He suggested a system similar to foster care, where individuals willing to open their homes would be matched with homeless individuals through case workers and screening to ensure appropriate placements. He noted that some residents, including himself, might be hesitant to host someone they do not know. He stated that they all encounter homeless individuals every day, noting that some resist structure despite family members wanting them to return home or stay in a safe environment at night.

Dr. Mishoe Sudler acknowledged that while they could not provide housing, the city could explore ways to support homeless or underserved populations. He noted that efforts to boost morale and provide encouragement could help individuals choose to break cycles of homelessness, emphasizing that engagement and support could make a meaningful difference.

Mr. Lott stated that he would do better with community events based on things that they orchestrated themselves.

Dr. Mishoe Sudler believed that they had some type of leg room to be able to host some events that would help with the relations in their communities because that was what they were supposed to do.

Ms. White referenced previous comments from Mr. Lott about housing and noted that families wishing to host homeless individuals would need insurance, similar to foster care, which could be costly. She cited a situation in Pennsylvania where a large building was repurposed to house individuals, with city, state, and government collaboration, which successfully alleviated homelessness in that area. She suggested that Delaware, particularly Kent County, could similarly repurpose a building to provide homeless individuals with medical care, cash assistance, and food support, creating a family-like environment. She stated that while events are useful, she prefers engaging directly with community members by asking what they need and how she can assist, emphasizing listening to them rather than speaking at them. She stated that instead of letting an idle building sit unused, Mr. Hugg could provide a single structure to start a housing initiative for the homeless. She emphasized that having approval from Mr. Hugg was essential to begin such a project.

Responding to Ms. White, Mr. Faust believed that council would have to approve that and that Mr. Hugg did not have the power to give property.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. White clarified that Mr. Hugg has access to give them direction for Community Development Grants.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. White stated that they would clearly communicate their needs to Mr. Hugg, as he has the resources to provide them.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. White clarified that they were not discussing an event, but rather requesting that Mr. Hugg provide a building free and clear to the community. She noted that community development funds, such as those available downtown, could support the project. She added that having a dedicated building, as Mr. Lott suggested, would reduce the need for homeless

individuals to stay in residents' homes, avoiding insurance and other logistical challenges, and allowing the necessary resources to be centralized

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. White stated that she would have no problem heading up that project.

Responding to Ms. White, Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that he would expect to hear back from her regarding her efforts to communicate with Mr. Hugg.

School Programs

Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated there were no significant updates on school programs but shared an announcement regarding the City of Dover's ongoing partnership with the Downtown Delaware State University (DSU) community to promote an inclusive collaboration. He noted that DSU holds community events at least twice a year and has consistently invited the Commission to participate and help promote these events to the broader community. He also mentioned an upcoming DSU event called the "Inspired Day of Service," which supported state scholarship requirements and emphasized the community's commitment to supporting youth education.

Responding to Ms. Brinkley, Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that he did not have the dates of the community events; however, they were posted online at the Delaware State University website.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Mr. Lott stated that he would like to be on the Community Programs committee as well as still work with the School Program committee.

Ms. White stated that there was no report.

He suggested to the family that if their main concern was the future of their student, particularly regarding scholarships and participation in activities, they should continue reaching out to institutions. He advised keeping records, videos, and other documentation of the student's achievements, as opportunities such as walk-on scholarships may still be available after high school. He emphasized that the family should explore all scholarship possibilities and noted that some students were considering attending a Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU). He noted that Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) recognize walk-on students and hidden talent, and opportunities depend on the effort families put into supporting their child. He emphasized that the primary goal was ensuring the student received a quality education, ideally debt-free, and that there were institutions available to help guide them along that path.

Ms. White believed that in the school system, starting from the elementary level up to the college level, a lot of life skills have been eliminated.

Ms. White stated that U. S. Senator Lisa Blunt Rochester does a lot for Kent County, as far as schools and housing, and there is a lot of state housing. He noted that she does not believe in waiting when she knows that they could move forward. She stated that she believed in action, success, and solving problems, and she goes where the help is at, and she does not take no for an answer. She added that they have been promised a lot of things, and they would put them on the back burner. She stated that she believes in action, success, and problem-solving, and emphasized that she does not take "no" for an answer.

By-laws

Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that the bylaws had been posted online and needed to be reviewed. He noted that a vote would be required to either approve them as written or make any necessary edits.

Finance

Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that there were no new updates as far as the Finance Committee. He noted that they still have a remaining balance of \$3,000, which they had started with, every year, and that they have not made any purchases.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. White stated that she needed more cards with both phone numbers on each card.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. Brinkley believed that the order for business cards was put in since she had to verify that her information was correct; she has not received the physical cards yet.

Ms. Wheeler stated that she would verify if Ms. Brinkley's business cards were in and order her shirt as well.

Ms. White stated that she had obtained her notary and will travel.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. Wheeler stated that each individual in the City Clerk's Office has obtained their notary.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Mr. Fleming stated that he would like to serve on the School Program Committee, since his background would help in that area.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Ms. Brinkley clarified that she would serve on the Assessment Committee, By-Laws Committee, and the Finance Committee.

Ms. Mullen stated that there was no report.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Mr. Fleming stated that he would like to be added to the Community Programs Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Faust requested an update on the two (2) open Commission slots and suggested contacting the council representatives of the respective districts to help fill them. He also discussed fundraising, noting he had briefly spoken with Dr. Mishoe Sudler. He recommended consulting the city attorney to determine whether the Commission was covered as a nonprofit or needs to apply for nonprofit status to avoid potential tax issues. He further noted the need to clarify financial procedures for fundraising, including whether a separate account was required and who would be accountable for the funds. He stated that he had sent an email several months ago but had not received a response from the Mayor's Office or City Council. He emphasized that if the Commission intended to conduct fundraisers in the upcoming year, it was important to obtain clear guidance on what was legally permissible before proceeding.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Mr. Faust stated that he would reach out to Mayor Christiansen and mentioned that he had sent an email several months ago to the Mayor and City Council.

Responding to Mr. Faust, Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that he had discussed fundraising with Mayor Christiansen, who was supposed to provide guidance on what the Commission could and could not do, as well as any applicable procedures.

Responding to Dr. Mishoe Sudler, Mr. Faust stated that he would send an email to Mayor Christiansen and CC Dr. Mishoe Sudler to ensure he was kept informed of the questions that needed to be addressed.

Responding to Ms. Mullen, Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that the discussion on fundraising was not tied to a specific project. He noted that the Commission wanted to understand the procedures for fundraising through the city and how funds could be utilized. Whether raising funds or applying for grants, there were requirements regarding the purpose, allocation of proceeds, and other procedural details. The goal is to determine what types of projects the Commission could undertake based on the funding it could collect.

Mr. Faust stated that the \$3,000 in the Dover Human Relations Commission's budget could not be used for donations, such as for back-to-school efforts. He noted that the funds could be used for training, business cards, water, and basic committee functions, and added that the Commission does not have discretionary funds like the City Council.

Responding to Ms. Mullen, Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that they do have permission to spend the fundraiser money.

Ms. Brinkley stated that at some point, once all of that was established, the bylaws would have to be created on how the money was spent.

Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that there were a few items that they were waiting on before they could think about putting them into the bylaws. He noted that fundraising would be a new dynamic for the Commission, and fundraising would need to go into those bylaws.

Ms. Brinkley stated there was no report.

Responding to Ms. White, Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that, as a city body, fundraising and having a treasurer would fall under the city's oversight. He noted that the Commission would need to determine how to operate within city procedures, as the city likely already had established processes for such activities.

Ms. Brinkley stated that if the Commission does not need to file for 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, the city's existing procedures should suffice. However, if filing were required, they would need to establish a board, including a treasurer.

Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that they would wait to hear from Mayor Christiansen regarding what fundraising or other activities would be possible, noting that most actions would also require City Council approval.

Responding to Ms. Brinkley, Dr. Mishoe Sudler stated that there was an opportunity for the Commission to meet as a whole with City Council to understand expectations and discuss moving

forward, but no meeting had been scheduled. He noted that the Commission would need to request the meeting, typically through their liaison, and expressed hope that it could be arranged soon.

Responding to Ms. Brinkley, Dr. Mishoe Sudler clarified that if Mr. Hugg did not schedule the requested meeting, the Commission could invite him to attend one (1) of their meetings to address their questions and concerns.

Responding to Ms. White, Dr. Mishoe Sudler clarified that while constituents may want to attend Commission meetings, the Commission cannot require their attendance. He noted that there was no need to entice participation, as meetings are advertised and open to the public. He added that, unlike City Council, attendance may be low, which he was not upset about. He also explained that constituents have online access to meetings, the doors are unlocked for the community, and that the police are neither promoted nor present at Commission meetings.

Responding to Ms. White, Ms. Brinkley stated that a constituent had requested live access via Webex and noted that the meeting link was included with all agendas.

Mr. Faust stated that a library of past meetings was kept for the constituents to review.

Open Discussion

No topics were discussed during the open discussion.

ADJOURNMENT BY 7:00 P.M.

Chairman Mishoe Sudler moved for adjournment of the Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) meeting, hearing no objection, the meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Travis Mishoe Sudler, I
Chair

TMS/cw

Attachments

Attachment #1 – Intake Form