



# CITY OF WHEELING HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

1500 Chapline Street, Room 305  
Wheeling, WV 26003

## COMMISSIONERS

Diana Bell, LSW

Joseph R. Blalock

Frank Calabrese

Rev. Ralph W. Dunkin

Rita Gupta

Karen Kangisser

Rosemary Ketchum

Loma Nevels

Anthony Sunseri

## Wheeling Human Rights Commission

Regular meeting of the Wheeling Human Rights Commission: March 19, 2019.

Commissioners present: Bell, Calabrese, Dunkin, Gupta, Kangisser, Ketchum and Nevels.

Commissioners absent: Blalock, and Sunseri.

City of Wheeling Staff present: Prager and Thompson.

## CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, the business meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by Chairman Calabrese.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Regular meeting: February 19, 2019. The minutes had been previously emailed. Commissioner Bell motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Kangisser. The motion passed.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

**SWPALS 2018 Education and Outreach Project** Ms. Thompson said that after attending the Health & Wellness Fair, the HRC is now up to **56.5** hours of education and outreach, exceeding the commitment of **33.75** hours for 2018. The additional hours will be forwarded to SWPALS if they will allow credit for them. SWPALS has not heard yet about the 2019 grant.

**Black History Month, February 2019** Chairman Calabrese noted that the Community should be proud to have had so many awareness events. He asked if anyone had attended any of the events. Commissioner Kangisser stated that she went to the NAACP Meet and Greet event and that an exhibit was mentioned by the moderator that she wished she would have seen, and that it would be great to have it displayed at WVNCC. Commissioner Bell suggested that the display could be used at any time, not necessarily just February, and to contact Mr. Darryl Clausell about putting it up again. Chairman Calabrese added that he has a restored life size painting of Martin Luther King, Jr. and there was discussion of using schools as display locations.

**Fair Housing Month, April 2019** Ms. Thompson reminded that the HRC has secured six billboards in and around the City's low-moderate income neighborhoods for Fair Housing Month, and stated that the theme given to Lamar for the billboards is "Creating Opportunity for Fair Housing". Lamar is working on the design. In addition, the City Council will issue a Fair Housing Month Proclamation during its meeting at noon on April 2, and Ms. Prager suggested that some Commissioners may wish to attend to accept it for a photo. Ms. Thompson added that the WV HRC's website states that there will be a Fair Housing Conference in Clarksburg on April 30, but further details are to be determined.

**WVNCC Health & Wellness Fair, March 5, 2019 from 11:00am to 1:00pm** Ms. Thompson stated that Commissioners Ketchum and Bell joined her to represent the HRC at the fair, and she listed the information and items that were retrieved from the table by attendees. The HRC's door prize was a \$25 gift card to the WVNCC bookstore. Commissioner Bell commended Ms. Thompson that the table looked nice and professional; and Commissioner Ketchum offered that despite low attendance, the event is a good opportunity to engage the community, as well as for agencies to engage each other.

**HRC Collaboration with National Alliance on Mental Illness Greater Wheeling (NAMI)** Chairman Calabrese asked Commissioner Ketchum to report. Commissioner Ketchum stated that she had met with Chairman Calabrese and Amy Gamble, and provided details regarding the opportunity for HRC to partner with NAMI to offer the Mental Health First Aid training. The actual cost is \$170 per person to host the training, but the charge is reduced significantly for NAMI to \$30 per person, which includes a training booklet. The HRC is being asked to commit \$1,000 to sponsor a training in May, which is also Mental Health Awareness Month, and that would cover the training for approximately 34 individuals in the

community. The class size is limited to 35 individuals, and there is typically a wait list. There was discussion. Ms. Prager recommended that if the HRC is interested in sponsoring this training, the funds should come from the SWPALS funding, as CDBG funds may limit who would be able to take the class. Commissioner Dunkin made a motion that the HRC sponsor the NAMI-hosted Mental Health First Aid training, in the amount of \$1,000, and that the first nine seats be reserved for the members of the HRC to attend. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bell. Motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Ketchum offered to work with Amy Gamble to find a date that works best for the HRC in May.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Current Budget/Treasurer Report** Ms. Thompson reported that the HRC currently has Fiscal Years' 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 CDBG funding totaling \$15,313.54, and SWPALS reimbursement funding totaling \$2,528.09, for a grand total of \$17,841.63 in available funding. Major expenditures already committed but unpaid are \$413 for the Black History Month ad and \$3,000 for the Fair Housing Month billboards. Once these payments are made, the HRC will still have a total availability of \$14,428.63, keeping in mind that the HRC also just committed \$1,000 of that to sponsor the NAMI training.

**Future Budget Discussion** Chairman Calabrese stated that he requested this discussion after seeing the City's General Fund budget in the newspaper, which reduced the HRC's budget from \$5,000 in Fiscal Year 2018 to \$0 in Fiscal Year 2019; but that he now understands this to be a bookkeeping correction, and not a funding cut. The HRC is funded with CDBG, not General Fund. Ms. Prager explained that the HRC's expenses are directly budgeted and paid through the CDBG allocation, so when the General Fund budget shows any amount for the HRC, it is always zeroed out at the end of the year.

**Citizen Inquiry/Complaint Activity Log through March 15, 2019** Ms. Thompson stated that one housing complaint had been offered but as the potential complainant is being denied a mailbox, she requested to pick it up, and then neglected to do so. Referrals were made to Legal Aid and Altenheim as necessary for a senior citizen, and to EEOC and WV HRC for a citizen who is employed outside the city limits.

**THOSE WISHING TO BE HEARD:**

There was no one wishing to be heard.

**REMARKS FROM MEMBERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:**

Commissioner Kangisser asked if the HRC would commit themselves to self-education for a year. There was discussion including that this could be as simple as 10 or 15-minute presentations from community organizations at the HRC's monthly meetings, and how this type of information would be beneficial. Commissioner Kangisser motioned that the HRC commit to 3-4 trainings for themselves per year by outside agencies. Commissioner Bell seconded, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Nevels announced that she would be a panelist on Thursday, March 21 at the Celebration of Women 2019 at Ohio University Eastern, and that Jessica Lynch is the keynote speaker. She offered that she will insert what she can per the HRC's ordinance.

Commissioner Bell stated that being a member of the HRC is always part of her credentials wherever she is involved.

Commissioner Ketchum thanked the HRC for recognizing the work of NAMI. She also spoke about Project ID, a nonprofit organization that is new to the Northern Panhandle, which helps individuals with no ID documents to secure them at no cost. It is an incredible opportunity for members of the HRC or the community to volunteer to help a vulnerable population.

Commissioner Gupta was present for the meeting but requested for the record to show that she exited during the Commissioners' remarks.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business Commissioner Dunkin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:56pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank Calabrese  
Chairperson

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