



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: April 16, 2019.

Commissioners present: Bell (remotely), Blalock, Calabrese, Dunkin, Gupta, Kangisser, Ketchum, Nevels and Sunseri.

Commissioners absent: (none)

City of Wheeling Staff present: Prager and Thompson.

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, the business meeting was called to order at 12:02 p.m. by Chairman Calabrese.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Regular meeting: March 19, 2019. The minutes had been previously emailed. Commissioner Dunkin motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Nevels. The motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

SWPALS 2018 Education and Outreach Project Ms. Thompson stated that this item has been kept on the agenda, while we await information about a 2019 grant, and reminded that the HRC met **56.5** hours of education and outreach, exceeding the commitment of **33.75** hours for 2018. The last reimbursement is pending from SWPALS.

Fair Housing Month, April 2019 Ms. Thompson stated that there was a Fair Housing Proclamation read aloud at City Council during the April 2, 2019 meeting, and that three members of the HRC attended to receive it, including Commissioners Nevels, Kangisser, and Ketchum. Additionally, Ms. Thompson provided copies of the Fair Housing Billboard of which six were posted around the City for the month of April. A copy of an article on HUD's website was provided announcing the campaign to protect people from sexual harassment in Fair Housing. Finally, Ms. Thompson provided information from the WV HRC's Fair Housing Conference in Clarksburg on April 30. Chairman Calabrese encouraged any who wanted to attend to do so, and suggested carpooling if possible. Commissioner Gupta questioned whether people would go in the morning or the night prior, and indicated that she may be interested. There was discussion, however no determination was made. Commissioner Dunkin motioned that if staff or Commissioners wish to attend, the HRC should cover the cost of mileage, hotel, and meals. Commissioner Sunseri seconded. The motion carried.

HRC Collaboration with National Alliance on Mental Illness Greater Wheeling (NAMI) Chairman Calabrese asked Commissioner Ketchum to report. Commissioner Ketchum stated that NAMI had secured space at West Virginia Northern Community College in room 121 on May 13, 2019 to offer the Mental Health First Aid training, sponsored by the HRC. There is a maximum of 35 participants, but the first nine spaces are reserved for the HRC. Chairman Calabrese suggested that once NAMI exhausts their invitation list, to give the HRC members the opportunity to share the information to fill the remainder of the class. Commissioner Gupta suggested that this training be offered to those who are prohibited financially from participating in such a training, rather than to those on the wait list who have means to pay for the training, and encouraged NAMI to consider this in filling the class openings.

NEW BUSINESS:

Citizen Inquiry/Complaint Activity Log through April 12, 2019 Ms. Thompson stated that three separate public accommodations complaints had been provided to one individual, as per the confidential log, but no completed form had been submitted to date. One non-discrimination related inquiry was referred to the City Clerk.

THOSE WISHING TO BE HEARD:

There was no one wishing to be heard.

REMARKS FROM MEMBERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:

Chairman Calabrese offered Commissioner Bell an opportunity to comment, and thanked her for participating remotely.

Commissioner Kangisser stated that she had followed up with Betsy Jividen, who indicated a willingness to do a training for the HRC regarding obstacles faced by those re-entering society from incarceration, and asked for a consensus for when the best time would be to receive this training. After discussion, it was suggested that this being a six-hour training, it would be best to do it sometime in September or the fall.

Commissioner Gupta stated that she feels that the NAMI funding request was pushed through the Commission. If the Commission had been given adequate time to consider the NAMI request, she may have responded differently. She asks for adequate time to consider future funding requests.

Commissioner Nevels requested that Ms. Thompson look into whether the WV HRC's Fair Housing Conference requires advanced registration.

Commissioner Dunkin expressed concern that legitimate cases never come to fruition or die somewhere in the process. Additionally, he requested clarification on the term that Chairman Calabrese is filling. Ms. Thompson stated that Chairman Calabrese is completing the remainder of the one-year term which began in July 2018, and that a new officer election will occur during the July 2019 meeting.

Commissioner Ketchum announced the Ohio Valley Pride Festival will be held on May 11, 2019 at Heritage Port, and that vendor participation is being sought. She asked whether the HRC would be interested. Volunteer availability was discussed, and Ms. Thompson offered to make materials available but announced that she cannot attend due to a prior commitment. Chairman Calabrese suggested that those who may be available to help and attend should contact Ms. Thompson.

Chairman Calabrese thanked all for their presence, caring, and ideas; and stated that for a city of this size, we do very well compared to other cities.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business Commissioner Dunkin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank Calabrese
Chairperson

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