



CITY OF WHEELING HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

1500 Chapline Street, Room 305
Wheeling, WV 26003

Wheeling Human Rights Commission

Regular meeting of the Wheeling Human Rights Commission: July 16, 2019.

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

Commissioners absent: 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: April 16, 2019. The minutes had been previously emailed. Commissioner Dunkin motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Kangisser. The motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Fair Housing Month, April 2019 Ms. Thompson reminded that the HRC paid for six billboards to promote Fair Housing, and a Fair Housing Proclamation by City Council in April 2019. She asked if any members attended the WV HRC's Fair Housing Conference in Clarksburg on April 30, to which no one affirmed.

HRC Collaboration with National Alliance on Mental Illness Greater Wheeling (NAMI) Ms. Thompson confirmed that there were six Commissioners along with herself and Ms. Prager, who attended the NAMI training on May 13, 2019 at West Virginia Northern Community College, and that NAMI billed for 24 attendee manuals, for a total of \$720.00 out of up to \$1,000 committed for the event. Chairman Calabrese suggested that letters of gratitude be sent to the trainers.

NEW BUSINESS:

HRC's Regular Business Meeting Time Chairman Calabrese stated that the HRC has lacked a quorum for two consecutive meetings, and asked if there may be a better meeting time. There was discussion regarding increasing Commissioners' attendance, regarding considering the public's needs including potential clientele, and regarding the suitability of different meeting times suggested by the members of the HRC. Commissioner Ketchum motioned to change the regular meeting time to 8:30am on the third Tuesday of the month, beginning with the August 20, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kangisser, and it passed unanimously.

Federal Government's Creation of the Commission on Unalienable Rights Chairman Calabrese referred to an associated press article from July 8, 2019 entitled "Trump Administration Reviews Human Rights' Role in US Policy", and expressed his belief that the creation of this Federal Commission creates a crisis for Human Rights. After a brief discussion, Chairman Calabrese agreed to further research the matter and report back.

Recent Observations at the US-Mexico Border, and the Conditions of Refugees Commissioner Bell spoke at length regarding her experience while working at the US-Mexico Border with the WV Catholic Charities group. She spoke of a lack of adequate permanent places to put people coming through, and that they worked for long days, providing clothing, belts and shoelaces, cooking, caring for kids, and in some cases, even buying what the people needed. She said that most people were appreciative, and some had broken English. Many seek the same opportunities that we are born with. All coming through must have a destination. She expressed that the situation is dire, and added that those in detention are not treated humanely. Chairman Calabrese asked what the Wheeling HRC can do. Commissioner Bell replied that changes can begin in our own environment, by making WV a more welcoming place for persons of color, or anyone. Commissioner Kangisser stated that if the Wheeling HRC were to do anything in response to this, that the focus should be upon assuring

COMMISSIONERS

Diana Bell, LSW

Joseph R. Blalock

Frank Calabrese

Rev. Ralph W. Dunkin

Karen Kangisser

Rosemary Ketchum

Loma Nevels

Anthony Sunseri

that the community is more welcoming to persons of color. After discussion, Commissioner Ketchum suggested that the WV ACLU offers a free Implicit Bias Training, and has not yet offered such training in Wheeling. Commissioner Gupta questioned whether there could be any potential costs to the HRC, to which Chairman Calabrese insisted that there would not. Commissioner Ketchum motioned that the Wheeling HRC invite the WV ACLU to offer the training, at no cost to the HRC. Commissioner Dunkin seconded and the motion carried. Chairman Calabrese requested that this item remain on the Agenda in August.

SWPALS 2019 Education and Outreach Project Ms. Thompson reported that SWPALS received a 2019 grant, and the Agreement period with the HRC is from June 10, 2019 to June 9, 2020. It is significantly the same Agreement as 2018, but the HRC is committed to **31** hours of Fair Housing Education and Outreach under the 2019 Agreement, for a total potential reimbursement of \$2,325. There was discussion regarding how hours can be met under the Agreement.

Around the World Dinner (YWCA Wheeling) – July 19, 2019 Chairman Calabrese shared a request from the YWCA for a \$500 sponsorship of the Around the World Dinner (previously emailed), which replaced the Multicultural Festival that the HRC has sponsored for several years. The HRC would be sponsoring the decorations, and would be listed on all promotions for the event. Commissioner Dunkin motioned that the HRC pay the \$500 sponsorship for the YWCA Around the World Dinner, and Commissioner Kangisser seconded. A vote was held and the motion passed with a majority of votes.

Celebrate Youth Festival (Youth Services Systems) – August 1, 2019 Ms. Thompson reported that the HRC is registered to have a booth at the Celebrate Youth Festival on August 1, 2019 from 10am to 4pm, and said that she would be there, but asked if any Commissioners would be interested in joining. Commissioners Kangisser (9-11am), Commissioner Dunkin (11am), Commissioner Nevels (2-4pm), and Commissioner Ketchum (TBD) all agreed to assist. Ms. Thompson provided a quote from Gwynn Advertising for insulated foldable lunch bags with the HRC's phone number and Fair Housing Logo, at a rate of is \$3.13 per item, for distribution at this and other events. After verifying funding, Commissioner Dunkin motioned to approve the purchase of 500 insulated lunch bags, seconded by Commissioner Kangisser. The motion passed.

Citizen Inquiry/Complaint Activity Log through July 12, 2019 Ms. Thompson provided the confidential report, which ran from April 15 to July 12.

Election of Officers For the position of Vice Chair, Commissioner Calabrese nominated Commissioner Nevels. With no other nominations, Commissioner Dunkin motioned to close nominations, seconded by Commissioner Blalock. A vote was held and the motion carried.

Commissioner Nevels presided over the election for the position of Chair. Commissioner Dunkin nominated Commissioner Calabrese. With no other nominations, Commissioner Dunkin motioned to close nominations, seconded by Commissioner Kangisser. A vote was held and the motion carried.

THOSE WISHING TO BE HEARD:

There was no one wishing to be heard.

REMARKS FROM MEMBERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:

There were no remarks from members of the HRC.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business Commissioner Nevels made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:09pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank Calabrese
Chairperson

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