



CITY OF WHEELING HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

1500 Chapline Street, Room 305
Wheeling, WV 26003

COMMISSIONERS

Joseph R. Blalock

Frank Calabrese

Rev. Ralph W. Dunkin

Karen Kangisser

Rosemary Ketchum

Loma Nevels

Anthony Sunseri

Emily L. Ward

Wheeling Human Rights Commission

Regular meeting of the Wheeling Human Rights Commission, February 18, 2020.

Commissioners present: Calabrese, Dunkin, Kangisser, Ketchum, Nevels and Ward.

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 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Calabrese.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Regular meeting: January 21, 2020. The minutes had been previously emailed. Commissioner Dunkin motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Nevels. The motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

SWPALS 2019 Education and Outreach Project Ms. Thompson reported that the HRC has achieved **30.38** of the committed **31** hours of education and outreach. The new balance of hours to achieve is **0.62** hours. Ms. Thompson reminded that SWPALS will tentatively conduct a Fair Housing Training in Wheeling for landlords during Fair Housing Month (April), at a date to be determined.

Ideas for Promoting the HRC Chairman Calabrese indicated his intent to contact the media to solicit the community's ideas for additional events. Ms. Thompson stated that the letter which was sent to the WV senators in support of adding protections for the LGBTQ community to the WV Human Rights Ordinance, was also sent to the local newspaper. Chairman Calabrese also expressed that the HRC voted to do billboards and is offering an award to a member of the community who supports the work of the HRC, which may help promote the HRC. Commissioner Nevels suggested and Chairman Calabrese agreed to forward the letter to local TV as well. Commissioner Dunkin asked that Ms. Thompson follow up and specifically request that the letter be printed in the newspaper. Additional ideas for promoting the HRC which were discussed were an upcoming WVNCC event, the Black History Month ad, Weelunk, social media, and the Chamber of Commerce newsletter.

Revisit the HRC's Regular Business Meeting Time Chairman Calabrese stated that he believed the current meeting time was awkward for the public, media and staff. Alternative meeting times were discussed, and Commissioner Dunkin motioned to change the HRC's regular business meeting time to noon on the third Tuesday of every month, beginning with the March 17 meeting. Commissioner Ward seconded the motion. A vote was held and the motion carried.

Continued Discussion Regarding Offering an Annual Community Award to someone Who Supports the Work of the HRC

Commissioner Kangisser updated that she has been informed by the City Solicitor that all such awards should come from the Mayor's office, however, that way may be better publicized. Chairman Calabrese indicated that Commissioner Kangisser has asked to be replaced as the chair of the HRC's ad hoc committee due to other commitments, but that she will still remain a member of the committee. Commissioner Ketchum volunteered to chair the committee, and therefore, was appointed by Chairman Calabrese to chair the committee. The committee members remain Commissioners Ketchum, Kangisser, Ward and Sunseri. It was discussed and Commissioner Dunkin offered ask the Mayor to implore at the State of The City address for 1-2 community members to join the ad hoc committee.

Black History Month, February 2020 Ms. Thompson reported that the ad which invites the community to celebrate Black History Month in February 2020, has been run in the newspaper on February 4, 7, 13, 19, and 25, 2020 as well as in the

Showtime Sunday insert for the week of February 9, 2020. WVNCC is having a Black History Month event, however it conflicts with the Mayors State of the City address.

Fair Housing Month, April 2020 Ms. Thompson reported that six billboards to promote Fair Housing during April 2020 have been secured with Lamar Advertising for the period of March 30, 2020 to April 26, 2020. The secured locations in low-moderate income neighborhoods and areas near public housing, include River Road (North Wheeling), 26th & Eoff Streets, Wheeling Island, Wheeling Hill, 33rd & Jacob Streets, and WV 88 (near Bridge Street School). The design is to be determined. Ms. Thompson reminded that a Landlord Training is also planned for April, and a Fair Housing Proclamation is tentatively scheduled to be read at City Council on April 7, 2020 at noon, for those members of the HRC who may be interested in attending to receive the Proclamation for a possible photo opportunity.

NEW BUSINESS:

WVNCC Health & Wellness Fair, March 24, 2020 from 11:00am to 1:00pm Ms. Thompson stated that she is anticipating an invitation, as she has been in contact with the staff at WVNCC regarding the Health & Wellness Fair. She offered to set up a table. Commissioners offering to assist were Kangisser (set up 10:00am), Dunkin, Nevels (12:00-1:00) and Ward (12:00-1:00).

Citizen Inquiry/Complaint Activity Log through February 14, 2020 Ms. Thompson explained the confidential report which ran from January 18 to February 14, 2020. One housing complaint form had been requested, and one active housing complaint remains under investigation.

THOSE WISHING TO BE HEARD:

City resident David Miller spoke about a recent social media post by a candidate for a city office, which he perceived as discriminatory; and stated that he is helping the HRC keep the finger on the pulse of discrimination.

REMARKS FROM MEMBERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:

Commissioner Nevels noted that the newspaper had not been in attendance at the last several meetings; Ms. Thompson confirmed that the newspaper staff has changed but meeting notices continue to be sent to the newspaper.

Commissioner Ketchum thanked Mr. Miller for attending and making the HRC aware of his concerns. She stated that she was proud of the current City Administration for making Human Rights a priority.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business Commissioner Kangisser made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:28am, seconded by Commissioner Ward.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank Calabrese
Chairperson

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