

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MINUTES

May 20, 2021 4:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers

PRESENT: COMMISSION CHAIR Derrick Thaxton
COMMISSIONERS Byron Hansbro, Francie Johnson, Richard Zaker,
Joyce Keller, Anay Hunt and Gina Taylor
ABSENT: VICE CHAIR Nikki Garry and COMMISSIONER Marty Watkins
ALSO PRESENT: ACTING HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER Penny Rogers and
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY Sherry Beasley

I. Call to Order

Chair Thaxton called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

A. Roll Call

Seven out of nine Commissioners were present at the time of roll call. Chair Thaxton declared a quorum does exist to conduct and approve business.

II. Concerns, Comments or Questions from the Audience

There were none.

III. Approval of the April 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Keller. Upon roll call, Commissioners Byron Hansbro, Gina Taylor, Anay Hunt, Francie Johnson, Joyce Keller, Richard Zaker, and Chair Derrick Thaxton, voted aye. Commission Chair Thaxton declared the motion carried.

IV. Monthly Activity Report & Summary of Cases

Acting Human Resources Manager Rogers provided a monthly status report of cases. (Exhibit A) Chair Thaxton asked the Commissioners if they had any comments or questions. Commissioner Zaker had a question regarding the process when it comes to how long it sometimes takes to reach a settlement agreement. He referred to Case #190725 which has been going on for almost two years. He is concerned that individuals might be discouraged to file a claim because of how long it might take to get resolved. Discussion followed. Chair Thaxton asked if the Commission could set a deadline for this case to be settled since it has been almost two years. Ms. Rogers stated she would speak to Assistant Corporation Counsel Amy Waks to see if the Commission can set a deadline. Commissioner Zaker stated he wanted to go on record to say he does not want to do anything to tie the hands of the investigators.

V. Unfinished Business

A. Update on participation in Juneteenth

Chair Thaxton reported the Juneteenth event will be held on Saturday, June 19. Individuals will meet at the Macon County Courthouse on the corner of Wood St. and U.S. Route 51 South at 10:00 a.m. A memorial wreath will be laid in honor of Sam Bush followed by a short ceremony. At 10:45, individuals will begin to line up for the March which will head North on U.S. Route 51 to Prairie Avenue to Central Park. The opening ceremony will begin at 11:00 a.m., and the event will last until 4:00 p.m. Chair Thaxton reported the t-shirts should be available around June 12. Some t-shirts will be given to Evelyn Hood from the African-American Genealogical Society to give away. There will also be some t-shirts at the Commission's table, and other t-shirts will be given to the Commissioners so that they can pass them out while walking around Central Park. Commissioner Hansbro reported he would be at Central Park prior to 11:00 a.m. to set up the table. He and Vice Chair Garry will meet to set up a staffing schedule for the Commissioners to sign up to work at the table. Ms. Rogers reported she would bring the Human Relations Commission skirt for the table as well as some candy to put on the table. The Commission's pamphlets will also be on the table. Ms. Rogers will send out an email when the t-shirts come in so that the commissioners can pick them up at the Civic Center in the Human Resources office. Commissioner Zaker stated that at the last meeting Vice Chair Garry suggested we invite the essay and poetry winners from the Black History Month contest to join us in the March. Chair Thaxton responded that after discussing it further, it was decided not to invite the students.

B. Update on Acts of Kindness campaign

Commissioner Zaker stated he wrote a synopsis of the recent act of kindness that Commissioner Keller relayed to him and shared with the Commission at the last meeting. Commissioner Zaker reported that he emailed this synopsis to Chair Thaxton and Ms. Beasley for feedback. Chair Thaxton replied he has not had a chance to read the synopsis and would like to table this until the next meeting. He asked Commissioner Zaker to send the photos of this act of kindness to Ms. Beasley so that they can be ready to put on the Commission's Facebook page.

C. Discussion on speaker from Decatur Landlord's Association

Chair Thaxton reported that his contact person who knows how to get in touch with someone at the Decatur Landlord's Association is ill; therefore, he did not reach out to her. He will check with her before the next meeting.

VI. New Business

A. There is none.

VII. Other Business

Commissioner Hunt stated she works on Saturdays and might be able to stop by the Juneteenth event for a while but cannot stay the entire time.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Keller. Upon roll call, the meeting was adjourned at 4:24 p.m.