

## **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MINUTES**

November 18, 2021 4:00 p.m.  
City Council Chambers

**PRESENT:** COMMISSION CHAIR Derrick Thaxton  
VICE CHAIR Nikki Garry  
COMMISSIONERS Richard Zaker, Gina Taylor and Francie Johnson

**ABSENT:** COMMISSIONERS Byron Hansbro and Joyce Keller

**ALSO ABSENT:** ACTING HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER Penny Rogers

**ALSO PRESENT:** ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Sherry Beasley

### **I. Call to Order**

Commission Chair Thaxton called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

#### A. Roll Call

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

### **II. Appearance of Citizens**

There was none.

### **III. Approval of the October 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Motion was made by Commissioner Zaker to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Taylor. Upon roll call, Commissioners Richard Zaker, Gina Taylor, Vice Chair Nikki Garry and Chair Derrick Thaxton, voted aye. Commissioner Francie Johnson abstained. Commission Chair Thaxton declared the motion carried.

### **IV. Monthly Activity Report & Summary of Cases**

Commission Chair Thaxton provided a monthly status report of cases. (Exhibit A) Chair Thaxton asked if there were any questions.

**V. Unfinished Business**

A. Update on Acts of Kindness campaign

Commissioner Zaker reported on an act of kindness that Commissioner Keller witnessed. This will be posted on the City's and Commission's Facebook page, the City's website and the government channel. He asked the Commissioners if they belong to any organizations to let their members know about the Acts of Kindness campaign.

B. Update on MLK 2022

1. Women's Forum

Vice Chair Garry suggested having the Women's forum in March for Women's History Month. Discussion followed. Chair Thaxton will follow up with Commissioner Hansbro regarding the Women's forum.

2. March

Ms. Beasley stated that at a previous meeting, the Commission decided to still have the Freedom March but no program after the March. The Commission expressed interest in having a commemorative reading or poem after the March. After the reading or poem, an announcement will be made regarding upcoming Commission events. Chair Thaxton will meet with Ms. Rogers to make sure the room at the Civic Center is secured for the date of the March.

3. Essay, Poetry and Drawing Contest

Chair Thaxton asked the Commission for comments or suggestions. Ms. Beasley stated in a previous meeting someone suggested having the essay, poetry and drawing contest in February for Black History Month. Vice Chair Garry asked if the contest is moved to February for Black History month, would the theme need to be changed. Discussion followed. It was decided to have a generic paragraph to fit the theme. Vice Chair Garry will write the paragraph for the contest and send it to Chair Thaxton and Ms. Rogers.

4. Scholarship

Ms. Beasley stated Mrs. Rogers added this item to the agenda to make the Commission aware that financially it is currently not possible to do a scholarship unless the Commission gets sponsorships.

C. Update on helping to bring Bryan Stevenson to Decatur

Commissioner Zaker reported the committee he is on would like to bring Mr. Stevenson to Decatur in the spring of 2023. A draft of the proposal will be sent to Mr.

Stevenson's people in early January 2022. Commissioner Zaker also discussed what the various organizations have planned to help bring Mr. Stevenson to Decatur. The committee discussed changing the name from the Bryan Stevenson Project to Decatur Justice Initiative.

**VI. New Business**

- A. There was none.

**VII. Other Business**

- A. Chair Thaxton stated to put the following on December's agenda
1. Black History Month  
Vote on moving the essay, poetry and drawing contest to February
  2. Women's Forum  
Vote on moving the Women's Forum to March

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Commissioner Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Vice Chair Garry. Upon roll call, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.