

## **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MINUTES**

December 16, 2021 4:00 p.m.  
City Council Chambers

**PRESENT:** COMMISSION CHAIR Derrick Thaxton  
VICE CHAIR Nikki Garry  
COMMISSIONERS Richard Zaker, Gina Taylor, Byron Hansbro and  
Joyce Keller

**ABSENT:** COMMISSIONERS Francie Johnson

**ALSO PRESENT:** ACTING HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER Penny Rogers  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Sherry Beasley

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

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

#### A. Roll Call

Six 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**

The following citizen provided comments to the Commission: Abeer Motan.

### **III. Approval of the November 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Motion was made by Commissioner Zaker to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Keller. Upon roll call, Commissioners Richard Zaker, Gina Taylor, Joyce Keller, Vice Chair Nikki Garry and Chair Derrick Thaxton, voted aye. Commissioner Byron Hansbro abstained. 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) Commissioner Hansbro commented on Exhibit A. He stated the hearing concluded with the witness testimony. Both parties will be given 21 days after receiving the transcript to prepare their closing summaries in writing.

## **V. Unfinished Business**

### **A. MLK Freedom March**

Chair Thaxton stated everyone will meet at the Civic Center before the March. He will do the following:

- Contact a few churches to see if they will use their van for those who do not want to march.
- Get a banner from Pepsi and will meet with Mrs. Rogers and Ms. Beasley to see what we want on the banner
- Contact the park district or Harris School about meeting at the park.
- Check on a portable speaker or device for after the March.

The March will start at the Civic Center and proceed to Hess Park. After the March, there will be a word of prayer, a commemorative reading or poem and everyone will be shuttled back to the Civic Center. Mrs. Rogers will reserve the meeting rooms at the Civic Center. The March will start at noon on January 17, 2022.

## **VI. New Business**

### **A. Motion to move the essay, poetry and drawing contest to February in conjunction with Black History Month**

Chair Thaxton asked the Commission if they wanted to review the email from Vice Chair Garry regarding the information to send to the schools. The theme for the contest is "Celebrating the Civil Rights Movement." Vice Chair Garry stated that in her meeting with the DPS Foundation, it was suggested we accept short films and/or art sculptures for the contest. Discussion followed. The short films will be accepted. The length of the video will be no more than five minutes. Vice Chair Garry will contact the Multicultural Voices of Praise (MVOP) from Millikin University to if they would be willing to sing at the Black History Month program and what dates they are available. Commissioner Hansbro will contact Rev. Vivian Clarington, Pastor of St. Peter African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church to be the guest speaker. Vice Chair Garry stated before making the motion, she would suggest modifying the motion to say the following, motion to approve works of expressions such as essay, poetry, drawing and short film contest. Vice Chair Garry made the motion to move the essay, poetry, drawing and short film contest to February in conjunction with Black History month, seconded by Commissioner Keller. Upon roll call, Commissioners Richard Zaker, Gina Taylor, Byron Hansbro, Joyce Keller, Vice Chair Nikki Garry and Chair Derrick Thaxton, voted aye. Commission Chair Thaxton declared the motion carried.

B. Motion to move the Women's Forum to March in conjunction with Women's History Month

Commissioner Hansbro reported that he has not had time to meet with Commissioner Taylor. The Forum will be done virtually. The panel will be at the Civic Center. He will have everything lined out in January's meeting. Vice Chair Garry stated in a previous meeting, it was suggested having Mia Tyus as the moderator. Chair Thaxton asked Ms. Rogers to put this back on the agenda for the January meeting.

**VII. Other Business**

Commissioner Keller stated the people that were recognized on the Acts of Kindness Facebook page that helped Mercedes Benz remove the tree that fell in her yard were recognized at the CONO Christmas party.

Commissioner Zaker reported on the Brian Stevenson's Project.

Chair Thaxton reported that Human Rights Investigator Fred Spannaus had a speaking engagement about implicit bias. He was given an honorarium and donated it to the Human Relations Commission.

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Commissioner Hansbro made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Vice Chair Garry. Upon roll call, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.