

**Mayor's Commission on Human Rights
and Community Relations**

MINUTES

The Mayor's Commission on Human Rights and Community Relations met by Zoom on October 21, 2020. The meeting was called to order by Chair, Heather Hardinger at approximately 5:33 pm.

Present	Heather Hardinger, Chair; Pamela Hernandez, Communications Officer; Mike Jungers, Daniel Ogunyemi, Bob Roberts, and Mary Bozarth.
Absent	Carlye Wannenmacher
Public	None
Staff	Bob Atchley and Judy White, Planning and Development Department, Kyle Tolbert, Law Department and Cora Scott, Public Information Office
Approval of Minutes	Mike Jungers moved to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2020 MCHRCR Meeting. Bob Roberts seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
Public Comments	None
Unfinished Business	Status Update – Current MCHRCR Discrimination Cases • Carlye and Daniel have been investigating open cases, one of which was a pre-complaint and has been resolved, and the other was a formal complaint. Daniel needs to touch base on investigation into the 2 claims. • One untimely pre-complaint was around an unlawful eviction, from over a year ago, stating he was discriminated on based on his race. The conversation Carlye had in the follow up stated that it wasn't racial discrimination from the landlord, but from other tenants that prompted the eviction. He wanted his collections situation resolved and removed from his credit report, which isn't part of the Commission, so he was referred to Legal Services of Southern Missouri. • Heather suggested having a representative from Legal Services of Southern Missouri speak to the Commission on what services they provide and how the Commission can make appropriate referrals to their organization. Daniel stated that he has contacts at Legal Services of Southern Missouri and could reach out to begin the conversations. • Kyle will look to see if there is something that can stop someone from filing multiple complaints.

Review Inclusion Survey Presentation Plan

- Heather is presenting with Gloria tomorrow, October 22, 2020, at The Good Community Committee and should be a great place to share results as there is a lot of community leadership involved. The Downtown Rotary Club would like them to present at the beginning of next year, and The Association for Women in Communications has them scheduled for the December 1, 2020 meeting. If any requests are received for a presentation, the request should be sent to Heather's city email so she can coordinate with Gloria on availability.
- There were discussions about how well the Have Faith and City Council Lunch presentations went as well as the opportunities that may come from them. The Library would like to be involved and they are working on the details of how that will look.
- The next steps on how to get involved, how to use the data, and how to apply it was

brought up. There were discussions about the role of the Commission and how they can best support this work, which might include additional education and training. Following the survey, they want a plan of action for the future and there is another City survey coming out at the first of the year. They will be looking at direct action items as well.

- There may be future discussions with Jason, as well as other City leaders, to create more long-term goals in the plan and how to execute. Mary suggested a round table discussion in the upcoming quarter to look at a summary of the data as a collaboration with the Commission and the task force that is part of Junior League.

Possible Impacts of June 2020 U.S Supreme Court Federal Anti-Bias Laws Decision

- Kyle explained the importance of the Title 7 claim in which the plaintiff stated he was fired due to sexual orientation. The Supreme Court's decision was based on the reading of the statute that sexual orientation, or sexual stereotyping, is a subset of sexual discrimination.
- As the Commission becomes more visible in the community, they will potentially start seeing complaints on what is considered unlawful activity. The question was raised on how the Commission would handle claims of sexual discrimination and if this was strengthening the protection. Most view it as strengthening protection as now there are protections where there hadn't been before. Kyle stated that the State Commission has been instructed by the MO Supreme Court that where there has been a claim of sexual stereotyping occurring, they may have a claim for sexual discrimination, which is something that not everyone may be aware of. Heather said receiving the legal opinion from the City Attorney and having language of what this means to explain to citizens and employers is something to create plans around.

New Business

Discussion of the Municipal Equality Index (MEI) Score Card for Springfield, MO

- Pamela shared that the Municipal Equality Index is an HRC Index that they have been trying to improve on over the last couple of years. It looks at protections and services in place for the LGBTQ community. Scoring criteria comes out in the Spring, which then allows time to submit changes and what has been done. Afterwards, the final rating is given and is published on the website. The rating for Springfield this year was 47 out of 100, which is up from rating of 35 the previous year. One of the important changes made this year was that an LGBTQ Liaison was added to the Police Department and has shown to be a much-needed support. There are some things in the works that should improve the rating in 2021. For example, Human Resources is looking at healthcare services for transgender employees that needs improvement. Until there are more specific enforcement mechanisms and protections when it comes to public accommodations, such as housing and workplace, then the score won't get to 100 as some other cities in the State have received.
- Heather stated that Springfield has made significant progress over the last 3 years or so and thanked Pamela for digging into this as it really helps the community, and the Commission can continue to build upon that. The current City leadership is open to making necessary changes to become a more inclusive community and show the results of that.
- Heather shared the link to the presentation with the Commission so they can review or suggest any changes.
- Bob Atchley mentioned that upcoming Tough Talks are scheduled and being held virtually.

Mike Jungers made a motion to adjourn at approximately 6:27 p.m. Bob Roberts seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Prepared by Rhonda
Moore

Heather Hardinger, Chair