

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

MINUTES

The Mayor's Commission on Human Rights and Community Relations met by Zoom on November 18, 2020. The meeting was called to order by Chair, Heather Hardinger at approximately 5:34 pm.

Present	Heather Hardinger, Chair; Pamela Hernandez, Communications Officer; Mike Jungers, Daniel Ogunyemi, Bob Roberts, Mary Bozarth, and Carlye Wannenmacher
Absent	None
Public	None
Staff	Bob Atchley, Bob Jones, and Judy White, Planning and Development Department, Kyle Tolbert, Law Department
Approval of Minutes	Bob Roberts moved to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2020 MCHRCR Meeting. Pamela Hernandez seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
Public Comments	None
Unfinished Business	Discussion and Investigation of Current Complaints • Carlye has been investigating on her own as it is a unique complaint, therefore Daniel hasn't been involved. Carlye has been reaching out to Mary Collette to resolve the first two bullet points for the complainant: 1. Reinstated in e-newsletter from C-Street 2. Unblock from Facebook page 3. Not to be excluded from other events • The complainant is ok with the proposed resolution and Heather stated she is okay to move forward with the above and would like a report back after resolved. • The second complaint is being handled by Mike. It is a workplace discrimination complaint at a manufacturing company with 18 employees. The complainant is the only African American employee which had tested positive for COVID-19 and he had been masked. Upon notification to the company of his positive results, he was fired. There were 2 occasions of which he gave examples of discrimination. During a company luncheon, he was told to go outside and wait until everyone had been served. On another occasion, he was told to go to the end of the line. He has worked there for 5 years and everything was fine until the son took the company over from the father. One of his witnesses said there are cameras throughout, and the owner said he wanted to see what this specific individual was doing and not watching anyone else. Another situation occurred when the locks were changed to the employee door. The owner was handing out keys to everyone who uses the door but did not give one to him. When he inquired as to why, he was told he has never had one and doesn't need one. Mike recommended he borrows a copy of the employee manual from one of the complainant's witnesses. The owner also called him the evening he had surgery and told him he had to come into work the next day even though he was on pain medication. There are two witness to specific situations such as the luncheon and looking at the camera. Mike wrote a draft and complainant wants his job back. • He was fired the previous week and the other incidents occurred more than 6 months ago, dated from February, May, and June of 2020. Kyle stated that being fired due to COVID could have been pretextual. Since the incidents were over 6 months ago, Heather recommended that the complainant file a state complaint and seek legal counsel as the

commission doesn't have power to remedy this situation. There are legal resources in the community if the individual is low-income. It was suggested to express a sense of urgency to file a complaint as time is of the essence.

New Business

City of Springfield Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey – Cora Scott

- The City released a Diversity and Inclusivity Survey to homes in the Springfield area that will include topics about race and policing. Some feedback has shown that people are interested and shocked by what they are reading in the report.
- Gloria mentioned the disability community thinks they are getting pushed to the side since there is such a focus on race and policing.
- Heather indicated that there will be a lot more requests coming to present the survey results to different groups. Any commissioners who are able will be welcomed to join and participate in the PowerPoint presentations. The Have Faith and Good Community presentations went over well with feedback of this information was long overdue.
- Carlye mentioned she spoke with the Diversity Inclusion Task Force about the results and they were shocked that people were in denial about the problem. She looks forward to presenting to the larger group of Junior League.
- Heather is comfortable with Gloria presenting as long as there is another commissioner present to take ownership and give the Commission's perspective.
- Bob Jones mentioned the possibility of getting the analysis of the data broken out by race, or ethnicity, and sort responses. However, this couldn't be done without taking another 3-4 months and a lot of extra work.
- Daniel commented on being a part of the presenting group. He also mentioned that he was a little bit frustrated regarding the continued talk of data. There is a need to take practical steps. He indicated that he feels that we need to hold people accountable from responding to what they are presenting.
- Heather met with City Manager Jason Gage last week regarding the future of the Commission and the need to figure out resources needed and compare the authority of the Commission spelled out in City Code, which could potentially take place as soon as next year. Heather has been asked to create a budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and have Jason review it. Some of the recommendations include additional training and becoming certified by the Missouri Commission on Human Rights. There is confidence that action will be taken this next year as they are taking these steps to create real change.

Bob Roberts made a motion to adjourn at approximately 6:42 p.m. Mike Jungers seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Prepared by Rhonda
Moore

Heather Hardinger, Chair