

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

MINUTES

The Mayor's Commission on Human Rights and Community Relations met by Zoom on Wednesday, March 17, 2021. The meeting was called to order by Chair, Carlye Wannenmacher, at approximately 5:32 pm.

Present	Carlye Wannenmacher, Chair; Pamela Hernandez, Mike Jungers, Daniel Ogunyemi, Bob Roberts, and Mary Bozarth
Absent	None
Public	None
Staff	Bob Atchley, 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 January 20, 2021 MCHRCR Meeting. Carlye Wannenmacher seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
Public Comments	None
New Business	Election of Communications Officer • Pamela resigned around October 2019 and Heather had stepped in as the MCHRCR Communications Officer. Kyle Tolbert mentioned that the vacancy needs to be assigned today according to the bylaws. Cora talked about the process of recruiting members of boards and commissions and the gap that can exist. She suggested putting out a press release specifying someone is needed with social media communication skills. Carlye asked about the minimum necessary that the communications officer would need to do in the next 7 months. Kyle read over the duties that are stated in the MCHRCR Bylaws which says the Communications Officer shall represent the Commission to private and public organizations, including the City Council and media, and may perform any other tasks or duties as assigned by the Commission. It was mentioned that Mary had shown an interest in the position. However, she informed the Committee that she has officially accepted a position in the City Attorney's office, therefore she must resign from the Committee, and this will be her last meeting. Carlye asked about seeking a student and confirmed with Kyle that the person would need to be named to the Commission beforehand. Mr. Atchley understands that the Mayor makes a recommendation to Council regarding members and it is a two-hearing process. Mike Jungers offered to jump in as interim Communications Chair. Daniel moved to approve Mike as Communications Chair. Bob Roberts seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Cora indicated that the PIO Department will put together the Press Release for new members.

City of Springfield Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey Update

- Cora said they are at the point to discuss how the PIO Department can help since the survey has been presented to Council as there was a delay due to COVID.
- After the death of George Floyd, City Council approved a formal resolution that was written by the City Manager, Jason Gage. She provided a link to the resolution in the chat. Cora indicated that she would like for Jason to speak to the commission at some point.
- The Police Department put together a webpage called Where We Stand. It outlines the policies of use of force and other situations regarding law enforcement action. It explains what the police department is doing and improvements that need to be made. The City Manager made a change that no longer requires individuals to complete the Citizens Police Academy before applying to be a member of the Police Civilian Review Board, which was sought by the NAACP. The Police Department has been funded and purchased body cameras for officers and several squads already have those on board.
- Interviews have begun and they are close to the semifinalist for a Director level position on the City's Leadership Team, which would be the Director of Diversity and Inclusion. They are hopeful the position will be filled within the next month. This person will have a lot of internal work to complete and enhancing the City's work. Then an external focus to represent the City in certain initiatives as well.
- Mayor Pro Tem Phyllis Ferguson and Dr. Lyle Foster convened a task force called Equity and Equality for All. A formal resolution came to Council that formed this very diverse 18-member group that will be developing guiding principles to improve equitable access to opportunities, recognizing inherent dignity in the value and worth of each individual. They are doing this work on 5 pillars of change: dialogue and understanding, cultural consciousness, advocacy and partnerships, structural and systemic barriers, and personal organizational accountability. The Mayor took referrals from other Council members and his discussions with the MCHRCR, and other groups, and then appointed the 18-member initiative. It will be a one-year time frame and they haven't had their first meeting yet. Cora will put a link up to see the list. She has volunteered to staff the initiative, along with Anita Cotter, and will suggest someone from this Commission coming to their meeting to inform them the roles and responsibilities of this Commission as well as ideas for the future that the MCHRCR would like to see changed.
- Cora spoke to the City's recent community survey report. It mainly focused on community and police race relations. Cora shared her screen to show some of the highlights. She believes that works needs to be done in undecided areas. On every question, there is a breakdown of demographics as well. Mark Ellison helped craft the questions on the survey.
- Carlye was pleased that the commission was able to participate in the beginning of the process. She mentioned that housing is something they focus on as well and shared her concern on where they fit in to make sure 3 different groups aren't doing the same thing.
- Daniel asked what Council's follow up was and what was coming from this data. Cora responded saying that diversity and inclusion was incorporated into their strategic priorities. Staff is assisting in creating the next level and defining what that means. He said there is so much going on that it is hard to keep up with. He would like to see less conversations and more collaborative effort into creating actionable items as well as more unity of voice.
- Cora said that this commission could help her and Anita with agenda items based on their experience, such as what some of the trouble spots are.
- Daniel mentioned from the police part, how to get the Commission to help get their issues resolved would be a good focus. Bob agreed with Daniel saying that there has been a lot of talking and needs to put things into action.
- Cora would like a copy of the Commission's strategic plan and Bob Atchley will provide it to her.

Carlye adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:27 p.m. with a motion from Bob Roberts and a second from Daniel Ogunyemi.

Carlye Wannenmacher, Chair

