

# HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MINUTES

November 19, 2020 4:00 p.m.  
City Council Chambers

**PRESENT:** COMMISSION CHAIR Derrick Thaxton  
VICE CHAIR Nikki Garry  
COMMISSIONERS Byron Hansbro, Richard Zaker, Marty Watkins and  
Francie Johnson  
**ABSENT:** COMMISSIONERS Joyce Keller  
**ALSO, PRESENT:** ACTING HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER Penny Rogers  
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY Sherry Beasley

## **I. Call to Order**

Chair Thaxton called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

### **A. Roll Call**

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

## **II. Concerns, Comments or Questions from the Audience**

There were none.

## **III. Approval of the October 15, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

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

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

Acting Human Resources Manager Rogers presented the monthly status report of cases for Human Rights Investigator, Fred Spannaus (Exhibit A). Discussion followed regarding case #190725. Chair Thaxton stated the two Commissioners that will serve as Hearing Officers for this case are Commissioner Hansbro and Vice Chair Garry.

## **V. Unfinished Business**

### **A. Protecting Places of Worship – Part II**

Commission Chair Thaxton reported that he has not heard from Mr. Bergeron and would like to table this until December's meeting.

### **B. MLK 2021**

#### **1. Update on participation in Juneteenth**

Commission Chair Thaxton said he spoke with Evelyn Hood and the plans for Juneteenth have not been finalized. He hopes to have more details the beginning of 2021.

2. Update on MLK essay, poetry & drawing contest.

Administrative Secretary Beasley stated that she emailed the changes for the 2021 MLK contests to Valerie Wells at the Herald & Review. Ms. Beasley also said she will send information to Decatur Public Schools after the Christmas break. It was suggested to update the Commission's Facebook page with the information regarding the contests and to email the information to the Commissioners.

3. Update on the MLK scholarship contest.

Administrative Secretary Beasley stated the scholarship information was sent to Maria Robertson at Decatur Public School District 61. Ms. Beasley reported she received a phone call from a counselor at MacArthur High School who said there might be interest in including this information in the curriculum next year. The deadline for submissions for the scholarship is December 14. Ms. Beasley will check with Commissioner Keller to see if she would like to read the submissions, and Commissioner Johnson will also read them. Vice Chair Garry volunteered to be an alternate reader.

C. Update on Election of Human Relations Commission Officers

Acting Human Resources Manager Rogers stated this item was accidentally left on the agenda from the October meeting and should be deleted.

**VI. New Business**

There was none.

**VII. Other Business**

Commissioner Zaker asked what the status was in filling the two open positions on the Commission. Acting Human Resource Manager Rogers reported that two applications have been received, and she is waiting for a meeting to be set up with the Mayor and the applicants.

Commissioner Zaker asked that we all remember Mary Jo Comerford who previously served on the Commission and passed away recently.

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Commissioner Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Watkins.

Upon roll call, the meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.