

# HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MINUTES

March 18, 2021 4:00 p.m.  
City Council Chambers

**PRESENT:** COMMISSION CHAIR Derrick Thaxton  
VICE CHAIR Nikki Garry  
COMMISSIONERS Byron Hansbro, Francie Johnson, Marty Watkins,  
Richard Zaker, and Anay Hunt

**ABSENT:** COMMISSIONERS Joyce Keller, Gina Taylor and  
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY Sherry Beasley

**ALSO PRESENT:** ACTING HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER Penny Rogers

## **I. Call to Order**

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

### **A. Roll Call**

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

Chair Thaxton called on new Commissioner Hunt to introduce herself.

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

There were none.

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

Motion was made by Commissioner Watkins to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Zaker. Upon roll call, Commissioners Byron Hansbro, Anay Hunt, Francie Johnson, Marty Watkins, Richard Zaker, 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 provided a monthly status report of cases. (Exhibit A) Ms. Rogers stated in the last meeting Chair Thaxton asked if the City could be reimbursed for any of its expenses in the settlement of Case #190725. Ms. Rogers reported she spoke with Assistant Corporation Counsel Amy Waks who explained the City does not get reimbursed for its expenses when there is a settlement between two parties. If the case went to a hearing, the Commission could ask that the City's expenses be included in the award of damages.

## **V. Unfinished Business**

### **A. MLK 2021**

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

Chair Thaxton reported the African-American Genealogical Society will meet next Monday. The Commission's level of involvement right now is to carry a banner, march in the parade and purchase the t-shirts. He will follow up with Evelyn Hood. Commissioner Hansbro stated there was discussion in a previous meeting that

the Commission have a booth where we could have our information about the Commission and answer questions about the Commission. Ms. Rogers stated this was discussed and asked Chair Thaxton to ask Evelyn Hood if there is a fee to have a booth and to get the details in setting up the booth. Chair Thaxton replied the Commission can have a booth, and he will get the details from Ms. Hood.

## 2. Recap on Black History Month program

Chair Thaxton stated he has received overwhelming responses about the Black History Month program which was held on February 25. He has been asked when the event will be played on Channel 18. Chair Thaxton will ask Ms. Beasley to inform the Commissioners by email of those dates and times. Commissioner Zaker asked if the program could be put on the Commission's Facebook page. Ms. Rogers stated she will check with the City's IT department. Vice Chair Garry, Commissioner Hansbro and Commissioner Johnson complimented the students on their essays and poems. Chair Thaxton and Vice Chair Garry complimented Commissioner Hansbro on a job well done on his speech. Commissioner Zaker suggested a thank you note be sent to the Decatur Public School District for their participation in the contest. Commissioner Watkins thanked Mr. Edwards from the City's IT department for his help.

### B. Acts of Kindness campaign

Chair Thaxton stated that Commissioner Keller informed him that she is very interested in this campaign. Chair Thaxton will meet with Commissioner Zaker next week. Commissioner Zaker said he thought a launch date in September right after the school year starts would be good. He also suggested the Commission get the information out to the radio stations as well as social media to promote the campaign and to try get sponsors to help with the awards.

## VI. New Business

None.

## VII. Other Business

Commissioner Zaker stated he heard there will be a Decatur Community Day of Peace event that is scheduled for April 2, and the highlight of the event is for the Police Department to buy back guns. Commissioner Zaker wanted to know if the Commission was asked to be involved in this event. Ms. Rogers replied that she just heard about this event and doesn't know any specifics. Ms. Rogers asked Commissioner Zaker if he had any ideas on how the Commission could participate. Commissioner Zaker responded that it's short notice for the Commission to be involved in the upcoming event, but for future reference he would like to let the organizers of the event to be aware that the Commission might want to be involved if it falls under the ideals of Human Relations. Ms. Rogers stated she will try to find out more about the event and will talk to the organizers to see if this is going to be an annual event

and if there is something the Commission can do to help support the event. Ms. Rogers will send an email to the Commissioners about the April 2 event.

Chair Thaxton stated a couple of years ago the Commission had someone from the Decatur Landlord's Association speak at a meeting and wanted to know if the Commission would like to have someone from that organization speak regarding landlord and tenant laws as a result of Covid-19. Discussion followed. Chair Thaxton stated he will reach out to the Decatur Landlord's Association to see if someone is available to speak to the Commission.

Vice Chair Garry said that as Covid-19 vaccinations become more available, the Commission might want to have more Commissioners attend the meetings in person, if they are comfortable.

Commissioner Hunt said if anyone is having difficulty signing up for a vaccine, they may contact her and she will walk them through the process to sign up with the Macon County Health Department.

#### **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 4:34 p.m.