

NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES
January 30, 2020

The Human Relations Commission met on Thursday, January 30, 2020 in the Commission Room at the Office of Administrative Hearings, 1711 New Hope Church Road, Raleigh, North Carolina. Commissioners present were Angelo Mathay, Linda Jackson Barnes, Nicholas Byrne, Toussaint Romain, Henry "Clay" Eddleman, Paul Norman, TR Nunley, Ralph "Steve" Stevenson, Amelia Stinson-Wesley, Reginald Speight, Vernetta Alston.

Commissioners phoned in: Jameesha Harris, Charlotte Williams, Matthew Hughes.

OAH Staff members present were Richard Boulden, Gene Troy, Sharesa Wilkins, Elouise Williams, Jacques Chappell, Linda Worth.

Dr. Anthony Wade of the City of Fayetteville-Cumerland HRC and Karin Hammonds-Blanks and Susan Camilleri of the Fiscal Research Division also attended this meeting.

Subcommittees met prior to meeting at 10:00 a.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. with Chairman Toussaint Romain presiding. Opening Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance led by Chair Toussaint Romain.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present and phoned in were noted. Quorum was met.

INTRODUCTION OF OFFICIALS, STAFF-PROGRAM MANAGER:

There were no officials present. There is one staff vacancy.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the September 26, 2019 meeting were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Angelo Mathay. The Commissioners unanimously seconded and accepted the minutes to be approved. Attorney Richard Boulden stated that the minutes will be available for public viewing on the OAH – HRC Website. Chair Romain proposed that the Agenda for today's meeting be revised to move the Public Comments up in the meeting before Sub-Committee Reports. The commissioners agreed with this decision. Commissioners were asked if any of them need to excuse themselves before the group speaks, because of opposing views.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Public Comments were by the "Demilitarize! Durham2Palestine" group. There were 26 people present from the group. There were eight speakers that spoke on Anti-Zionism, Antisemitism, Racism, Civil Rights, Racial Social Injustices, Criticism of Israel, and Violence against Jews and Palestinians in North Carolina. (parameter - 30 minutes total time) The speakers were: Trude Bennett, John Luke Kuruoz, Michael Papich, Aman Aberra, Alyandra Megia, and Lavia Gibney, and two additional speakers Roger Ehrlich and Jerry Marketas. Commissioner Mathay asked the group about any other topics about their community the commissioners should be aware of. Aman Aberra referenced to Equal Opportunities, Title VI Funding, Education Topics, and other Antisemitism related topics. Attorney Boulden recommended that the commissioners to refrain from any comments due to that the litigation is pending in Federal Court. Chair Romain thanked them for their presence and for voicing their concerns. As the group departed, the commissioners went for a temporary break to allow them to leave.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice Chair Election

Position Vacancy - Voting on Election of Vice Chair

Nominations: Commissioner Steve Stevenson is interested, Commissioner Amelia Stinson-Wesley nominated by Commissioner Mathay – Commissioner Stinson-Wesley declined the nomination at this time.

Commissioner Matthew Hughes is interested. Commissioner Charlotte Williams questioned about what part of the state the nominees are from. The commissioners voted by stating the name of the commissioner he/she wanted to be the next Vice Chair. Voting Results: Matthew Hughes – 10 votes; Ralph "Steve" Stevenson – 3 votes.

The new Vice Chair is Commissioner Matthew Hughes. Commissioner Amelia Stinson-Wesley questioned about the term of the Vice Chair position. It was explained by Chair Toussaint Romain and Attorney Richard Boulden about the term process.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Fair Housing Committee Report was given by Commissioner Angelo Mathay. – There will be Fair Housing Training for the committee for three commissioners and proposed one or two speakers that will address the Fair Housing topic.

UPDATES AND INFORMATION

A Brief Overview on Human Relations Commission Mission was given by Chair Toussaint Romain. He presented a PowerPoint Presentation on the purpose of Human Relations Commission. He also discussed in depth 1. Statue; 2. Duties; 3. 2020 Goals – Affordable Housing, Re-Entry/Fair Chance Hiring, Diversity and Inclusion, Voting Rights, and Access to Basic Education. A link will be sent to the commissioners to review.

Chair Romain opened the floor for questions. Commissioner Stevenson asked about the expungement process and then discussed his involvement in assisting those people needing that assistance. The discussion has been tabled and will be researched further on how to move forward. Commissioner Harris asked about the HRC stand on Affordable Housing problems. It was stated that HRC addresses concerns as they come and suggests legislation. Attorney Boulden suggested to contact HUD field office in Greensboro and North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. Commissioner Stinson-Wesley suggested that in dealing with Fair Housing that source income discrimination and inclusionary zoning will be taken into consideration. Commissioner Reginald Speight suggested that in College Education that Food and Security issues will be addressed.

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL HRCS

Program Manager Gene Troy informed the commissioners an update on the various city-wide meetings and trainings he attended and topics of discussion (Current Statewide Issues, Fair Housing, Belhaven Fair Housing for Tenants Training, and other local HRC Regional Meetings).

Mr. Troy introduced the Newest Housing Investigator, Jacques Chappell. He also introduced Dr. Anthony Wade, the Director of Fayetteville/Cumberland Human Relations Commission. Dr. Wade briefly spoke on the upcoming “Dining and Dialog” Event and “*The Hate You Give*” Book Dialog Series Event and other upcoming trainings and events. Chair Romain thank Dr. Wade for attending the meeting and he thank Mr. Troy for his report.

UPDATE ON NEXT REGIONAL MEETING

Program Manager Gene Troy gave the update on the recent Statewide Regional Meetings held and the upcoming meetings that will be held in the upcoming months.

UPDATE ON NCHRC TRAVEL

Program Manager Gene Troy gave a report on what he discussed with Director Lamont Goins about a budget and quorum for accomendations for commissioners to travel, hotel expenses, and meals.

UPDATE ON INTERN SUPPORT

Attorney Richard Boulden reported on the Intern Support provided in next year’s budget. Judge Mann is still lobbying for an additional staff member that will dedicated to 50 percent to Fair Housing and 50 percent HRC and other community relations support activities. A budget is needed for this position.

OLD BUSINESS

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF DRAFT BYLAWS

Program Manager Gene Troy gave a report on what he discussed with Director Lamont Goins on the draft bylaws. The Review and Approval of Draft Bylaws are still under review by the Rules Review Staff. The review results will possibly be available at the next meeting.

PURCHASE OF HRC COMMISSIONER ID BADGES

Program Manager Gene Troy gave a report on what he discussed with Director Lamont Goins about the printed samples of HRC Commissioner ID Badges. The three badges were viewed and discussed by the commissioners. The commissioners voted unanimously on Badge #1. The order will be placed for the badges.

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL SPEAKERS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Commissioner Amelia Stinson-Wesley reported on her discussion with Commissioner Angelo Mathay and committee to have a sub-committee meeting to discuss the Potential Speakers for Future Meetings and will give a report to Judge Julian Mann.

FAIR HOUSING TRAINING

Program Manager Gene Troy informed the commissioners of the calendar of Fair Housing Training. The Budget is available for two Fair Housing staff members to attend training.

NEW BUSINESS

POTENTIAL MEETING LOCATIONS FOR CHARLOTTE FOR 2020

Chair Toussaint Romain discussed the NCHRC travel of once per year announcing the designation of Charlotte, NC. Accommodations will be provided. Lunch may be provided. The commissioners voted for the July 30th meeting to be held in Charlotte, NC. It was motioned by Motion by Commissioner Reginald Speight, Seconded by Commissioner Ralph "Steve" Stevenson, and the commissioners unanimously agreed to have the July 30th HRC meeting in Charlotte, NC. The arrangements will be completed by Director Goins and Program Manager Troy. Mr. Troy stated that the quorum needs to be made to go forward so that it will not be a wasted effort.

2020 PROJECTS

Chair Toussaint Romain suggested to table the 2020 Projects idea. The 2020 Projects will be postponed to a later date.

CLOSING REMARKS

Closing Remarks were made by Chair Toussaint Romain. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 1:21 p.m.

Submitted by,
Elouise Williams, Civil Rights Division Administrative Specialist

Minutes approved by,
The Human Relations Commission
Toussaint Romain, Commissioner (Presiding Chair)