

NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MINUTES
September 26, 2019

The Human Relations Commission met on Thursday, September 26, 2019 in the Commission Room at the Office of Administrative Hearings, 1711 New Hope Church Road, Raleigh, North Carolina. Commissioners present were: Vernetta Alston, Linda Barnes, Nicholas Byrne, Edith Chance, Immanuel Jarvis, Angelo Mathay, Paul Norman, TR Nunley, Toussaint Romain, Reginald Speight, Steve Stevenson, Amelia Stinson-Wesley.

Commissioners phoned in: Henry Eddleman, Janeesha Harris, Richard Huffman, Toni King, Charlotte Williams.

OAH Staff members present were Lamont Goins, Richard Boulden, Gene Troy, Sharesa Wilkins, Elouise Williams.

Dejha Deaver (Outreach and Support Staff) and Marquita Mbonu (Community Relations Analyst) from the City of Raleigh Human Relations 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 by Commissioner Steve Stevenson.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Jennie.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present and phoned in were noted.

Quorum was met.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS, OFFICIALS, STAFF-PROGRAM MANAGER:

There were six new appointees. There were no officials present. There are two staff vacancies. There was administering of oath of office. The new commissioners were sworn in by Judge Julian Mann – Vernetta Alston, Linda Jackson Barnes, Nicholas Byrne, T R Nunley, Reginald Speight, and Amelia Stinson-Wesley.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the March 28, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Public Comments were by the North Carolina Coalition of Israel group. There were 23 people present from the group. There were ten speakers that spoke on Antisemitism in North Carolina. (30 minutes total time) – (North Carolina Coalition for Israel, et al v. City of Durham, et al). The speakers were: Amy Rosenthal, Josh Ravish, Hal Marcus, Jennie, Kathryn Wolf, Debra Freeman, Jerome Fox, Bruce Newman, Rodman Cotman, and Andrew Blount. Attorney Richard Boulden spoke in response about Antisemitism that since it is a pending litigation that the Commission should not comment on this pending litigation. Chair Romain spoke on his advisement in agreement. Commissioner Stevenson also commented. Chair Romain thanked them for voicing their concerns. Mr. Josh Ravish thanked the commissioners for listening. They then departed.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Discussions on Fair Housing, Service of Support Animals, Statutory Housing HUD Training. Director Lamont Goins commented on the training budget available for commissioners. Commissioner Stevenson went on record to employ two commissioners to have for the Appellate body – Fair Housing Committee.

UPDATE ON EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS

Attorney Richard Boulden stated that there were not legislative updates on the two bills that regulates the certification of ESA animals since last meeting.

UPDATE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING & LOCAL HRC'S REPORT

Program Manager Gene Troy informed the commission about the High Alert Memo about hate crimes. He also provided an update on the various city-wide meetings and trainings he attended and topics of discussion (Human Relations issues, Ordinance, and next Regional Meeting).

UPDATE ON FAIR HOUSING INTAKE INQUIRIES

Director Lamont Goins reported on Fair Housing Intake Inquiries process and other Fair Housing information.

UPDATE ON NCHRC TRAVEL

Chair Toussaint Romain discussed the NCHRC travel once per year. Director Lamont Goins answered questions asked by the commissioners.

UPDATE ON INTERN SUPPORT

Director Lamont Goins reported on the Intern Support provided in next year's budget.

OLD BUSINESS

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF DRAFT BYLAWS

Director Lamont Goins reported on the draft bylaws. Since there technical changes are recommended, The Review and Approval of Draft Bylaws was proposed to be tabled and postponed for further discussion.

PURCHASE OF HRC COMMISSIONER ID BADGES

Director Lamont Goins discussed the printed samples of HRC Commissioner ID Badges. They were viewed and discussed by the commissioners. A decision for purchase will be made at a later date.

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL SPEAKERS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Potential Speakers fo Future Meetings were discussed by Judge Julian Mann. He will choose speakers for short presentations that have an interest in the HRC's purpose with the commission's approval.

FAIR HOUSING TRAINING

The Commissioners were informed of the new calendar of Fair Housing Training by Director Lamont Goins.

NEW BUSINESS

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2020

Director Lamont Goins reported on the Meeting Schedule for 2020. The commissioners were in agreement to have four quarterly main meetings for year 2020 and additional meetings throughout the year, if needed. The proposed dates for year 2020 are: January 30th, April 30th, July 30th, and October 29th. It was motioned by Commissioner Immanuel Jarvis to accept the dates and seconded by the commissioners.

CLOSING REMARKS

Closing Remarks were made by Chair Toussaint Romain. He briefly talked about the purpose why the commissioners heard from the group earlier. He thanked everyone for receiving and listening to them. Also, he thanked them for helping the HRC to be stronger in harmony and in reconciliation of the state. Commissioner Steve Stevenson asked the question about the potential vice chair vacant position. It was briefly discussed. The vice chair status will be investigated and further discussion tabled until a later date.

The meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Submitted by,
Elouise Williams, Civil Rights Division Administrative Specialist

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