

## Human Right Commission Minutes 2020 Retreat

**DATE:** February 3, 2020

**LOCATION:** 7 Rockbrook Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22901

Shantell Bingham called the meeting to order at 10:15 am.

**ROLL CALL:** Lyndele Von Schill, Andy Orban, Ann Smith, Jeanette Abi-Nader, Sue Lewis, Ernest Chambers, Kathryn Laughon, Matthew Tenant, Shantell Bingham, Rob Woodside

### **Facilitated discussion by Cristine Nardi and Mary Davis from the Center for Non-profit Excellence**

- High Functioning Meeting Norms
  - Ms. Nardi led an exercise during which Commissioners identified hopes and fears
    - Hopes
      - More support from the City regarding the office and our relationship.
      - We have one clear policy change presented.
      - Greater clarity and efficiency in our process.
      - To be a meaningful voice for change, heard and respected by City Council and City Manager
      - More visibility with City officials regarding policy recommendations
      - More visibility with the public regarding an interactive dialogue on issues that citizens care about.
      - Get more community members to attend meetings by contacting neighborhood associations, church leaders, and representatives from the underserved populations of Charlottesville.
      - Find ways to be more effective and vocal in our advocacy before City officials.
      - Follow outcomes of individuals bringing issues to the OHR; find out what are the roadblocks to effective remedies (what happens after referrals).
      - Attention and positive response from CPD.
      - Continued/increased opportunity to collaborate among HRC Commissioners on human rights issues.
      - More people attend regularly.
      - We get our policies passed with the help of City Council going along with us.
      - More resolutions.
      - Public and private sector partnerships.
    - Fears
      - Four more years of the Trump Administration.
      - The dance of the Police Review Board.
      - Charlene is leaving. That was an important hub for our work.
      - Policy review(s) are never heard by Council.
      - Continued lack of impact on critically important policies, especially related to L.E.
      - Bogged down in minutiae.
      - NRAO and local services

- Not pursuing the more difficult options for fear of not succeeding.
- Not aiming high enough.
- The end of our impact because of the Council and City Manager.
- Weakening of the OHR role and the Commissions voice and partnership potential.
- Boggled down in minutiae by neo-liberal do-gooders who are worried about making true change.
- Meandering aimlessly from idea to idea.
- That the City doesn't give us the wrong Director.
- The we become more militant.
- Ms. Davis led several discussions and activities that explored team function
- Review of HRC role and responsibilities
  - Ms. Nardi led a discussion around the primary mission and function of the HRC
  - A key theme emerged of improving the effectiveness and impact of policy review and recommendations
- Meeting agenda structure
  - Ms. Nardi led an exercise to review the HRC Regular Meeting agenda structure
  - She shared the following key principles
    - You drive the agenda. The agenda does not drive you.
    - Look forward vs. backwards
    - Watch for signals
  - Commissioners suggested the following recommendations for the Regular Meeting agenda
    - Things to add
      - Board packets should go out to Commissioners one week in advance of meeting
      - Agenda items that are informational only and require no action should be noted as such
      - Agenda items that require action should be noted as such
      - An agenda item that offers the option of creating new ad hoc committees
      - An agenda item to review next steps and actions
      - A moment of silence
      - State the mission at the top of the agenda
    - Things to keep
      - Matters by the public (required)
      - Written staff reports and short discussion
      - Other business (where Commissioners share updates about other meetings)
      - Updates from the Ad hoc committees
        - Materials should be included in board packets in advance
    - Things to lose or improve
      - Other business
        - Some Commissioners felt that this did not contribute toward moving the HRC forward
      - The agenda and attachments should be provided a week beforehand
      - Clarify the difference between business matters and work sessions
      - Move announcements to the end of the meeting
      - Put the most important items first

### **Review of hopes and fears raised by Commissioners and identification of goals – Charlene Green**

- Key themes that emerged from a review of the Hopes

- More City support
- More visibility and attendance at meetings
- Policy effectiveness
- Ideas for 2020 Goals
  - Continue writing letters of support
    - Coupled with a better understanding of the supported groups
    - Grounded in the background work of the HRC
  - Motivate City Council and the City Manager to support the HRC
  - Pursue FEPA status
  - Advocate for response and action the City when providing recommendations
  - Increased public awareness
  - Improved HRC member attendance at meetings
  - Have clear priority City policy issue areas
    - ADA access for deaf and hard of hearing at City Council
    - LGBTQ+ employee rights and benefits
    - Equitable policing
      - Explore relationship with to the Civilian Review Board
      - Explore collaboration with the People’s Coalition
      - Explore HRC’s role in community/police relations
    - Housing
      - Potential advocacy around HB6 and HB357
      - Explore relationship with the Charlottesville Low-income Housing Coalition
      - Explore relationship with the Housing Advisory Committee

**Discussion regarding report to City Council on February 18, 2020**

- Review of key achievements by the HRC – Shantell Bingham
- Review of education & awareness and facilitation & leadership actions – Charlene Green
- Review of service provision data and emerging trends – Todd Niemeier

**Status of the OHR and Charlene’s departure**

- Charlene provided a summary of her reasons for moving on

**HRC Chair leads closed discussion**

**Meeting Adjourned: 3:10 pm.**

**ACTION ITEMS**

- **All Commissioners**
  - **Follow-up meeting to continue retreat discussion**
  - **Wednesday, February 5, 2020, from 6pm to 8pm**
  - **Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church (Aldersgate Room)**
  - **1901 Thomson Road**
- **Todd**
  - **Post public notice for 2/5 meeting on Monday, February 3.**
  - **Type minutes from retreat and return to HRC before 2/5 meeting.**