



**Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
November 17, 2022
City Space, 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902
6:30 pm**

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1. WELCOME

- a. CALL TO ORDER
 - i. Chair, Jessica Harris, called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm
- b. ROLL CALL
 - i. Jessica Harris
 - ii. Ernest Chambers (arrived 7:17pm)
 - iii. Jeanette Abi-Nader
 - iv. Mary Bauer
 - v. Wolfgang Keppley
 - vi. Kathryn Laughon (arrived 7:24pm)
 - vii. Andy Orban
 - viii. Lyndele Von Schill (joining remotely)
- c. Moment of Silence for D'Sean Perry, Lavel Davis Jr., and Devin Chandler
- d. MISSION (recited by all): *Act as a strong advocate to justice and equal opportunity by providing citywide leadership and guidance in the area of civil rights.*

2. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - i. Ang Conn
 1. Has concern regarding homelessness in Charlottesville—there are still people sleeping unhoused, especially with the weather
 - a. Speaking on behalf of herself and not an organization
 2. Exposure to the extreme cold by individuals with underlying conditions (or without underlying conditions) is very concerning
 - a. The Councilors have not been responding to phone calls
 3. Asks the Commission to bring the situation to Council's attention; there are not enough options for those who are currently unhoused
 4. Commissioner asks how many people usually unhoused
 - a. Ms. Conn is unsure, but knows there are capacity limits for certain options, leaving others without any options
 - b. Could seek out the accurate number, though it may be difficult to get one
- b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- i. Commissioner appreciates Ms. Conn's comments and suggests addressing this topic in an annual report to Council
- ii. Another Commissioner says PACEM just opened their shelters on 11/14/22 which will be open until the spring; wonders what their capacity is compared to what is needed
 - 1. Commissioner finds that PACEM holds about 65 people per night, depending on individual church capacity
 - 2. Salvation Army is a 58-bed shelter
 - 3. In 2021, the Daily Progress reported that 260 individuals were unhoused in the city; in the county, the number was 177
- iii. Commissioner asks what restrictions there are for shelters, and if they are denied, what their options are then
 - 1. HRC Director references notes from homelessness Rumble from several meetings back:
 - a. There are only two homelessness shelters: Salvation Army and PACEM
 - b. PACEM operates Premier Circle specifically for people with health conditions that make them more susceptible to COVID; is not accepting new entries because the building is getting redone in April
 - c. PACEM congregate capacity varies based on size of church, and it is first come, first served
 - i. People are supposed to call first and find a way to arrive there between 5:30pm and 7:30pm for intake; if full, they will provide a referral to the Salvation Army warm room, where there are six spots for men and six spots for women; if both are full, that is it
 - d. Barriers for entry are real and unsolved
 - 2. BRACH will host a follow-up Rumble session on 12/1/22

3. MINUTES

- a. Review of minutes from 10/20/22
 - i. Motion to approve
 - 1. Wolfgang
 - ii. Second
 - 1. Mary
 - iii. Vote
 - 1. In favor: 4
 - 2. Opposed: 0
 - 3. Abstained: 2

4. BUSINESS MATTERS

- a. Chair Update
 - i. Follow-up about ad-hoc committees: would like to revisit the breakdown of committees and potentially condense some to work more effectively
- b. OHR Staff Reports (HRC Director)
 - i. Adding new primary service type called "Navigation" in order to most accurately reflect the work that the OHR does other than processing complaints of discrimination, which is supposed to be its primary role
 - 1. Total number of incoming and outgoing contacts for October

- was 353; 256 were navigation-related contacts (more information in the staff report in the agenda packet)
2. Can compile this data to present to Council to show the work that the OHR is doing that could possibly be done by another service provider that should exist (and how much money is being spent at the moment)
 - ii. HRC Ordinance is back on Council's action agenda for 11/21/22--there will be more discussion about it within Council
 1. HRC Director will be present remotely
 - iii. Hiring is temporarily on hold
 - iv. Budget meetings seem to be going smoothly; OHR requested permanent budget line items for interns
 - v. During 2-2-1s, quarterly reports to Council came up
 1. HRC Director will begin forwarding the OHR Director Monthly Report document to Council quarterly
 - vi. Commissioner asks about next steps after compiling Navigation data
 1. Having the data to give to Council may not necessarily change what the OHR does
 - a. OHR is moving offices and will no longer be as visible to passerby
 2. Understanding the time and resources dedicated to navigational tasks could reveal the need for navigator positions in other parts of the City
 - vii. Commissioner asks to quantify time spent on "Providing Spanish translation for other City departments"
 1. It is periodic; it depends on where the call lands and who knows that OHR staff can speak Spanish
 2. HRC had not followed up on the language access resolution
 3. Deputy City Manager has already done a procurement for some language access components, though HRC Director is unsure where it stands at the moment
 4. Commissioner asks what happens when someone comes into the OHR speaking a language other than Spanish
 - a. Either they come with someone who speaks the language or says they know someone or the OHR calls the IRC for a translator
 - viii. Commissioner asks how to access letters uploaded to the website
 1. charlottesville.gov > Government > Human Rights > Human Rights Documents (some recent documents may not have yet been uploaded)

5. WORK SESSION

- a. Commissioner Terms
 - i. Spreadsheet is in agenda packet
 - ii. Term staggering became lost over time
 - iii. Would like some Commissioners to decide whether they would prefer a two- or three-year term
 1. A two-year term would mean that the term ends 2/28/2024, and a three-year term would end 2/28/2025
 - iv. Andy and Lyndele volunteer for a two-year term

1. This would mean Ernest and Kathryn would take three-year terms (they are not currently present)
 - v. For those whose terms end the coming February, Maxicelia Robinson can simply resubmit Commissioners' previous application from so long as there are no changes to be made (HRC Director can check)
 - vi. Jessica says she never received email outlining Commissioner duties
 - vii. Council is in the process of unifying rules and procedures across boards and commissions
- b. Nominating Committee Formation
- i. Commissioner asks if electing a new Chair every year is required every year
 1. Currently, yes, though the Commission can change bylaws
 2. Director suggests going by new changes in Rules & Procedures; suggests discussing during next meeting changing Commission officer terms
 3. Wolfgang volunteers to be Chair of Nominating committee
 - a. Mary volunteers to be committee member
 4. The Nominating committee prepares the ballot for Chair and Vice Chair for the 2023 term
 - a. Will work before the next regular meeting to create a ballot, and voting will occur in January's meeting (could nominate someone from the floor during the January meeting as well)
- c. Ad-hoc Committee Updates
- i. In 2023, Commissioners can have a couple virtual regular and committee meetings
 1. Commission is supposed to only have meetings after 5pm due to CitySpace availability
 - ii. Committee restructuring
 1. Commissioner proposes working via email for Community Engagement committee for the rest of the year
 2. Chair proposes restructuring committees to do more effective work
 - a. Housing committee reports it would like to restructure during next year's retreat to pick an issue to focus on to increase efficiency
 3. Director says the HRC is a Tier 2 Commission, so it has priority to use CitySpace after 5pm if the City Planning Commission or the Architectural Board of Review is not using it at that time
 - a. Director can ask if there is a reoccurring window earlier in the day that the Commission can meet
 4. Chair asks committees and their Chairs to push forward productivity via email until committees reconvene in the new year
 5. New rules and procedures also state that Commissioners cannot meet to do business in groups of two without public notice
 - iii. Housing committee Chair Wolfgang asks if a different Commissioner would like to step up in the position

- iv. Director advises Commissioners to focus on a single topic to be more efficient, then schedule the year keeping that topic in mind; can consult the Ordinance for specific ideas
 - 1. Commissioner supports reporting on homelessness in the City
 - 2. Commissioners generally support keeping the Housing and Community Engagement committees and letting go of the Equity in City Government committee
 - 3. Commissioner brings up past conversations with other Charlottesville service providers about wraparound services and the HMIS database
- v. Commission decides to move work for December committee meetings to email and not meet on 12/1/22
 - 1. Potential progress reports in January meeting
 - 2. Director will continue to hold the current time and space, but **will ask about other options as well**
 - a. Currently has space booked 6:30-9pm, so can look into alternative times within that window for committee meetings
 - 3. Next ad-hoc committee meetings will be 1/5/23
- vi. Commissioner asks OHR Outreach Specialist about upcoming events
 - 1. There are no upcoming events until after Thanksgiving besides the Turkey Giveaway on Saturday 11/19

6. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - i. None
- b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC
 - i. None

7. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

- a. Commissioner says she sent an email regarding upcoming Livable Cville webinar
- b. NSBP meeting was held the week previous (helped in large part by Jessica), and the event was a success
 - i. Mayor Snook and Chief of Police spoke
- c. Commissioner asks about Council's response to the legislative agenda recommendations
 - i. Council responded with questions and feedback; **Todd will follow up to ask what they are going to do with the recommendations**

8. NEXT STEPS

- a. **Wolfgang & Mary**
 - i. **Work in Nominating committee to make ballots for Chair and Vice-Chair**
- b. **Committee members**
 - i. **Work in Housing and Community Engagement committee meetings for January meetings**
- c. **Todd**
 - i. **Ask Maxicelia about HRC applications**
 - ii. **Ask about alternative times/locations for HRC committee meetings**
 - iii. **Follow up with Council regarding legislative recommendations**

9. ADJOURN

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm

