

# CITY OF FAIRMONT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

## **Minutes of:**

### **Regular Meeting**

**August 26th, 2020 – 5:30p.m.**

The duly called and noticed meeting of the City of Fairmont Human Rights Commission was held on Wednesday, August 26th, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., via Zoom.

Brett White, Commission Chairperson, called the meeting to order and asked for a roll call of members.

## **Roll Call of Members**

### **Members Present:**

Brett White

Dani DeVito

Marianne Moran

Jim Nolan

Gia Deasy

Cyndi Straight

Larry Buckland

Whereupon, a quorum of commissioners was determined to be present for the purposes of conducting the business of said commission as set forth on the Agenda.

**In RE: Approval of Meeting Minutes from 7/22/20:** Minutes were sent out for review by the commissioners prior to the meeting. No discussion took place.

Marianne Moran moved that the minutes be approved.

Cyndi Straight seconded the motion.

Minutes were approved.

## **In Re: Report from Committee on Education and Community Forum:**

- Jim Nolan reviewed structures of discussion that were put together during our workshop in December 2019.
  - SEE ATTACHED
- Jim Norton updated the commission on the Building Bridges of Respect event and Fairmont City training.
  - Still exploring workshop opportunities for BBoR.
  - Most immediate concern is assisting the Communities of Shalom with the cultural competency training.
  - Funding for the training has been approved.
  - Hope to come back to the HRC with a couple of different formats for the BBoR event.

- Communities of Shalom purchased “How to be an Anti-Racist” for all City Council members.
- DD Meighen
  - Spoke about the plan to introduce some curriculum for Marion Co. Schools to use about county history with human/civil rights.
  - Recognized that today signified 100 years of women’s right to vote.
  - He is looking for funding for the curriculum.

**In Re: Update on City of Fairmont Employee Training Progress:**

- Tony Michael and Denis Scott from WVU were on the call
  - Tony said that training customization has started.
  - Communities of Shalom was able to secure all costs through grant funding
  - Planning to try to deliver the training in person in smaller groups
  - Hoping for late Sept./early Oct.
  - The next step is to make the connection with the City Manager about scheduling/location/etc.

**In Re: Discussion of Lack of Diversity on Human Rights Commission:**

- Brett White reminded everyone that the entire commission agrees with the problem with the lack of diversity on the commission.
  - Stated we don’t have the power to make those changes ourselves.
- Gia Deasy clarified that we all applied, but that we were chosen and that it seems as though the procedure itself is flawed and was not advertised enough.
- Cyndi Straight pointed out that she is a minority.
  - Stated that she would gladly give up her seat.
  - All terms expire on November 15, 2021 at the same time
- Gia suggested advertising openings to try to diversify the group.
- Marianne Moran explained the process of choosing commission members
  - City Manager and Council see all application.
  - City Manager chooses their picks and they have to be approved by Council.
- Brett brought up the suggestion of having 3 commission members resign in November to free up seats for new applicants.
- Gia suggested that the paragraph section of the application could be the place where applicants can speak to diversity and their personal experiences.
- Brett reiterated the difficulty that the commission has had in getting the word out about meetings and other things we are doing.
- Jim Nolan suggested adding recruiting efforts to our education efforts. He is willing to do that as part of the education group.
- Brett suggested that we need to let Council know that they need to do better with a more diverse group when appointing members.
- Dani DeVito suggested that one of the commission members go to a Council meeting and update the Council on the complaints that the commission has received about the lack to diversity.

- Larry Buckland said that he was willing to address Council with the issue at the next meeting.
- Commission also began a discussion on if additional fields of Name and Email Address by required on the Google Form.
  - Decided that it was best to leave the form anonymous.
- Dani suggested having any of our statements moving forward read into the record at City Council meetings.
- Dani also suggested having Larry also inform Council that, as a way to add more diversity to the commission and stagger our terms, 3 members of commission would be stepping down in November.

**In Re: Open Citizen Forum:**

- None

**In Re: Announcements:**

- Marianne Moran
  - Thanked the education committee and Communities of Shalom for their work on the training and the grant funding.
- Larry Buckland
  - Echoed Marianne’s comments.
- Gia Deasy
  - Echoed those comments as well.
  - Thanked Brett for his leadership and help through all of the comments and compalints.
- Cyndi Straight
  - Echoed the same thanks.
  - Also thanked Jim Norton for all he has done on the education committee.
- Jim Nolan
  - Thanked everyone for attending and suggested taking advantage of upcoming events/forums.
  - Invited all those in attendance to bring someone with them next time.
- Dani DeVito
  - Also thanked everyone for attending and helping and encouraged anyone who can to read the book “How to be an Anti-Racist”
- Brett White
  - Echoed the thanks for everyone involved in the training.

**Consideration of Business**

**Pending Business: NONE**

**New Business: NONE**

**Financial Report: NONE**

**Events/Forums: NONE**

**Adjournment**

Larry Buckland made a motion to adjourn.  
Motion seconded by Marianne Moran and carried.  
Meeting adjourned.

Approved this the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of Sept., 2020.

  
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CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:

  
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Secretary