

**City of Fairmont-Human Rights Commission**

**Minutes of:  
Regular Meeting  
September 28, 2022- 5:30 pm**

The duly called and noticed meeting of the City of Fairmont Human Rights commission was held on Wednesday, September 28, 2022, at 5:35 p.m. both in person at Life Methodist Church and via ZOOM.

Larry Buckland, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call of Members**

**Members present:**

Dusty Merrill- via zoom  
Cyndy Straight  
Larry Buckland  
Dan Swiger  
Tiffany Samuels  
Miki DeMary-Andrew-via zoom

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.

Motion to excuse Robert Martin was made by Cyndy Straight and seconded by Tiffany Samuels.

**In RE: Approval of Meeting minutes from August 24, 2022:** Minutes were sent out for review by the commissioners prior to the meeting. No discussion took place.

Dan Swiger moved that the minutes be approved.  
Tiffany Samuels seconded the motion.

Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

**In RE: Review of Home and Secure meeting from last meeting.**

-”Once a person decides they want to be in recovery and commit to it, we have services to give to them.” - as quoted by Larry Buckland.

-Tiffany Samuels thought the presentations were great, and it was good to hear an update and to hear them from a different perspective. It is definitely a human rights issue for people to have proper housing, and to help people obtain proper housing, and to learn how they become without homes in the first place. She thanked Dan Swiger for bringing this to the meeting.

**In RE: REVISED FAIRMONT, WEST VIRGINIA NON-DISCRIMINATION ORDINANCE**

-approval at last meeting to go to city with anti-discrimination ordinance, the human rights commission needed to amend the current ordinance.

-Tiffany Samuels had a question about explaining differences in revision. It reads very similar to the first ordinance. How is this more in line with the mission of the human rights commission?

-Cyndy Straight: it started out that Andrew Schneider at Fairness WV, found out that there was no actual ordinance for human rights in Fairmont. The original version gave HRC deciding factor and that recommendations could be made to the city.

Larry did not realize it gave HRC this power.

-Kevin Sansalone said that the ordinance did not go along with what the people of Fairmont wanted when they voted for the HRC. By laws would need changed if those things were to become a part of the HRC.

-Cyndy said that it is important to pass this ordinance before the upcoming elections. We are hoping to have this on the agenda for October, but have not heard yet.

-Monongah passed the first ordinance, the original one, unanimously. They do not have HRC, but they passed the ordinance.

-Larry: We hope we will be the first county in WV to have 2 municipalities to approve this ordinance.

-Larry would like to entertain motion for Fairmont, WV Nondiscrimination Ordinance

Tiffany Samuels: motion to approve.

Cyndy Straight: seconded the motion.

All in favor, the motion is approved. We will do due diligence to move it to the City of Fairmont.

#### **In RE: OPEN CITIZEN FORUM**

Larry: Intro to Jim Norton about Communities of Shalom. And Renee Verbanic to get items and to work with East Fairmont Middle. Those items approved via funding. They will share once the items are received. One of the things requested, would like to train 2 commissioners to be trained to work with East Middle.

-Renee Verbanic would like a Schoolwide push for a positive environment and the principal of East Fairmont Middle is very excited about this. T shirts have been ordered for teachers and commissioners

-Miki DeMary-Andrew and Cyndy would like to be part of the committee. Tiffany Samuels will as well, despite limited time.

-Jim Norton- those who are volunteering will receive bullying prevention training

-Cathy Reed- Sat. Oct 8th; 10 to 2 at Field house and disaster preparedness expo. Please spread word about this because it is the first one since 2018.

-tomorrow council of churches 7 pm at First Baptist. School of Nursing is coming. They want to get nurses into the churches to get them more involved with the community.

-Communities of Shalom are first tuesday of month at 7 pm, will be via zoom for October & November.

-Jim Norton- still trying to gather submissions for Marion County artbook about resiliency during this pandemic. "Inspiration through Tough Times." Please send it to anyone who is interested. This book will be published and will be free to those who want it.

-Dan Swiger- asked if Phil Dugan at Fairmont State was contacted because he has done a lot of art in Marion County. He may be a good contact for some submissions.

-bit.ly/shalomartbook is the link to sign up and upload.

**In RE: ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMISSION**

- Dusty Merrill and Larry- podcast potential for HRC. They are collaborating and hope to speak about this more next month. Will include Jim Nolan in this endeavor.
  - Cathy Reed- recommended to connect with MCFRN and City of Fairmont because they are also doing podcasts. -potential for a town hall session time. Larry said it is important for those at this meeting to try and help build excitement and get more people on board.
  - planning session upon HRC, make announcement to get people to be part of planning as well.
  - Dan swiger- would like to see an all inclusive event to encompass many different organizations in Fairmont.
  - Miki DeMary-Andrew-auditions for Town and Gown October 5th for the two winter shows.
  - Cyndy Straight- October 22nd, 2022; HRC can have a table at DSF Stop's event if we can gather support.
  - Tiffany Samuels-October 22nd Dunbar Stop; expanding past that and will be a Health and Wellness Center. They are having a "Soul Stroll" on October 22nd, 2022 with the hot air balloon. Expecting 500 to 1000 people at this event. There will be a hayride, Tent or treat, community row for organizations. 1pm to 6pm. Will have encouragement of the covid 19 pfizer boosters available.
  - Larry Buckland- Dancing with the Stars; gathering starts at 6pm, but the event starts at 7. He will be dancing as couple number 4. They are also minimally in the lead for fundraising.
- City Council is October 11th at 7pm. We will know if it is on the agenda by October 5th.
- Dusty Merrill- none at this time.
  - Early voting starts soon (last day to register to vote is Oct. 18th; early voting will begin shortly after this date; by location. October 26th-November 5th) make sure to vote.
  - Happy early birthday to Larry Buckland and half birthday to Cyndy Straight.

**The next meeting will be held on October 26, 2022 at 5:30 pm via Zoom or in person at Life UMC.**

**Motion to adjourn- Tiffany Samuels  
Seconded by Dusty Merrill  
Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.**

Approved this the 26<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2022.

  
LARRY D. BUCKLAND  
CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:  
Secretary

  
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