

MINUTES OF HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

A regular session of the Human Relations Commission was held at 6:15 p.m. in Council Chambers, City Hall.

Members Attending: Block, Feltner, Holycross, Keller, Major, Severt, Villalobos.

Presiding Officer: Chairman Marvin Major, Sr.

Others Attending: City Staff
Citizens

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting commenced at 6:18 p.m. by the Chairman's call to order.

ACCEPT RESIGNATION OF LORETTA PHILLIPS: Upon motion of Mr. Major, seconded by Ms. Holycross, resignation of Loretta Phillips was approved by the Commission unanimously.

MINUTES: Upon motion of Ms. Holycross, seconded by Ms. Villalobos, the July 21, September 15, and November 17 minutes were approved by the Commission unanimously, having no corrections or additions to these minutes.

TRI-FOLD BROCHURE: Upon motion of Mr. Feltner, seconded by Ms. Holycross, the redesigned HRC tri-fold brochure was approved by the Commission unanimously.

REVISED OPERATING GUIDELINES: Upon motion of Ms. Holycross, seconded by Mr. Feltner, the revised HRC Operating Guidelines were approved by the Commission unanimously.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON: Upon motion of Mr. Severt, seconded by Mr. Feltner, Sonia Holycross was elected as a Chairperson by the Commission unanimously.

NEW MEMBER SUGGESTIONS: The Commission members discussed the process of adding new members to the HRC and suggested several individuals who, most likely, will be interested in serving on the HRC and/or have recently expressed their interest in becoming a Commission member. The decision was made to recommend Mayor to consider the appointment of the following individuals to the HRC:

- Donald Chavis – motion made by Mr. Feltner, seconded by Mr. Severt, approved by the Commission unanimously.
- Vernon Whitt – motion made by Mr. Major, seconded by Ms. Holycross, approved by the Commission unanimously.
- Darla York – motion made by Ms. Holycross, seconded by Mr. Severt, approved by the Commission unanimously.

The discussion ensued with Mr. Keller's comment that per the newly adopted Operating Guidelines, the maximum number of the HRC members can be nine; currently, the Commission has seven members; thus, Mayor, subject to City Council's approval, only can appoint two of the three suggested individuals. The Commission members agreed to proceed with the recommendation as it provides more potential member options for Mayor to consider.

POLICE INTERACTION: Mr. Major stated that the HRC should pursue finding ways to implement driver education program at schools. The program would entail not only learning driving rules but how to interact with police officers during traffic stops not to escalate the situation – for instance, learning how to respond and react to the commands given by an officer. Mr. Major noted that the endeavor to make the program part of the curriculum at schools would require the State Legislature's involvement as the lack of knowledge about how to interact with a police officer during a traffic stop is a state-wide issue. He emphasized that he did not think this issue was a significant concern for the city of Troy and added that the idea did not arise from the problems in Troy's community. Additionally, Mr. Major stated that if such program is implemented, the HRC should recommend the Troy City Schools (TCS) to have a trial run at their schools and make TCS a change model for other communities.

The Commission decided to invite Senator Steve Huffman to the HRC meeting to discuss the driver education program at schools and determine the process of sending the request to the State Legislature to be assigned to a committee.

Ms. Villalobos asked if any of the Commission members were aware of any driving schools teaching their students how to interact with a police officer during a traffic stop. Mr. Major responded that his two children have been taking classes at the driving schools, and such topic has not been discussed.

Mr. Keller noted that he liked the idea but wanted to discuss how to execute it. He asked if the Commission had sufficient materials to present to the Senator or if the HRC needed more time to solidify the idea. Mr. Major responded that a former Black police officer in the State of Illinois worked with the State Senators to introduce a bill to pass a law requiring every student obtaining a driver's license to go through the police interaction course. The HRC could use the State of Illinois Driver Education Program information to present to Senator Huffman.

In response to Mr. Feltner's question regarding having enough materials for the Senator to review, Mr. Severt said that if the Senator decides to pursue the idea, his group will work on the language of the legislation. Mr. Keller stated that having a framework of the State of Illinois Driver Education Program would help to lead the conversation with the Senator. Mr. Feltner mentioned that depending on which State Committee this issue needs to be presented to, the Commission could write a public statement that can be read in front of the Committee. Ms. Holycross and Mr. Feltner agreed that this would be the best approach to ensure the proposal gets to the Committee. Still, meeting with Senator Huffman will help to determine if the statement is viable to be submitted to the Senate. Ms. Holycross added that including the Driver Education Program in schools will make the information accessible for all students regardless of socioeconomic status.

The Commission members discussed the December report of the Troy Police Department. In response to the question regarding citations and warnings statistics, Chief McKinney stated that the data could be obtained for the different age groups. Chief McKinney noted that he believes driver education is part of the AAA driving classes curriculum; a portion of it may be mandated by the State and may address interaction with police during a traffic stop. He added that Troy Police Officers interact with 5th and 7th grade Troy City Schools students as part of the DARE curriculum. The curriculum discusses making good choices, peer pressure, bullying, etc. Additionally, high school SRO meets with students during health classes.; however, due to the limited time and question-driven environment, the SRO not always has time to go over the items in the outline while answering student questions.

Ms. Holycross and Mr. Feltner suggested recommending Troy City Schools extend the time for health classes and consider conveying an assembly of Troy High School students for a driver education class.

FUTURE MEETINGS: Upon motion of Ms. Holycross, seconded by Mr. Major, the Commission unanimously decided to continue meeting bi-monthly on the third Thursday of a month at 6:15 p.m. with the exception of a special meeting scheduled for February 16, 2023, at 6:15 p.m. to discuss the 2023 HRC projects.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS: Mr. Feltner proposed implementing an annual survey to obtain feedback from the community. He added that such a survey would help to compile data regarding existing issues and the diversity and inclusion of the community. Mr. Feltner said that the data would assist HRC with the annual report and recommendations to the Mayor and motioned to accept his recommendation. Mr. Severt stated that the proposal aligned with the Operating Guidelines and seconded Mr. Feltner's motion. The annual survey implementation was approved by the Commission unanimously.

Mr. Severt shared an image of a plaque (attached to these minutes) put up next to the back door of the Missouri Theatre. The plaque acknowledges the history of the Theatre and reads as follows: "Lest We Forget Never Again! Until the late 1950's, persons of color were not permitted to enter the Missouri Theatre by its front door. Entrance was only permitted through this back door and then only for seating in the balcony." Mr. Severt suggested reaching out to the new Mayflower building owners and asking if they would consider putting up a similar plaque. Mr. Keller asked if the Commission members knew this part of the history was relevant to the Mayflower building. Mr. Severt responded that while there is anecdotal evidence in the community, research

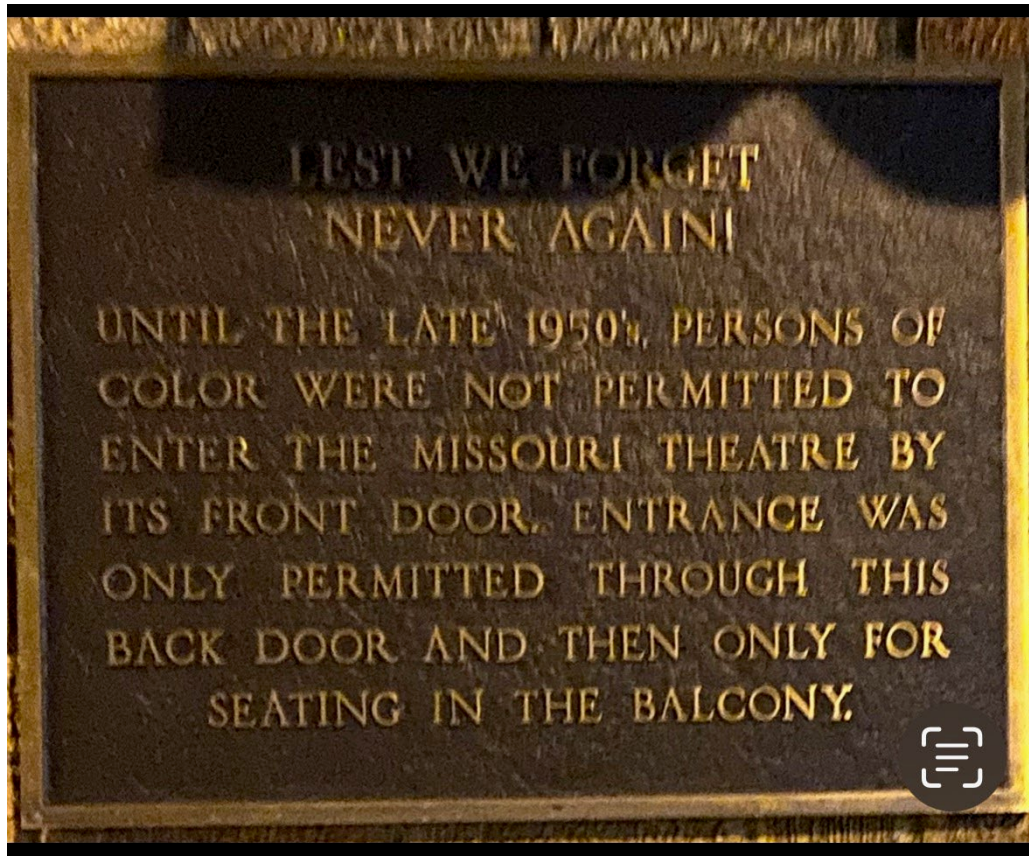
needs to be done to find historically accurate facts. The HRC members decided to add this item to the February 16 meeting agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Brad Boehringer, 105 Crestwood Drive, stated that the local history of Native Americans is being forgotten and recommended the Commission members look into advising Mayor and City Council to adopt a resolution to recognize the month of November as National American Indian Heritage Month.

Mr. Boehringer also inquired about the police interaction topic discussed and asked if issues related to it were relevant to the city of Troy and if the Commission was overreaching. He added that Troy is very fortunate to have great police officers and that, in his opinion, education on how to interact with police comes from the family, even before kids are in school. Mr. Feltner noted that because the culture of every family varies, it cannot be assumed that every kid is educated at the same level regarding how to interact with police officers. Mr. Major and Ms. Holycross agreed that Troy has an excellent police force. However, there is a lack of knowledge about police interaction in the community, and the absence of information prevents combating fear of police that affects an individual's behavior during a traffic stop. Mr. Boehringer further asked if the HRC had considered his recommendation made at one of the previous meetings and had met with the community members in their neighborhoods. The Commission members responded that they interact with their community every day.

Melissa Kleptz, President and CEO of The Troy Foundation, shared the Statement of Inclusiveness (attached to these minutes) approved by the Governing Board of The Troy Foundation on December 12, 2022. She stated that the foundation was inspired by the HRC's work and the Troy MLK team and I.D.E.A. Troy partnership to adopt the statement to become part of the collaboration. Ms. Kleptz added that by the end of 2023, the foundation would require non-profit organizations to adopt a similar statement of inclusiveness to receive future grants.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.





STATEMENT OF INCLUSIVENESS

Approved on 12/12/2022

The Troy Foundation exists to improve the quality of life for all citizens of Troy, Ohio, and is made up of a diverse collection of funds given by caring individuals, businesses and organizations that have a common concern for the well-being of the people in the community. Our mission requires a commitment to inclusiveness as a fundamental operating principle and is best pursued if our workforce, grantees, donors, volunteers, partners, vendors and governing body include individuals of diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and perspectives.

The Foundation believes that diversity encompasses, but is not limited to, age, gender, race, national origin, philosophy/religion, physical and/or mental abilities/characteristics, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic circumstances, and lifestyle. Thus the Foundation is committed to fostering a supportive work environment that respects and appreciates diversity in its many forms and provides all staff members with an opportunity to maximize the use of their work-related skills and talents.

The Foundation seeks to work with external organizations that reflect, as a group, the diversity of the Troy community. We look for grantees, volunteers and business partners that include individuals of varied backgrounds, beliefs, and perspectives. We encourage all organizations with which we work to recognize and embrace the benefits of diversity.

Finally, in order to achieve the highest standards in all our activities, it is important that the Foundation benefit from the perspectives of many different segments of the community. Toward this end, we seek to collaborate with donors of varying means and interests. In addition, we encourage the appointment of community leaders to our governing board who will bring varying points of view to board deliberations.

The Troy Foundation celebrates and values diversity that contributes to a kind, encouraging and welcoming community which helps all residents live happy, healthy and hopeful lives.