

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: Keller, Major, Severt, Villalobos, Holycross.

Upon motion of Mr. Severt, seconded by Mr. Keller, Mr. Feltner was excused from this meeting by unanimous vote.

Presiding Officer: Chairperson Sonia Holycross

Others Attending: City Staff

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting commenced at 6:20 p.m. by the Chairperson's call to order.

MINUTES: Upon motion of Mr. Severt, seconded by Mr. Major, the November 16, 2023, minutes were approved by the Commission unanimously, having no corrections or additions to these minutes.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS: Mr. Severt stated that the Mayor had asked him to continue serving on the Commission, and Mr. Severt had agreed to an additional two-year term.

The Commission members were provided with a printed copy of the Troy, Ohio, African-American Historical Sites brochure. The Commission thanked City staff for completing the project and noted that the brochures would be distributed among different organizations in Troy. Mr. Major stated that the Commission should continue working on projects portraying Troy as an accepting and inclusive community.

Ms. Holycross mentioned the MLK Day walk, during which the participants held pieces of a mosaic portraying Martin Luther King, Jr. Each piece displayed small-scale pictures of different community organizations, events, activities, and people. The display represented MLK's vision of a Beloved Community. Ms. Holycross thanked the Chief of the Troy Police Department, the Miami County Sheriff, and the Maker Lab of Troy-Miami County Public Library for their support.

Mr. Keller noted that the Commission should discuss the future HRC initiatives. He stated that if The Troy Foundation hosts diversity, inclusion, and equity training, the Commission should participate, as enhancing knowledge will help the HRC better identify community needs and advise the Mayor on those issues.

The HRC discussed different demographic groups that need support in the community, either with material assistance or access to services, such as mental health support. The Commission members concurred that research is required to determine what kind of assistance these demographics need and who in the community can provide that support. A need for a visitation house and its importance was also discussed. Mr. Severt and Ms. Villalobos explained the complexity of establishing such facility and the challenges those face who operate it. Mr. Keller and Mr. Major noted that sharing the idea with the churches in the community may be worthwhile to see if there is an interest in pursuing the project.

The Commission and the Chief of Police Shawn McKinney also briefly discussed police officer hiring and retention challenges in the Troy Police Department. Chief McKinney mentioned different recruitment strategies the Department utilizes to hire more officers.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No public comments were provided.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.