

MINUTES OF HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

A regular session of the Human Relations Commission was held at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, City Hall.

Members Attending: Major, Severt, Villalobos, Holycross.

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

Presiding Officer: Chairperson Sonia Holycross

Others Attending: City Staff

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting commenced at 6:04 p.m. by the Chairperson's call to order.

MINUTES: Upon motion of Mr. Severt, seconded by Ms. Villalobos, the April 18, 2024, minutes were approved by the Commission unanimously, having no corrections or additions to these minutes.

INITIATIVES: The Commission members discussed the completed, ongoing, and future initiatives. Mr. Severt complimented the HRC's accomplishments. He also notified the HRC that he would resign from the Commission at the end of the year. The Commission members concurred that a lot has been accomplished, and positive change is noticeable in diversity hiring in Troy City Schools and the Troy Police Department. However, it is needed for the Commission to stay active and participate in various engagements that will allow them to remain visible, enhance intergroup relationships, and increase awareness about the HRC.

The Chairperson emphasized the importance of attending events/concerts, ribbon cuttings, and police officers/recruits' swearing-in ceremonies. She added that if no Commission member can attend, other options should be explored to show HRC support. Mr. Severt noted that the HRC is an advisory commission serving as a conduit between the City and the community, and the initiatives should be realistic and fit the scope of the Commission's operation; the group has difficulty having quorum at the meetings due to busy schedules, and it will be difficult to attend those events. He added that some suggested activities, such as attending ribbon cuttings and engaging in outreach, could be more suitable for I.D.E.A. Troy. Ms. Holycross stated that while it is understood that the HRC is an advisory board, it can help to build a bridge between the City and the community. It could be achieved with simple activities such as providing flyers or brochures from HRC with the welcome bag on ribbon cuttings or City staff such as Salome or the Mayor herself welcoming new police officers on behalf of the HRC during swearing-in ceremonies.

The HRC has determined that the Commission should continue searching for ways to help re-establish the Festival of Nations. Mr. Major and Ms. Villalobos stated that they would contact the festival committee and inquire about how they could help.

Ms. Holycross stated that she would contact The Troy Foundation for an update regarding the diversity training. She added that if that training is not an option, the HRC should pursue organizing training for the Commission. She also asked City staff to notify the HRC about upcoming ribbon cuttings and officers/recruits' swearing-in ceremonies. The HRC also asked for a list of community events to determine which they could attend individually or as a group to interact with attendees and distribute the HRC brochure.

Mr. Major and Ms. Holycross concurred that the Commission should renew working with the City administration regarding the "Discrimination and Protected Classes" ordinance. Mr. Major stated that he would lead the initiative. He also suggested inviting student political and national honor society groups established within public and private schools in Troy to Commission meetings and asking them to make a small presentation about their group. Also, attending the meetings would allow the students to hear what the HRC discusses and learn what is the purpose of the HRC. The HRC agreed that those groups may share valuable information as they have a different perspective and experiences.

MEETINGS: The Commission agreed to meet monthly to work on the discussed initiatives. It will be inquired if the meeting day can be set for Wednesdays instead of Thursdays, and based on availability, the next meeting date will be set.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No public comments were provided.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.