

City of Morgantown
Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes for March 21, 2019

Present: Jan Derry, Chair
Kristen Cooper, Secretary
Kate Levine-Freedman
Jena Martin
Don Spencer (Program Assistant)
Tim Hairston (State HRC Liaison)

Meeting called to order by Jan Derry, Chair, at 6:44 PM.

The newly appointed Commissioner, Jena Martin, introduced herself to the group. Introductions were made with everyone who was in attendance.

The agenda was distributed with one change (Don Spencer to discuss City Council candidate questions during the Communications session).

Public Session:

No one from the public was present at the meeting.

Minutes:

The minutes for February 2019 were distributed and reviewed. No changes were requested. Kate Levine-Freedman moved that the minutes be accepted as written. The motion was seconded by Jena Martin, and the motion passed unanimously.

Communications:

Tim Hairston announced the upcoming Civil Rights Day and asked for members to send him nominations for individuals for the Civil Rights Advocate of the Year award.

There were no updates from the Commission's hot line. Jacob Powers was not present to report on social media, however, it was noted that the recent incidents of KKK literature being distributed in Morgantown was addressed on the Commission's Facebook page.

Tim Hairston, on behalf of the State HRC, reported that they still have not found a permanent director. He took a few minutes to explain the structure of the State HRC to Jen Martin.

Don Spencer distributed a list of questions that will be submitted on behalf of the Commission for the upcoming City Council candidate forum presented by the League of Women Voters and Mountaineers for Progress on April 11th at South Middle School. Topics covered by the questions included (1) affordable housing, (2) the Employment/Housing non-discrimination act, (3) efficient operations, and (4) more compassionate, equitable and inclusive city efforts. Some changes were made to the existing questions to make them broader, to focus on the environment, and candidates' specific response to the KKK flyers.

Priority Items:

The DEI Plan was on the agenda; however Drew Bucy was not there to comment of the updated attachment K.

Judith Wilkinson was not in attendance to discuss the Welcome Statement utilization efforts. Jena Martin suggested we encourage WVU student organizations to help fundraise for this effort. Kate Levine-Freedman suggested that Welcome Statements could be displayed in schools.

The Commission's Project List was reviewed. Jacob Powers will head up the Anti-Bullying campaign, Kate Levine-Freedman will handle the "New to Morgantown" website information, Jena Martin will create a flow chart and FAQ for the non-discrimination ordinance complaint forms, and Open to All was added to the Project List.

The Open to All Campaign was discussed. Kristen Cooper reported on a recent committee meeting during which it was decided that there is a need for continued organization and an effort to bring in other key people/organizations. It was suggested that Drew Bucy investigate the "All Kinds Welcome Here" program to see if there is overlap between the two programs.

Don Spencer will speak to Eve Foulkes in regards to the Design Across Borders conference to see if the HRC can distribute flyers to attendees.

Don Spencer reported on the Land Acknowledgement Resolution. He said that Jacob Powers will be taking the lead on this effort and will work with Bonnie at the WVU Native American Studies Dept. We are waiting for her OK on the resolution. Don Spencer also shared the resolution with John Bolt at WVU. Don noted that there are other states using similar resolutions. Don has asked Judith Stitzel to look at the resolution to make the wording more efficient.

Don Spencer revised the Inclusionary Zoning Resolution based on notes from Ron Dulaney. Don is waiting on a committee meeting and he is setting up a meeting with the City Manager and others.

New Business:

Kristen Cooper read an email from Drew Bucy with an update on the Pride Block Party on April 13th. Drew was unable to meet with the event organizer regarding setting up an HRC table at the event. She encouraged all of the Commissioners and volunteers to attend.

Judith Wilkinson was not in attendance to discuss the Compassionate City effort.

Ongoing Projects:

Due to time constraints, Ongoing Projects will be carried forward to the April agenda.

Announcements:

The next meeting of the Human Rights Commission will take place on April 18th, 2019.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Submitted by Kristen Cooper