

Montgomery County Government
Office of Human Rights
21 Maryland Ave.
Suite 330
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Meeting Minutes
of the
Human Rights Commission
Of 2012

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**Human Rights Commission
Montgomery County Office of Human Rights
21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, Maryland 20850**

HRC Meeting Minutes: March 26, 2012.

Meeting Place: 21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, Maryland 20850.

Commissioners Attended: Russell Campbell (Chair) William England (vice chair), Barron Oakcrum, Betsy Jett, Jeremiah Floyd, Stacey Ormsby, Terry Vann; Matthew Marguia; Tina Patterson, Sajjad Durrani, Stephanie Mason, Doug Ryan.

Commissioners Absent: Ruth Martin, Selena Singleton, Suresh K. Gupta

Staff attended: Director James Stowe, Loretta Garcia, Compliance Manager.

1. Call to order:

- **Meeting:** Vice Chair William England called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.
- **Agenda:** An addition was made to the agenda under old business...”Meeting Frequency” The Commission then passed the agenda unanimously.
- **Minutes:** February minutes were not available to the Commission for review but were requested to be sent out to members by email after the meeting and will be reviewed and approved at the April Meeting.

2. Chairman’s Report: Russell Campbell:

- The Chair reported and shared a letter of response with the Commission to the Interagency Fair Housing Coordinating Group concerning the proposed Rental Survey. The Commission will continue to follow this matter. After discussion on the letter and proposed next steps, Commissioner Ryan volunteered to work with staff on the survey plan.
- The Chair reported on his attendance at the Montgomery County Sister City’s March 13th public meeting. Also Commissioners Floyd, Vann Oakcrum; and Matthew Marguia, Director Stowe, Loretta Garcia and Anis Ahmed attended the meeting. Further discussion was delayed until “Old Business”
- The Chair requested the Commission to review the Agency website. Staff has reported that many updates have been made to the site.
- The Chair reported that he attended the Lincoln Park Historical Foundation Gospel Freedom Train Ride program. The event was well attended and was a great success. This was a Black History Month program of spoken word, gospel music and dance.

3. Director’s Report: James L. Stowe:

- The Director reported that the efforts of Michael Dennis who is working under the Knowledge Transfer Contract is going very well with a focus on completing the current inventory of appeal cases by June 30, 2012 and establishing a Standard Operation Procedure for case management. He will also assist with the revision of Chapter 27.

- The Director reported that the budget committee hearing for the Office of Human Rights will be held Wednesday April 25, 2012 at 9:15 am in the Council Office Building. The Office of Human Rights will be supporting the County Executive's Budget proposal for the Office.
- The Director reported that Loretta Garcia would provide the Case Summary and Appeal Case Summary later in the meeting. conjunction with the County Attorneys office;

4. *Committee Reports:*

COHV: The Director reported that the COHV is now looking at the next issue or program idea to pursue...One suggestion was to have a public discussion on "Civility" in light of the coming presidential campaign and potential negative rhetoric associated with that. Also the COHV will be working on the CERB Report for the Committee and developing a 2 year work plan.

CAB: Commission England shared a summary of information on poverty in Montgomery County. Discussion followed with a request to have the data sent to all Commissioners.

Also there is a proposal to reorganize CAB and reduce the number of board members to 25.

CPD: Commissioner Jett reported that there is action moving forward concerning the Schedule A Hiring Preference for persons with disabilities. This would give persons with disabilities preference points when seeking employment with Montgomery County government. Also she stated that parking abuse of handicap parking spaces is becoming a problem. In addition the committee is looking at developing an accessibility rating survey

- IAFCG: Committee Chair Jeremiah Floyd reported that IAFCG received the letter from HRC and shared that it was discussed and next steps were in the hands of the HRC and not IAFCG who has no authority to act on the matter but are an advisory body.

5. *Special Committees:*

- Commissioner Jett reported that the Speaker's Bureau should work along with the outreach efforts as well as the proposed outreach meetings.
- Legislation efforts were put on hold at this time by the Chair
- There were much discussion on the proposed Public Forum Immigration and the possible approach. The following Commissioners agreed to serve on a working committee to further develop the idea. Commissioners Vann, Ormsby, Mason and Marguia...no chair was appointed.

6. *Old Business:*

- Commissioner Singleton was not present but did send a written report of her work to secure a site for the first outreach meeting. She and Commissioner Jett had been discussing possible locations and Commissioner Jett was able to report on the format of

such a meeting with the Commission. A number of ideas were discussed but not definite decision was made. The Commission did decide to hold the outreach meeting June 25, 2012 at the Silver Spring Civic Building. The Chair requested Commissioner Singleton through Commissioner Jett and Staff to move forward on reserving the space and the recommended format.

- Commissioner Floyd reported on the Montgomery County Sister City Proposal and the previous letter sent to the Commission from the organization Human Rights Matters. There was discussion by the Commission and members of staff who attended the March 13th meeting of the Sister City Committee. Commissioner Floyd sum up the discussion by stating that the letter requested HRC to look into the matters; HRC did so by getting a report from the Staff Liaison to the Sister City program Bruce Adams and HRC had Commissioners and staff attend the public meeting on the matter and based on that he felt HRC has been responsive to the request and therefore no further action should be taken....the issue asserted in the letter was the lack of transparency by the Sister City Committee...HRC was now satisfied according to the Chair that the public was now aware of the process and aware of ways they could interact with the Committee. By common consent the Commission agreed and the matter was closed.
- The Commission next discussed the issue of meeting frequency especially during the summer months...a decision was made also concerning the May meeting of the Commission since the regular date fell on a holiday....The Commission agreed to meet on May 14, 2012 for its May meeting and after some additional discussion did not finalize whether there would be a July or August meeting. A final decision will be made at the April meeting.

7. **New Business:** No new business

8. **CRB Reports:** Loretta Garcia. Compliance Manager:

- Current caseload: 219,
- New intake: 28,
- Case accepted from intake: 8
- Mediation: 8,
- Cases with investigators: 124,
- Management review: 36,
- Awaiting Director's final review: 2
- Post Determination: 21,

9. **Announcements:**

- 1) Fair Housing Financial Fitness Fair; April 28, 2012 at Bohrer Park, Gaithersburg from 10:00 am- 3:00 pm. Commissioners Vann, Mason, Campbell, Patterson agreed to participate.
- 2) Human Rights Youth Diversity Camp May 18-20, Camp Letts, Edgewater, Md. Commissioners England, Patterson, Jett and Vann agreed to participate.

9. **Meeting adjourned:** at 9:05pm.

10. **Next meeting:** May 14, 2012 at 7:00pm.

Meeting Minutes: Notes were taken and written by Jim Stowe, Director; Office of Human Rights.