

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
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HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes-May 9, 2019 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roland Watkins. The following commission members were present: Helen Connolly, Susie Lee, Kiley Tibbetts, Walter Charles Sargent, Paul Lewis, Carole Lieber, Marilyn Calix and Sukari Pinnock–Fitts. Tony Sanders and Latoya Asia were absent. Executive Director Gurjit Chima was present from the Office of Human Rights. Arlington County Southern Battalion Chief Tiffanye Wesley was present as a member from the public. The meeting proceeded as follows:

- I. The Minutes from the previous meeting were unanimously approved.
- II. Ms. Wesley shared her journey to her current position in the county as well as experiences from her speaking engagements across North American. She recommended outreach into middle schools as a way to get more women interested in careers in the fire department.
- III. There were no questions or comments on the statistical report.
- IV. Executive Director Gurjit Chima provided an update on the RFP (Request for Proposal) for the county's upcoming barrier analysis. Ms. Chima shared that the RFP was issued and would close on May 24, 2019, after being open for proposals for 30 days. Ms. Chima shared that two vendors attended the preproposal conference held on May 9, 2019. Ms. Chima also shared that the County's Affirmative Action Plan was posted on the county website.
- V. Ms. Pincock-Fitts asked Ms. Chima for the topic of the OHR and EEOC co-sponsored fall event. Ms. Chima shared that the office just commenced the planning for the event and that the topic was currently religious hate crimes, based

on the EEOC's suggestion. Ms. Chima shared that she would share additional information as it became available.

- VI. Ms. Sukari shared information on the upcoming county fair and requested that OHR provide county pens for distribution at the event. Ms. Chima indicated she did not think that would be a problem and shared that OHR would also provide OHR brochures. Ms. Sukari requested that Commissioners buy bags of candy and bring them to the county fair for visitors.
- VII. Commissioners unanimously approved an extension for an ARCO charge.
- VIII. Ms. Pincock-Fitts shared the success of the Tiffany Josselyn Forum and thanked Commissioners who attended. Ms. Pincock-Fitts thanked Ms. Chima for her assistance and for arranging for video coverage by the county.
- IX. Ms. Chima shared that the county was beginning its efforts to gather information for the Human Rights Campaign 2019 Municipality Equality Index (MEI) report. Ms. Chima shared that, to her knowledge, the categories for the survey remained the same from last year.
- X. Ms. Lewis shared that he requested the reservation for the County Board Room on May 9, 2019, for the next James B. Hunter Awards on December 12, 2019. Ms. Chima shared that the county board room was reserved the same day. Mr. Lewis also indicated a desire to add a 4th category for the awards.
- XI. Ms. Lieber provided an update on the Virginia Association for Human Rights's upcoming conference and shared that the association would put forward a draft agenda soon. Ms. Lieber also shared information on the cost of attendance and the location of the conference. The Chair asked if the information related to the conference could be posted on OHR's website. Ms. Chima responded that OHR staff would post the information once received from the HRC. Mr. Watkins added that the VAHR is considering an amendment to make FEPA directors ex-officio members in order to allow other members voting rights.
- XII. The Chair shared information on Project PEACE, including that it is hosted by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHS). The project is aimed at ending domestic and sexual abuse. The Chair shared that Project PEACE contacted the

HRC in relation to an assessment they would like to undertake related to the LGTBQ community.

- XIII. The Chair shared that County Board Liaison to the HRC, Katie Cristol, would be invited to the HRC's July 2019 meeting.
- XIV. The Chair requested information regarding the process, if any, by which HRC Commissioners could file a discrimination complaint with the Office of Human Rights. The Chair advised commissioners to speak generally on the process. Ms. Chima informed Commissioners that OHR did not accept complaints from HRC Commissioners due to concerns over the ability of OHR staff to remain impartial given its reporting role to the commission. Ms. Chima re-extended the County Attorney's previous offers to meet with the HRC to answer any questions or concerns on this which were previously not accepted. Mr. Watkins accepted the offer and requested that the County Attorney be invited to attend the next HRC meeting to answer questions on this subject. Ms. Chima agreed to contact the CAO to extend to the invitation.
- XV. The Chair briefly discussed the Tenant Landlord Commission's proposal to add Source of Income Discrimination to the Arlington County Human Rights Ordinance. The Chair asked all commissioners to read the proposal so it could be discussed further at a future HRC meeting and indicated his intention to invite a representative from the Tenant Landlord Commission to the next HRC meeting. Mr. Watkins also shared that the Tenant Landlord Commission has a subcommittee on housing discrimination.
- XVI. Ms. Pincock-Fitts requested that OHR provide the previous HRC meeting minutes three days in advance of the HRC meeting.
- XVII. Member Reports--Ms. Connolly shared a draft letter she prepared to the Board on the commission's behalf expressing concern over a recent reduction in OHR staff by one person and on the size of the office. Ms. Carole shared information on the renaming of the Nauck neighborhood to Green Valley. Ms. Pincock thanked Ms. Chima and commissioners for their attendance at the Tiffany Jocelyn Forum. Mr. Tibbetts shared information provided to him by Ms. Chima on relevant upcoming cases before the Supreme Court. Ms. Lee shared information from a report

regarding health and equity in Arlington County which indicated a difference of a decade in life expectancy among residents based on their area of residence in the county.

XVIII. Meeting adjourned.