

# ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
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## HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

### Minutes-August 2020 VIRTUAL Meeting

The Chair greeted commissioners and welcomed them to the virtual commission meeting, Members present included Chair Roland Watkins, Vice-Chair Kiley Tibbetts, Susie Lee, Carole Lieber, Whytni Kernodle, Walter Sargent, Jose Quinonez, Daniel Githens, Sukari Pinnock-Fitts and Paul Lewis. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed new member, Jose Quinonez after which members introduced themselves. The meeting proceeded as follows:

- I. Previous meeting minutes were approved.
- II. There was no public comment.
- III. Ms. Maynard shared that the Barrier Analysis was on track on behalf of the Executive Director.
- IV. The chair asked a question about the statistical report, stating that FY 2020 showed that 50 cases were closed for administrative reasons. The Chair questioned whether complainants were filing complaints correctly.
- V. EEO Standing Committee Report-The Vice Chair shared that the EEO Standing Committee would meet on August 17 and that the committee would welcome two new employee members: Cynthia Liccese-Torres from CPHD and Captain Wayne Vincent from Police. The Vice Chair shared that the committee would host the County Manager at the meeting for a discussion. The Vice Chair shared that he invited the Chief of Police to attend the HRC's September 10 meeting. The Vice Chair also added that he sent a letter to DES Director Greg Emanuel regarding sensitivity training and that he invited the Superintendent of APS to the Oct meeting. The Vice Chair shared that he was working on the committee's annual report due to the Board at the end of August and would share the draft with members.
- VI. The commission shared concerns over the delay of the AAP. Ms. Lieber asked if the EEO Standing Committee has a charter and shared concerns that one of the employee members of the committee was a supervisor. The Vice Chair stated that he would share the charter on Monday. Members shared that they are concerned that employee members of the EEO Standing Committee are supervisors which they fear chills employees from speaking up.
- VII. Mr. Quinonez asked about the role of the new Chief Race & Equity Officer. Ms. Lee asked if the position would have additional staff and shared that she was concerned that the position would be under-resourced and a "scapegoat." The members shared that the candidate selected did not have a background in diversity and inclusion. Members would like the commission to engage with the Officer on her plans. The Chair shared that he expected County Manager to share the role of the position with the commission. The Chair also asked if there would be interaction between the County's Officer and the APS Equity Officer and if they would work together.
- VIII. There were no extensions.
- IX. The Chair shared that the commission would virtually hear an appeal in October.

- X. The commission discussed the amendment to the HRC Ordinance passed on July 18. Members commended the HRC members for their work and persistence.
- XI. The commission discussed a potential proposal to further amend the Human Rights Ordinance to add housing discrimination.
- XII. Ms. Lee reported on the Tiffany Joselyn Forum on behalf of Ms. Asia and shared details including the forum's time, format and title, "The State of Black People in Arlington." Ms. Lee stated that speakers were in the process of being confirmed and that a flyer was posted by OHR. Members were asked to share the flyer with others.
- XIII. Mr. Lewis reported that the James B. Hunter Awards will not have a keynote speaker and that he would work with OHR to get the applications for the award up on the website in the next week. He asked members to volunteer on the committee to plan the event.
- XIV. Ms. Kernodle shared that she met with the task force created by the commission to address racial equality in Arlington schools twice since the task force was created. She shared the task force includes advocates and students all of whom are female. As such, Ms. Kernodle would like to get a male on the taskforce. She shared that the students were impressive and made many great points. Ms. Kernodle shared that the taskforce is working on it's mission, vision, and goals and would like to ensure jurisdiction over the process. She further shared that, according to data, APS has great racial inequity. The taskforce would like to look at racism, classism, socioeconomic inequities and xenophobia. Ms. Kernodle shared that she does not believe the Human Rights Ordinance precludes the HRC's jurisdiction over schools in this area but would like to have the ordinance amended to give the HRC jurisdiction explicit jurisdiction to consider racial equality in schools and would like the amendment to mirror the language in Alexandria's ordinance. Mr. Quinones and Ms. Lieber recommended a person of Latin descent on the taskforce.
- XV. The commission voted to endorse the efforts of Arlingtonian's for Justice to expand internet broadband service. Ms. Lieber seconded the motion and the motion endorsing the efforts was passed unanimously. The Chair proposed that he send a letter to the Board stating that the motion was approved.
- XVI. The Chair shared that the NAACP sent a letter to the Board asking that the County's logo be changed as "Arlington House" is a memorial to General Robert E. Lee which is divisive and racist. The proposal is with the Board and the Chair will be monitoring it. The Chair shared that Board Member Garvey said the board would consider the proposal with community input. Ms. Pinnock-Fitts shared that she would prefer that the Board focused on making the supervisors adhere to affirmative action. Ms. Pinnock-Fitts shared that she was concerned that the County's new Race and Equity Officer was a planner by background, part of CM's "kitchen cabinet" and had no diversity and equity experience. Ms. Kernodle supported the Board's consideration of the NAACP's letter but indicated that the consideration should not be at the expense of other equity and affirmative action work. Ms. Lee asked commissioners what focus the commission wished to engage in. Mr. Sergeant and Ms. Pinnock-Fitts questioned why the County's D&I positions have high turnover. Mr. Lewis suggested that the commission send the County Manager a list of questions to which the commission desired responses during the EEO Standing Committee Meeting on August 17. Mr. Tibbetts shared that the questions had been submitted.
- XVII. Mr. Lewis motioned that that HRC request the Board to change Lee Hwy to John Robert Lewis Highway which was seconded by Ms. Kernodle. The motion passed unanimously.
- XVIII. Ms. Kernodle motioned to request the Board to change Chapter 31 to include APS and to remove the following language, "does not include public schools, colleges, universities" to allow the commission jurisdiction over public schools. Mr. Tibbetts seconded the motion. Ms.

Lieber suggested the creation of committee to make recommendations on further amendments to the Human Rights Ordinance which Mr. Lewis agreed to lead. Mr. Lewis stated that he would update the commission in two weeks. The motion was tabled until the commission's September meeting. The Chair asked Ms. Kernodle to share information regarding statutes from other jurisdictions.

XIX. There were no Members' Reports.

XX. The meeting was adjourned.