

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
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HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes-July 13, 2020 VIRTUAL Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roland Watkins. The following commission members were present through virtual participation: Roland Watkins, Paul Lewis, Kiley Tibbetts, Susie Lee, Walter Sargent, Latoya Asia, Daniel Githens and Whytni Kernodle. Executive Director Gurjit Chima and Anna Maynard were present from the Office of Human Rights. The meeting proceeded as follows:

- I. The Chair greeted commissioners and welcome them to the virtual meeting, adding that the last time the commission met in person was February 2020 due to the pandemic.
- II. The Chair welcomed the commission's newest member, Whytni Kernodle, who introduced herself as the co-founder and vice president of Black Parents of Arlington, an attorney and a social justice advocate.
- III. Commissioners voted to approve the meeting minutes from January and February 2020 without any corrections.
- IV. There was no public comment.
- V. There were no investigation extension requests.
- VI. The Executive Director provided the Executive Director's report, sharing that the Barrier Analysis project was continuing as planned and sharing news that the County Manager appointed Samia Byrd as the County's Chief Equity Officer. There were no questions on the Statistical Report provided by the Executive Director.
- VII. Vice Chair Kiley Tibbett provided an update on the EEO Standing Committee, sharing that the committee last met in person on March 3, 2020 due to the pandemic. Mr. Tibbetts shared that the committee would welcome two new employee members. Mr. Tibbetts stated that the committee had not yet reviewed the AAP and that he understood that the Barrier Analysis was proceeding as planned. Mr. Tibbetts also shared that the committee intended to invite the County Manager to discuss the county's diversity and recruitment efforts at the committee's next meeting. He added that he was also working on drafting the committee's annual report. Mr. Tibbetts questioned why the county had not conducted an employee survey in recent years and also shared that the committee intended to invite Police Chief Jay Farr to discuss recruitment efforts by the Police Department at the next HRC commission meeting.

- VIII. The Chair shared that the County Manager addressed the recent “chalk incident” in a memo to employees in Arlington County. The Chair shared that wished to know what training DES supervisors received in relation to the incident.
- IX. The Chair shared that the commission requested the Board to amend the County’s Human Rights Ordinance last August to include greater LGTBQ protections and added that the VA General Assembly recently amended the state statute to do so. The Chair asked the Executive Director if the County Board would vote to amend the Human Rights Ordinance to enact LGTBQ protections at its July meeting. The Executive Director responded that she would check and update the Chair. The Chair also shared that he intended to review whether the ordinance should also contain Source of Income as a protected basis.
- X. Ms. Asia shared that this year’s Tiffany Joselyn Forum would occur on September 3, 2020 in a virtual format and that the topic was “The state of people of color in Arlington” with a focus on Blacks in Arlington. Ms. Asia asked the Executive Director if the event could be streamed by the County. The Executive Director responded that she would check with the Communications Department. The Chair asked Mr. Tibbets and Ms. Asia to send a list of presenters and the platforms are under consideration for use to the Executive Director. Ms. Asia indicated that she would send the Executive Director the invitees names.
- XI. There were no member reports.
- XII. Mr. Lewis asked commissioners to volunteer on the James B Hunter Awards committee and indicated that the event would be held virtually this year. Ms. Lee suggested that the commission consider how to address potential concerns should they arise over the commission’s decision to issue a James B. Hunter award to a recipient who was alleged to have harassed an individual. Mr. Lewis indicated that he would add that topic for the committee’s consideration.
- XIII. Ms. Kernodle moved the commission to consider establishing a “State of Education Task Force. Ms. Lee seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- XIV. The Chair asked if commissioners wished to meet in August. All agreed to do so virtually. The Chair indicated the next meeting would be held virtually in August.
- XVI. Meeting Adjourned.