



Human Relations Commission
Executive Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 10, 2024
Festival Park Training Room, 225 Ray Ave, Suite 122

Present: Chairwoman Donna Pelham; Vice-Chairwoman Demetria Murphy; Secretary Crystal Edmonds; Commissioner William "Bill" Milton

Staff Present: Yamile Nazar, DEI Director; Yamilet Padilla, Human Relations Specialist; James Woolums, Human Relations Intern

Absent: Commissioner Milette Herring, Commissioner Dakota Wright (Excused)

Others Present: Jodi Phelps; Assistant City Manager

Chairwoman Pelham called the meeting to order at 5.30 p.m.

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Milton, seconded by Vice-Chairwoman Murphy. Vote was unanimous.

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Vice-Chairwoman Murphy, seconded by Commissioner Milton. Vote was unanimous.

Annual Retreat Recap: Chairwoman Pelham stated that the Commission Retreat was well-attended and provided valuable information for Commissioners on the ordinance, bylaws, and ethics of the Human Relations Commission. Deputy City Clerk, Jennifer Ayre, conducted a training session on Robert's Rules of Order, while Danett Nelson, Organizational Development and Training Consultant, facilitated icebreakers to encourage dialogue among those in attendance.

Committees: Chairwoman Pelham stated a committee sign-up sheet will be provided at the next regular meeting for Commissioners to decide which one they would like to serve on.

- Rapid Response Committee - Chairwoman Pelham stated the Rapid Response Committee is a standing committee and the By-Laws Committee will need to amend the by-laws to formalize this designation. Commissioners Pappas, Wright, and Pelt have volunteered to

be on the Rapid Response Committee, with hopes that Commissioner Milton will serve as the Chairman. Vice-Chairwoman Murphy has also agreed to being added to the committee.

- Executive Committee – Chairwoman Pelham stated that Commissioners Herring and Milton agreed to serve as At-Large members of the Executive Committee.
- Awards & Scholarships Committee – Chairwoman Pelham stated that Commissioner Herring and Secretary Edmonds are the Co-Chairwomen of the Awards & Scholarship Committee.
- Historian Committee – Chairwoman Pelham stated Commissioners Narcisse and Upchurch are on the Historian Committee.
- By-Laws Committee – Chairwoman Pelham stated that Commissioner Herring is currently the Chairwoman of the By-Laws Committee, and the committee will need to be developed soon to start making important additions to the by-laws.
- Nominations Committee – Chairwoman Pelham stated that Commissioners Abrams and Francis are currently on the Nominations Committee.
- Special Projects Committee – Chairwoman Pelham stated that the Special Project Committee has not yet been formed.

Ms. Nazar stated that ^{the} he Historian Working Group will reengage and collaborate with local artists to incorporate historical research into Market House programs. Contact will be made with Bianca Shoneman, CEO of Cool Springs Downtown, and Robert “Bob” Pinson, CEO of the Fayetteville-Cumberland County Arts Council, to help coordinate the process of partnership between the two groups.

- Sister City Committee – Ms. Nazar stated that Doug Hewett, City Manager, has requested that the Human Relations Commission create a Sister City Committee. Depending on the outcome, it will determine if the committee will remain a sub-committee under the Human Relations Commission or become its own like the Wilmington Sister City Commission. Ms. Nazar will research the Wilmington Sister City Commission to guide Fayetteville’s efforts.

Ms. Nazar explained the expectations of the Sister City process, which consists of identifying what Fayetteville plans are and how it will anchor that relationship. Mr. Robert Van Geons, CEO of the Fayetteville Cumberland Economic Development Corporation, will provide research and designate a staff member to assist. Currently, St. Avold, France and Demona, Italy are Sister Cities to the City of Fayetteville. Mr. Hewett will report the Sister City information to City Council on October 28, and the outcome will determine the next steps.

Vice-Chairwoman Murphy has volunteered to be the chairwoman of the Sister City Committee.

At-Large Positions: Chairwoman Pelham stated she will reach out to Commissioner Herring to confirm if she still wants to be designated At-Large Member for the Executive Committee.

Dining & Dialogue: LGBTQ+: Ms. Nazar stated the event will be held at the Botanical Gardens on October 30, 2024 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The program panel will include a confirmed host and two transgender speakers. Ms. Nazar encourages all Commissioners to attend and stated information about the Dining & Dialogue will be sent out via email.

Community Awards: Chairwoman Pelham stated that fundraising strategies for the Community Awards will be discussed at the next meeting. Proceeds from ticket sales, table sponsorships, advertisements, and donations will fund Human Relations Scholarships. Secretary Edmonds suggested Commissioners share insights from the community to stay informed and engaged. Ms. Nazar recommended attending community meetings, such as NAACP, Community Watch, or School Board meetings.

Commission Decorum: Chairwomen Pelham emphasized the need for professionalism, urging Commissioners to avoid expressing political beliefs during meetings, which could create a hostile environment for the Commission. Vice-Chairwoman Murphy reinforced this, and advocated for a safe and neutral space for discussions. Ms. Phelps suggested consulting the City Attorney to review a draft of a clause to be added to the bylaws regarding this matter.

Other Community Events: Chairwoman Pelham inquired about event flyers, and Vice-Chairwomen Murphy stated that she submitted the ones that she has to Ms. Curtis to be distributed out via email.

HS/College HRC: Chairwomen Pelham stated that she has had discussions with Methodist University about the Student Human Relations Commission and Denim Day, and they have agreed to participate. A student would need to inquire about starting the commission and a faculty member could sponsor it. The Student Human Relations will be added the agenda of the next meeting for discussion.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Secretary Edmonds, seconded by Commissioner Milton. With a unanimous vote, Chairwoman Pelham adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Approved _____

Crystal Edmonds
Crystal Edmonds, Secretary

