



REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, August 09, 2018

Festival Park Plaza Training Room

225 Ray Avenue, Fayetteville, NC 28301

Present: Commissioners Chair Sheila Cuffee, Vice-Chair Dr. Vicki Teachey-Dukes, Secretary Maybelyn Rodriguez Laureano, Melba Conley, Antoinette Morris, Dr. Donna Pelham, Jeffrey Wire, Georgeanna Pinckney (via phone), Dr. Mark Kendrick,

Absent: Kevin Brooks, Wesley Fountain, LTC Julia Kobiska, Gregory Foxx, Milette Harris, Dr. Ngozi Kamalu, Robert McRae

Staff Present: Director Dr. Anthony Wade, Manager Yamile Nazar, Human Relations Administrative Specialist Willetta Ragin

Chair Cuffee called meeting to order at 5:45 PM. Followed by a moment of silence. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Kendrick.

Motion to approve agenda was made by Commissioner Kendrick, seconded by Commissioner Pelham. Approved by unanimous vote.

Motion to approve June 14, 2018 minutes was made by Commissioner Rodriguez Laureano, seconded by Commissioner Teachey-Dukes. Approved by unanimous vote.

Public Forum: No public present.

Committee Reports:

- A. **Nominating Committee:** A verbal report was given by Commissioner Morris who stated it is time for Commissioners to select new officers. The three positions for nominations are the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. She has only received one nomination for Chair from Commissioner Teachey-Dukes, and one nomination for Vice-Chair from Commissioner Maybelyn Rodriguez Laureano. She received no nominations for the Secretary position and opened the floor for nominations. Commissioner Kendrick asked for the duties of the secretary. Chair Cuffee asked current Secretary Rodriguez Laureano to explain. Commissioner Hendrick then agreed to place his name on the slate to fill the position. Receiving no other nominations, nominations were closed. Chair Cuffee asked for a motion to close the slate with the three names presented.

Motion to close the slate with Commissioner Vicki Teachey-Dukes' nomination as Chair, Commissioner Maybelyn Rodriguez Laureano as Vice Chair and Commissioner Kendrick as Secretary was made by Commissioner Pelham, seconded by Commissioner Wire. Approved by unanimous vote.

Commissioner Morris called for a vote to accept all three said names as officers. Vote was unanimous.

B. **Rapid Response Team:** See attachment. Dr. Wade stated they met on Monday, July 23, 2018. Present for the meeting was Commissioner Brooks (RRT Chair), Chair Cuffee, Sheriff Ennis Wright who hosted the meeting, Human Relations Department Director Dr. Anthony Wade, who led the meeting; FPD Chief Gina Hawkins & FPD Anthony Kelly, ACM Jay Reinstien, Corporate Communications Director Kevin Arata & Nathan Walls, Fire Chief Benjamin Majors, and Human Relations Department Manager Yamile Nazar, Veteran Intern Stephen Thrasher, Cumberland County Communication Outreach Coordinator Jeanine Markel representing Assistant County Manager Sally Shutt, and Acting Director of Installation Services for Headquarters of Department of the Army Deborah Reynolds. A two-star general equivalent in the Senior Executive Series of the federal government. Ms. Reynolds is currently shadowing City Manager Doug Hewitt and his staff. Dr. Wade stated it was a very animated meeting in which all players were engaged.

Dr. Wade explained that the current model supports Goal 4 of the City's Strategic Plan, which states as a City, we want to be "a desirable place to live work and recreate." The model also supports Cumberland County's vision statement which is to grow as a regional destination for employment, economic development, commerce and cultural pursuits. This model was also used because it supports the Commission's objective to eliminate the escalation of problematic situations. He explained the purpose of the Rapid Response Team which is for the Commission to collaborate jointly with public safety, local government, the business community, the faith community, Fort Bragg and other agencies, industries and businesses to minimize and eliminate the escalation of problematic situations involving community relations. He explained the structure of the Rapid Response Team will consist of two levels (Level I, which is strategic planning; and Level II, which would involve the Community Engagement Partners). As a result of this meeting the next step will be to go before the level II participants and explain the process to them before bringing it to City Council and County Commissioners at a work session for informational purposes. He stated that there really is not an approval needed and his understanding is that if both sides of law enforcement are in support of it both County Commissioners and City Council will be in support of it.

Motion to approve the Rapid Response Team report was made by Commissioner Wire, seconded by Commissioner Teachey-Dukes. Vote Unanimous.

Old Business:

A. **Fayetteville City Ordinance Change** – Voted by FCHRC June 14, 2018. Dr. Wade presented a verbal report. He stated that upon commission recommendation, he is to bring before a City Council work session the proposal to add the language of sexual orientation, gender identity and LGBTQ to the Mission Statement, By-Laws and City Ordinance. After speaking to Director Willie Ratchford, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Human Relations Director, his recommendation was to speak to City and County Officials one on one before the proposal is presented in a work session to allow them the opportunity to address the issue and ask questions, therefore; Dr. Wade is proposing to bring it to City Council at their September work session instead of the August work session. Mr. Ratchford also recommended that the Commission speak with the City's delegation to Raleigh. He believes any change to any ordinance or law needs to be briefed to that delegation prior to

it being enacted locally. Morris suggested commissioners and staff should wait until after the election to present it to County Commissioners. Chair Cuffee countered that this is the best time because it is not an election year for City Council. Commissioners agreed to a schedule being set-up in order to have one on one conversations with elected officials. Mr. Ratchford believes that we may be prohibited to change our law to include the three groups based on what happened in Charlotte. Dr. Wade believes since the City Ordinance does not allow enforcement or compliance specific to the three classes, this would be more of a statement that Fayetteville is welcoming to everybody regardless and wants people to be treated well regardless. What the Commission and staff would like people to know is that they are going to be advocates for fair treatment. It is not a matter of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, or veteran status. All they are saying is they want everyone in this community to be treated fairly. Chair Cuffee stated that we can use Orange County has set a precedence by using the same language in their ordinance.

- B. **FCHRC Annual Report to City Council.** Chair Cuffee. See the attached. Chair Cuffee stated she presented the report to County Commissioners in June and is scheduled to present it to City Council on Monday, August 13th at 7:00 p.m. She stated she would like commissioners, especially those who have been appointed by the City, to attend because it looks great when they are present and when she asks everyone to stand. She stated that the annual report is a snap shot of everything the commission has done this year and shows that the commission is active and engaged in the community. She also stated that the very last slide shows the number of in-kind volunteer hours the commission contributed. She stated that everyone is not reporting their in-kind hours, so the hours reflected are less than the amount of hours reported last year. She expressed to commissioners the importance of completing their VMT spreadsheet that captures in-kind hours and submitting them to Ms. Nazar so they can be reflected correctly on the annual report and in Trac Stat.
- C. **71st High School Complaint.** Dr. Anthony Wade stated the Commission received a complaint from Dr. Sarah Taber, a parent of a child in the Cumberland County School system, regarding allegations of unfair treatment that has allegedly created a racially divisive climate at 71st High School. In accordance with City Ordinance, Section 2-39, the director can receive and investigate complaints on behalf of the Commission. He reached out to the Board of Education Chair Ms. Sutton who asked him to reach out to the Superintendent Dr. Connelly. Dr. Wade sent a letter to Dr. Connelly regarding the allegations citing the ordinance which gives the Commission the authority to be a part of this particular process in terms of looking into the types of concerns that were raised, specifically based upon race, and asked for a meeting to discuss the issues further. Dr. Wade reiterated what he had stated earlier, which is the Commission has no authority on these type issues, but the Commission was designed to be that mechanism to hopefully bring people together to discuss the issues to see if a solution can be found. He received a call back from the school attorney who just wanted more information and was curious about the Commission's authority to have these types of discussions. Dr. Wade stated it was a pleasant conversation, not adversarial. It was decided by their attorney and the City's attorney that a meeting should be scheduled with Dr. Connelly, Dr. Taber and Dr. Wade to discuss the issues further. Dr. Connelly had already looked into the allegations and spoken to school administrators who shared a different perspective than what was presented by Dr. Taber. Dr. Wade stated that Dr. Connelly was very gracious and stated that he does not

have to meet with the clubs and teachers at the school, but he would because he feels that is part of his due diligence. He stated that he would be following-up with the Commission after he completes his investigation. Dr. Wade is looking forward to hearing back from him. Dr. Wade stated that a good relationship has been established between Dr. Connelly, the staff and Commission and he is open to establishing a Student Human Relations Council. He also stated that Dr. Connelly is a great addition to the organization because he has a rich past with over 30 years of experience as a school administrator, a prior military background, and is also a pastor. At this point the Commission has done everything it can at this point to address the issues raised.

Madame Chair thanked Commissioner Wire and Ms. Nazar for their assistance in meeting with Dr. Taber and completing the in-take.

New Business

- A. **Hate Crimes Committee-Community Conversation Coalition.** Chair Cuffee stated that the Hate Crimes Committee has an arm to it of education but does not want the Hate Crimes Committee to reinvent the wheel. There is some work that has to be done to create a presentation to go out to the community. Meanwhile, there are opportunities for commissioners to partner with the Community Conversation Coalition to help facilitate the discussions centered around presentations about race. Chair Cuffee and Ms. Nazar have been attending the meetings, but she is asking someone who is on that committee to attend. Commissioner Kamalu is currently chairing this committee but his term will be expiring at the end of September and will not return, so there will be an opening for a lead for this committee. She also stated that the Coalition meets at 2:00 p.m., on Tuesday's at the Main Library, but she and Ms. Nazar will ask if they will consider changing the meeting time so people who work can attend.
- B. **Special Projects-Disability Awareness Month-October.** Chair Cuffee stated that Disability Awareness Month is in October and Commissioner Harris has agreed to be the point person for this project. The Commission is planning to host a disability awareness event where different vendors will be invited to showcase products and resources for the disabled community. The idea is to have different workshops and activities taking place that will allow participants to experience what it feels like to be disabled. The proposed location to have the event is the Department of Social Services probably the 18th, which is the date they have open, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Chair Cuffee's term expires in September, but she has agreed to serve on the planning committee. Commissioner Harris proposed the event be set-up like a job fair that will not require speakers. Chair Cuffee has already spoken to several organizations who have agreed to participate.
- C. **Calendar of Events.** Ms. Nazar. See attachment. Ms. Nazar presented the calendar and stated that events that do not have dates assigned are still being worked. Volunteers are requested for all events.

Ms. Nazar needs to speak to Commissioners Kobiska, McRae, Wire, Harris, and the Chair Elect, Teachey Duke, to assist with organizing the Commission retreat. Because of their training and background, she is asking them to come up with the topics to

discuss at the retreat. No tentative date or location has been determined for the retreat. Suggested locations are Department of Social Services and the new FAST Training Room.

Ms. Nazar stated that she and Ms. Ragin have been talking about the Annual Awards Reception and the MLK Scholarship Award Ceremony. Because we struggled again this year with getting the check from the City to the Cumberland Community Foundation to pay for scholarships, she recommends moving the dates of the Annual Awards Reception and the MLK Scholarship Awards Ceremony to allow more weeks between the two the events. Chair Cuffee stated that everything needs to be coordinated with the Cumberland Community Foundation because the names of the recipients and the names of selection committee must be turned in and approved by the Foundation before the MLK Awards Ceremony takes place.

Chair's Report: See attachment.

Director's Report: See attachment. Dr. Wade stated as a result of the veteran's listening session on yesterday, we have a new star named Ms. Nazar on WRAL video. Ms. Nazar did a great job and it will be shared. The video highlighted the collaboration that is being done on fair housing. Out of the veteran's listening tour came an invitation for the North Carolina Fair Housing Project to come back and talk to veterans at the VFW. There were more veteran service providers present than veterans, but the service providers were very passionate about the work they do.

Chair Cuffee extended thanks to Commissioner Morris for participating at the Fayetteville Pride Festival, Commissioner Wire for facilitating "Race-the Power of Illusion", and the friend of the Commission, Eric Olson, for facilitating two of the discussions on race.

Chair Cuffee stated that on Monday County Commissioners voted to appoint Eric Olson to the Commission and Georgeanna Pinckney to serve another term on the Commission. She congratulated them both and is looking forward to their continued hard work on the Commission.

Announcements

- a. Women's Equality, Fort Bragg, August 17, 2018 the Fayetteville Police Chief Hawkins is the guest speaker.
- b. Hispanic Heritage Month, September 15, 2018 to October 15, 2018, Fort Bragg

Next commission meeting will be held on September 13, 2018 in the Festival Plaza Training Room, Festival Park Plaza at 5:30 PM.

Chair Cuffee called for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Commissioner Teachey-Dukes and seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez Laureano. Motion approved by unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 PM.

Approved _____

(Date)

Maybelyn Rodriguez Laureano, Secretary