

Regular Meeting

Thursday, January 9, 2020, 5:30 p.m.

Festival Park Plaza, 225 Ray Avenue, 1st Floor Training Room, Fayetteville, NC 28301

Present: Interim Chair, Eric Olson; Commissioner Rosa Garris-Turner; Commissioner Eileen Hatch; Commissioner Joshua James; Commissioner William “Bill” J. Milton, II; Commissioner Dwight Palmer; Commissioner Semone Pemberton; Commissioner Georgeanna Pinckney; Commissioner Theodore Trainer, III; Commissioner Franco Webb.

Absent: Commissioner Mark Kendrick, Secretary; Commissioner Milette Harris; Commissioner Ayax Rangel; Commissioner Cherie Readus; Commissioner Jeffrey Wire.

Staff Present: Dr. Anthony Wade, Director; Willetta Ragin, Human Relations Administrative Specialist; and Janet Beaudry, Office Assistant II.

Staff Absent: Yamile Nazar, Manager.

The meeting was called to order at 5:51 p.m. by Interim Chair Eric Olson, followed by a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion to approve agenda was made by Commissioner Pinckney, seconded by Commissioner Webb; vote unanimous.

Motion to approve the December 12, 2019, minutes was made by Commissioner Webb, seconded by Commissioner James; vote unanimous.

Commissioner Pinckney had a question about the minutes, and it was resolved.

Committee Reports:

1. Annual Awards and Human Relations Scholarship. Ms. Ragin asked the Commission if they had decided on a theme for the ARA banquet. Commissioner Olson listed the following themes: 1. Inspiring others for a brighter and better future in Fayetteville and Cumberland County; 2. Being the light in the darkness to inspire and to enlighten others in Fayetteville and Cumberland County; 3. Being the change you wish to see in Fayetteville and Cumberland County. The Commissioners voted on “Being the Change You Wish to See in Fayetteville and Cumberland County.” This is a variant of a Mahatma Gandhi quote. Commissioner Webb shared that Patriot Outreach is on board with the Awards Banquet and have agreed to be the non-profit organization to partner with Human Relations on our accounting side. There will be at least one Patriot Award this year. George Breece has agreed with enthusiasm to be our Master of Ceremonies for the banquet. Discussion followed about the sponsorship packet.

Commissioner Webb has asked Starbucks to be the primary sponsor. Antonio at Metro Diner and Anna at Fayetteville Bakery are also to be sponsors. Dr. Wade stated that his supervisor, Ms. Wright-Lanier, was talking with the city manager about funding, and that he has a meeting with her tomorrow where he will find out the status. Commissioner Webb also stated that Patriot Outreach will have a link on their web site for purchasing tickets and another link for donations to the ARA Banquet funds. Discussion followed about the tickets, both physical and digital, and how they will be purchased and distributed. There was also discussion about how the funds donated through the web site will be distributed. Ms. Ragin discussed the mailing list for the banquet, and stated that she will send out the list of dignitaries to the Commissioners. Interim Chair Olson asked when the next ARA committee meeting is scheduled. He stated that the next Executive Board meeting is January 23.

1. Hate Crimes and Rapid Response. No date as of yet for the next meeting.

Director’s Report. Dr. Anthony Wade. Dr. Wade noted that as it was so early in the year, he did not have a written report, and that he would have a combined January and February report for the next Commission meeting. He noted that he is the co-chair of the Cumberland County Complete Count Committee which is working with the Census, and the North Carolina Count Coalition. There is a need for almost 4,000 people to be employed with the Census. He listed the people who are historically undercounted in Cumberland County including people of color which includes the Hispanic population, renters, and those experiencing homelessness. Human Relations is concerned that these populations get counted this time around. He shared that on Monday, January 13, there will be a NC Works Bus Tour where there will be ten computers dedicated to filing applications for potential workers. They will set up in the Public Health parking lot from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. There are over 2,100 jobs yet to be filled. They are part-time jobs paying $14.00 – $16.00 an hour. Dr. Wade also said that there are approximately 14,000 people in Cumberland County who are not expected to be counted. Bob Coats is the statistical expert at the North Carolina Complete Count, and he has assigned a dollar amount of $1,828 that is lost for every person who is not counted. That adds up to as much as $26 million per year in federal funding. The Census determines political representation, business and economic development, and ensures that federal funding comes to the community.

There is a community engagement event on January 18 organized by Judge Gregory Weeks which is part of an outreach from Racial Equity Institute. The theme is “Organizing Against Racism in Cumberland County.” Several notable people are on the agenda. It will be from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Headquarters Library on Maiden Lane in the Pate Room.

On January 17, Dr. Wade will do a walk through at FTCC of the site for the Dining and Dialogue event which will be held on February 15. It will be in the Tony Rand room at FTCC.

Methodist University approached Dr. Wade about a leadership series they are holding for their internal development. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education is the topic they wanted him to speak on. He recommended Interim Chair Eric Olson, who is currently Director of Human Resources at Womack, and Commissioner Olson accepted. Commissioner Olson talked about how Methodist University is a part of the local community. He said you can’t separate human resources from human relations because they overlap. The date is Thursday, April 2.

Dr. Wade gave the Commissioners an update on Ms. Nazar, who is currently out after sustaining an injury.

Other new business. Commissioner Palmer shared with the group that the Mayor of New York City bussed a lot of their homeless population to Fayetteville. Commissioner Webb shared that he had driven by the bus station, and saw 15 – 20 people wandering around; they were part of the homeless people bussed down to Fayetteville. He also said there was no agreement to do that on the part of the Mayor. Commissioner Palmer talked about the fact that we already have a homeless population that is creating problems for the businesses in the Grove Street area. Highway 301 is the gateway into Fayetteville. There is no day center for the homeless population in Fayetteville. Since the folks from New York City have arrived the problem is even worse. The Pastor Coalition is aware of the problem and is trying to work with the Homeless Coalition.

Commissioner Pinckney went to ballot training. She passed out Democracy NC information on the upcoming elections and how a photo ID is not needed to vote for early voting or for the primary, but that may change for the general election. Some discussion ensued.

Dr. Wade stated that the Commissioners will be asked to invite people to the Dining and Dialogue event in February, and to think with a diverse mind so that the event will represent the community. It will be from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on February 15.

Next Commission meeting will take place on February 13, 2020, at 5:30 p.m., at Festival Park Plaza Training Room.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m. Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Webb. Vote unanimous.

Approved\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 (Date)

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Dr. Mark Kendrick, Secretary