



Human Relations Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, February 23, 2023
Kiwanis Recreation Center, 352 Devers St

Present: Chairwoman Semone Pemberton; Vice-Chairwoman Harris; Secretary Samar Abdelfatah; Commissioner Abram Flores; Commissioner Dr. Elmore Lowery; Commissioner J. Vernon Peterson; Commissioner Claudia Zamora; Commissioner Peter B. Pappas; Commissioner Toshiba Narcisse; Commissioner Sabb, LTC; Commissioner Lynndora Thompson

Absent: Commissioner Shirley S. Francis; Commissioner Eric D. Washington, SFC; Commissioner Denise Abrams, MSG; Commissioner Dakota Wright

Staff Present: Yamile Nazar, DEI Director; Diona Curtis, Administrative Specialist

Chairwoman Pemberton called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

Chairwoman Pemberton called for a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion to modify the agenda with the Cumberland County Transportation matter made by Secretary Abdelfatah was made by Commissioner Pappas, seconded by Commissioner Flores. Vote was unanimous.

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Secretary Abdelfatah, seconded by Commissioner Thompson. Vote was unanimous.

Market House Repurposing Update: Ms. Nazar stated three designs for the Market House will be received by the end of February. There have been five meetings with City Staff and one with the consultants on the progress of the Market House and the plans going forward. Ms. Nazar stated she is awaiting further guidance from the City Manager's office on how to proceed once the designs are received. Once feedback is provided, the Commission will present to City Council.

Community Education: Chairwoman Pemberton stated Commissioner Lowery will be explaining the focus of the Community Education Town Hall. Commissioner Lowery explained the purpose of the Town Hall and its purpose of providing awareness and information to educate the public of the procedures that are followed after an officer-involved shooting or incident, why there are specific outcomes, and the rights of residents. Chairwoman Pemberton stated correlating

Commissioner Lowery's schedule with the Police Departments of Fayetteville, Spring Lake, Hope Mills, Sheriff's Department, and District Attorney William "Billy" West. The Town Hall is tentatively scheduled for May. Secretary Abdelfatah stated streaming it on the Human Relations social media so there is greater access for everyone. Vice-Chairwoman stated gathering questions and addressing them in segments so that everyone's voice is captured about issues they are worried about.

Dining & Dialogue Proposal: Secretary Abdelfatah proposed for the next Dining & Dialogue to partner with the Asian American community in Fayetteville. There are currently 1,320 students that identify as Asian Americans in Cumberland County Schools, but that is a small percentage of the whole population in Fayetteville. Secretary Abdelfatah stated that when the pandemic occurred, many businesses ran and owned by those in the Asian American community were affected and people were prejudice against them. Leaders from the Asian American community will speak and dispel stereotypes, and give an authentic insight into their culture. May is Asian American Month.

Motion to add Dining & Dialogue: Asian American and Pacific Islander to the Matrix was made by Commissioner Pappas, seconded by Commissioner Flores. Vote was unanimous.

Dogwood Festival: Ms. Nazar stated the Human Relations staff will provide all supplies for the festival, and the Commissioners will need to sign up to volunteer for Saturday and Sunday. There will be three-hour shifts, and the shifts will overlap the last hour of each. A sign-up sheet will be distributed for the Commissioners to select their availability.

Denim Day: Ms. Nazar stated she is working on getting sponsors to help fund Denim Day. The Botanical Gardens has April 26th reserved for the event. Vice-Chairwoman Harris stated that she is looking for a male survivor to speak at Denim Day.

Got Consent: Vice-Chairwoman Harris stated *Got Consent* was a success at Terry Sanford High School, and it was a two-day event. It was suggested to have counselors on stand-by just in case they are needed after for additional support and/or counseling, and to have future *Got Consent* presentations during Teen Violence Month in February or around prom time. Ms. Nazar stated that she is going to follow-up with Mr. Lindsay about getting into all of Cumberland County Schools.

Habitat for Humanity/Women's Build: Chairwoman Pemberton inquired on who is interested in participating in Habitat for Humanity. Secretary Abdelfatah stated she will find out dates and times for the Commissioners to volunteer and get the information to Chairwoman Pemberton.

Youth Dating Violence: Chairwoman Pemberton stated she attended The P.R.O.O.V.E Project with Kevin Brooks, which was a Youth Dating Violence Prevention session on Facebook Live. The session discussed the number of youth that are abused in dating situation as well as those on the collegiate level. Chairwoman Pemberton stated there was a suggestion for the Human Relations Commission to partner with The P.R.O.O.V.E Project, and asked the Commissioners their opinions on the

initiative. Vice-Chairwoman Harris stated that conversations should start at the schools to raise awareness. Chairwoman Pemberton stated that there will not be a vote on Youth Dating Violence today and she will add it to the Matrix as a proposed initiative.

Transportation & Cumberland County Schools: Secretary Abdelfatah stated there are 240 exceptional children that do not have transportation to school due to a shortage of Special Education bus drivers. The request is finding programs that can help train drivers, and if there is anything that the Human Relations Commission can do in regard to this issue. Ms. Nazar stated the Human Relations Commission can draft a letter to the Board of Education, and provide it, following review by the City Attorney.

Motion to do a limited inquiry into the Transportation & Cumberland County Schools was made by Vice-Chairwoman Harris, seconded by Commissioner Lowery. Vote was unanimous.

Departmental Report: Ms. Nazar stated there is no Departmental Report for this meeting.

Other Business: Ms. Nazar stated the *12th Annual Walk Awhile in Their Shoes* will be held Friday, March 24, in Downtown Fayetteville. This event is a time for men in the community to show support for survivors of sexual violence by strutting down Hay Street in red high heels.

Commissioner Sabb extended an invite to the African American Observance event hosted by the 82nd Airborne Division. The event will be held on Ft. Bragg and also live streamed on their Facebook page tomorrow, February 24, from 11:30 am-1:00 pm.

Commissioner Thompson extended an invite to the Delta Sigma Theta Big Hat Brunch at the Iron Mike Center on Ft. Bragg.

The next regular commission meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2023.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Pappas, and seconded by Commissioner Flores. With a unanimous vote, Chairwoman Pemberton adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Approved _____

Samar Abdelfatah, Secretary