



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

**Present:** Chairwoman Semone Pemberton; Vice-Chairwoman Harris; Secretary Samar Abdelfatah; Commissioner J. Vernon Peterson; Commissioner Peter B. Pappas; Commissioner Toshiba Narcisse; Commissioner Lynndora Thompson; Commissioner Shirley S. Francis; Commissioner Dakota Wright; Commissioner Denise Abrams, MSG

**Absent:** Commissioner Elmore Lowery; Commissioner Abram Flores; Commissioner Claudia Zamora

**Staff Present:** Yamile Nazar, DEI Director; Eric Washington, Human Relations Specialist; Diona Curtis, Administrative Specialist

Chairwoman Pemberton called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

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

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Pappas, seconded by Commissioner Narcisse. Vote was unanimous.

Motion to approve the minutes with the correction of the absence of Commissioner Abrams was made by Commissioner Pappas, seconded by Commissioner Francis. Vote was unanimous.

**Departmental Report:** Ms. Nazar stated on February 8, the Market House Consultants updated City staff on the progress as it relates to the design, and on February 9, the Human Relations Executive Committee was updated. Since then, Ms. Nazar has had three meetings with the Project Manager for the City Manager, and a project management plan and charter are being drafted.

There are monthly Greater Fayetteville United meetings that a member of the Human Relations staff or Commission will attend periodically.

There was a Community Conversation facilitated by Myron Pitts, Opinion Colonist for the Fayetteville Observer, on February 11, in reference to the Tyre Nichols case. The panel concluded with a suggestion for an Office of Community Safety reporting to the City Manager.

Ms. Nazar provided fair housing training for staff representing the Eastern part of NC who work for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Raleigh. The theme of the training was “You’ll hear a story that makes you go hmmm, before I do!”

Ms. Nazar stated there has been numerous positive feedback about the Community Recognition Awards, as well as the Dining & Dialogue Luncheon that the Human Relations Commission hosted with the Vision Resource Center. The Fayetteville Observer and City View newspapers published articles.

There are two active ADA cases, Ms. Nazar attended 26 meetings and 28 hours of the School of Government Municipal & County Government curriculum, and there were 224 calls to the Human Relations Department.

**Overview of the HRC Ordinance:** Chairwoman Pemberton inquired about the Human Relations Ordinance. Ms. Nazar stated it was included to serve as a guide for understanding the responsibilities of the Human Relations Commission as it pertains to new initiatives.

**Farewell to Samar Abdelfatah:** Chairwoman Pemberton stated that she wanted to honor Secretary Abdelfatah for her service to the Commission, as it will be her last meeting. Secretary Abdelfatah shared her experiences and thoughts, and expressed that she will still volunteer when needed. Ms. Nazar gathered all the Commissioners together for a group picture with Secretary Abdelfatah.

**Market House Repurposing Update:** Chairwoman Pemberton stated that the Historian Committee will be meeting on Tuesday, March 28 and inquired about the details. Ms. Nazar stated Matthew Parker, Human Relations Intern, was tasked to identify local Historians who would like to be a part of the committee to help start developing the plan for program implementation for the Market House.

**Denim Day Update:** Commissioner Thompson suggested fundraising ideas such as a Digital Program Book to generate sponsorships for Denim Day. Chairwoman Pemberton inquired if people would be able to access the Digital Program Book from the Human Relations Facebook page and if there will be sponsorship tiers. Commissioner Thompson stated that she needed volunteers to assist with Denim Days. Chairwoman Pemberton and Vice-Chairwoman Harris volunteered to be a part of the Denim Day Committee with Commissioner Thompson. Denim Day is Wednesday, April 26.

**Dogwood Festival Update:** Chairwoman Pemberton stated there is a Dogwood Festival sign-up sheet that will be going around for those who would like to volunteer.

**Roundtable:** Chairwoman Pemberton inquired if anyone had any information or announcements. Commissioner Abrams stated the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne will be hosting a Holocaust Observance on April 20, and there will be a live stream of it on the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division Facebook page.

The next regular commission meeting is scheduled for April 27, 2023.

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn was made by Vice-Chairwoman Harris, and seconded by Commissioner Wright. With a unanimous vote, Chairwoman Pemberton adjourned the meeting at 6:16 p.m.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

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Semone Pemberton, Chairwoman