



Human Relations Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, April 27, 2023
Kiwanis Recreation Center, 352 Devers St

Present: Chairwoman Semone Pemberton; Vice-Chairwoman Harris; Commissioner Dakiesha Upchurch; Commissioner J. Vernon Peterson; Commissioner Peter B. Pappas; Commissioner Toshiba Narcisse; Commissioner Demetria Murphy; Commissioner Crystal Edmonds; Commissioner Denise Abrams, MSG; Commissioner Dwight Palmer Jr.; Commissioner Claudia Zamora

Absent: Commissioner Elmore Lowery; Commissioner Abram Flores; Commissioner Lyndora Thompson; Commissioner Shirley S. Francis; Commissioner Dakota Wright

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

Chairwoman Pemberton called the meeting to order at 5:39 p.m.

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

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Vice-Chairwoman Harris with the addition of Youth Dating Violence, seconded by Commissioner Peterson. Vote was unanimous.

Motion to approve the minutes with the correction of Colonist to Columnist under Community Education was made by Commissioner Palmer, seconded by Commissioner Upchurch. Vote was unanimous.

Introduction of New Commissioners: Chairwoman Pemberton welcomed the new Commissioners, and the Human Relations Commission introduced themselves to one another.

Market House Repurposing Update: Ms. Nazar stated the Consultants have provided information on the cost of the Market House repurposing, and there is a strategy being implemented to get more done around the Market House and Square. Chairwoman Pemberton inquired about the budget, and Ms. Nazar stated the budget is \$1.5 million. With the budget, the primary focus is going to cost \$1.4 million which is making the Market House ADA compliant.

Commissioner Pappas inquired about the \$749,000, and Ms. Nazar stated it was funds from Park & Recreation and the \$1.5 million are State funds. Ms. Nazar stated she plans on identifying other Federal funding, and to coordinate with other City departments to in hopes of funding additions to the Market House repurposing.

Commissioner Peterson inquired about progress, and Ms. Nazar stated there will be a Lunch & Learn series implemented that will teach the history of the Market House. The community will have the opportunity to sit under the Market House and have lunch while listening to Historians tell the history. The first one will be Friday, May 26 from 12:00 -1:00 p.m.

Commissioner Murphy inquired about the safety concerns surrounding the Market House. Ms. Nazar stated the purpose of the Human Relations Commission in the repurposing of the Market House is to gather and inform the community of the most accurate information. Historians will be working together to compile their evidence.

Vice-Chairwoman Harris stated the goal decided on is to advocate for African American history in the Market House, and suggested making the first floor ADA compliant and getting the four corners completed with the budget that the Human Relations Commission has. Ms. Nazar stated there are four renditions of the Market House design, and the budget will determine the version that will be selected.

Denim Day Update: Chairwoman Pemberton stated Denim Day was yesterday, April 26, and it was a beautiful event. Ms. Nazar stated approximately 125 people registered for the event.

Dogwood Festival Update: Ms. Nazar stated the Human Relations tent will be set-up in the parking lot across from the Library on Saturday, April 29. Due to the weather forecast the Human Relations Commission decided that for Sunday, April 30, the tent will not be set up and all volunteers can pick a time slot for Saturday.

Got Consent: Chairwoman Pemberton stated the Commission is awaiting permission from the Superintendent of Cumberland County Schools. Vice-Chairwoman Harris stated *Got Consent* is a program that is done in the military about sexual consent. *Got Consent* is being presented in high schools to inform students that they have do not have consent no matter the circumstance, and teaches Bystander Intervention as well. Vice-Chairwoman Harris stated the Commission is working with the schools to make sure there are permission slips. The goal is to work with Title IX schools to translate what is done federally to a state level, so that it is comprehensive and students become aware of the proper process reporting incidents.

Community Education: Chairwoman Pemberton stated the Community Town Hall is scheduled for May 31 from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., and is an initiative that was planned after the Steven Addison and Jason Walker shootings that occurred in 2021. Community leaders and advocates met to discuss ideas and strategies to dispel myths about the process after an officer-involved shooting. The Community Town Hall will be moderated by Commissioner Elmore Lowery, Vice President of Communities in Schools of North Carolina, and former Special Agent in Charge with the North

Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (SBI). Panelists will include Cumberland County District Attorney Billy West, Cumberland County Sheriff Ennis Wright, Fayetteville Chief of Police Kemberle Braden, Spring Lake Chief of Police Dysoaneik Spellman, and Hope Mills Chief of Police Stephen Dollinger.

Bus Issue in CCS: Ms. Nazar stated there were over 200 differently-abled students that missed school because the Cumberland County School system did not have enough bus drivers that were certified to drive them. More information will be collected and presented to the Human Relations Commission, who will make a decision on how to proceed.

The Talk: Chairwoman Pemberton stated *The Talk* can be found on YouTube. Vice-Chairwoman Harris stated *The Talk* is a monologue by Dr. Sonny Kelly that is a conversation about race between a father and his son.

Youth Dating Violence: Chairwoman Pemberton stated the Youth Dating Violence initiative is a request from Kevin Brooks to partner with the PROOV Project and Fayetteville State University to bring awareness to teen dating violence, and inquires if the Commissioners would like to vote on adding this initiative to the Matrix at the present time or at a future meeting.

Commissioner Murphy suggested partnering with organizations whose primary focus is advocating for and interacting with the youth population.

Departmental Report: Ms. Nazar informed the Commissioners that they will be receiving Departmental Reports electronically so it can be shared to keep people updated about what the Human Relations Commission and staff have been doing.

Other Business: Vice-Chairwoman Harris stated her and Eric Washington, Human Relations Specialist, will be conducting a training for Solid Waste on June 28.

The next regular commission meeting is scheduled for May 25, 2023.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Palmer, and seconded by Vice-Chairwoman Harris. With a unanimous vote, Chairwoman Pemberton adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Approved _____

Semone Pemberton, Chairwoman