

FREDERICK COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

CITIZENS SERVICES BUILDING

401 Sagner Ave.

Frederick, MD 21701

January 26, 2021 Meeting

- I. A virtual online meeting was held and called to order by Chair Mari Lee.
- II. The following members and others were present: Mari Lee, Lisa Clark, Annette Breiling, Francisco Alves, Roger Sobkowiak, Cindy Shubin, Lee Whisner, Greg Sember, Veronica Lowe, Michael Baran, Paula Glasco, Irene Packer-Halsey, Chris Islieb and Desiree Tucker. Dana Falls, FCPS Liaison, Jessica Fitzwater, County Council Liaison, Keith Merkey, Education and Outreach Associate with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, Captain Dwight Sommers, Acting Chief of Police from the Frederick City Police Department, Michael Hughes, Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer for Frederick County, Margaret Nusbaum, Special Administrative Director for Frederick County, Christine Kay, Citizens Services Division Director and Human Relations Department staff members Pat Fleet and Miles Ward were also present.
- III. The minutes from the November 2020 meeting were approved by unanimous vote with a motion made by Veronica Lowe and a second from Roger Sobkowiak.
- IV. County Executive Gardner introduced Michael Hughes, the Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer for Frederick County. His responsibilities are broad but include identifying policies and practices to insure equality. He will be working with many departments within the County Government. CE Gardner created a leadership team to be a short team standing community. She wanted to clarify that it is a short term committee. She asked how the HRC sees it's role and how roles of the other commissions will work together.

Michael Hughes shared that he comes to the county with the same passion as the HRC and is looking forward to working with the county.

The conversation moved into the Immigration Commission. It was brought up that the County Council is restricting the Immigration Commission to certain areas and that appeared to be concerning to the HRC members. The

majority of the HRC members that spoke were in favor the need for such a Commission.

CE Gardner said she is more interested in how the HRC should be linked, collaborated or merged. She heard that the HRC was concerned about how all of the commissions would work together and would like to hear how the HRC members feel about that.

Jessica Fitzwater mentioned that there are a lot of commissions that are currently operating in the community. She also said she was in support of expanding the scope of the HRC as Roger has proposed.

It was brought up that if a list of all of the commissions in Frederick County could be made available it would help with decisions making and Community Partnerships. All of the members were able to express their individual thoughts on the matter.

Roger Sobkowiak made a motion that a proposal be prepared to be submitted to the County Executive changing the changed to the following the word "focus" be changed to "**apply**" and the word "eliminating" to "**promoting**" and broaden the scope by removing the categories of Housing, Employment and Public accommodation. The motion was seconded by Annette Breiling.

Members once again expressed their thoughts. By a vote of 5 not in favor to 4, the motion fails. One person abstained. Members will resume discussion on the request to expand the scope at the February meeting.

V. Guest speaker Amya Diggs left the meeting and did not present.

VI. Officers' reports

On behalf of the Treasurer Pat Fleet reported that the current balance of HRC funds is \$4,150.00

Veronica Lowe reported on the recent forum. She said that 100 percent of the surveyed individuals said they had learned something new. The entire event was viewed as positive. There will be follow-up forums.

Greg Sember gave an update on the Hate has no Business here initiative. He said that he is waiting on Rick Weldon to respond to his last request to review the press release. A few of the signs have been posted in businesses around the city.

VII. Liaison Reports

Dana Falls reported that staff will be returning to the building to work this week. They are focusing on Emotional and Social wellness.

Jessica reported that there was an additional public hearing with 4 speakers tonight. It will be scheduled for a vote next week. She commended the HRC for the work they are doing.

VIII. Old Business

Lisa Clark reported that there were 109 participants in the Virtual MLK Day of Service and the pillows were distributed to 12 agencies.

Annette Breiling reported that there were 75 participants in the virtual MLK potluck.

IX. Heard from members that wished to made brief closing comments.

X. The meeting was adjourned.

These minutes were prepared by the Human Relations Department.