



# Human Relations Commission

## Minutes

September 11, 2019 6:30 P.M.

Village Hall

3930 N. Murray Avenue, Shorewood, WI 53211

### 1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m.

Members present: Sharveta Parker, Deba Briscoe (by phone), Matt Weiss, McKenzie Edmonds, Gladys Mitchell-Walthour, Sarah Spencer, Jesse Dercks, Mira Lee Prabhu and Julia Appel

Others present: Assistant Village Manager Tyler Burkart, Trustee Davida Amenta, Director of Equity Sam Coleman, Charlie Desando, Lt. Thomas Liebenthal, Tr. Wesley Warren

### 2. Consider Approval of August 8, 2019 minutes

Ms. Mitchell-Walthour moved to approve the August 8, 2019 minutes. Motion seconded by Ms. Edmonds. Motion approved by a 7-0 vote.

### 3. Public Comments

Mr. Sam Coleman was in attendance to introduce himself as the Director of Equity with the School District. There was some discussion with Mr. Coleman about recruitment and retention for minority teachers and professionals in the District.

### 4. Discuss Observations in the Community

Shorewood Moving Forward is meeting this upcoming Saturday to discuss the holiday decorations policy and the process utilized to develop the policy. There was a mention of how some of the high level classes has fewer diversity among the students perhaps due to some systemic challenges for students of color. Additional discussion involved bathroom locations in the schools for non-binary and trans students. Kerri and Sarah performed ride-alongs with the officers, which was covered in the Shorewood Today magazine.

### 5. Staff Liaison Updates

Mr. Burkart informed the Commission they will be revisiting the holiday decoration policy in October. There were a number of items that still need to be clarified in the policy, specifically relating to special events, defining key terms such as a decoration and secular items, and addressing the equal protection clause proposed by the Village Attorney Nathan Bayer. An updated policy will be completed by the end of this week and will ask a few members of the policy subcommittee to meet with staff and Tr. Amenta to review the updated language. Student voting rights was deferred once more due to language about Shorewood students needing to be a resident to be a member. This language is updated to reflect that one needs either to be a Shorewood student or a Shorewood resident. The updated language also amended the selection process for students. President Rozek had some other minor revisions. The ordinance will go back to the Village Board for their September 16 meeting.

## **6. Discuss and Reflect on First Year of Implementation of the HRC**

What have we done well?

- Deep and meaningful thought about the holiday decorations policy
- Discuss uncomfortable topics with one another
- Several people taking ownership and engagement of topics
- Welcoming environment for the public and visitors
- Asking all those that applied to be a part of the sub-committees
- Inclusion of the high school students
- Initiating discussions and moving them forward

What areas do we need to improve in?

- Retention of members – potentially incorporate an exit interview for members leaving with staff liaison and one other committee member or Trustee Liaison
- Training on handling difficult conversations and developing common terminology
- Understanding people are human and will make mistakes. Everyone who comes to the table are sharing the same passion in attempt to tackle human relation issues.
- If something is on your mind, speak and be honest with the group rather than holding it in
- Reset the norms as new members join
- Visual of ground rules and reminders of how to work together – Data subcommittee
- Communication and updates for subcommittee members in between meetings
- Establish more concrete times to meet outside of normal business meetings

Review the mission statement and purpose of the HRC.

- General support for the mission statement and ordinance language
- Narrow scope that could incorporate more policy discussion and assess the impact on minority and other underrepresented populations

Thoughts on meeting structure

- Go back to monthly business meetings – one hour from 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- After business meetings allow time for sub-committees to focus on action items
- Put on the agenda near the end a time to solidify the action items that need to be accomplished for the next meeting
- Create subcommittee chairs to help accountability in accomplishing action items and setting up separate subcommittee meetings.

Subcommittee Chairs – Mira Lee and Julia (Policy), Sarah (Education), McKenzie (Data)

Role of the Chair

- Keep discussion on agenda item
- Email subcommittee chairs each month to assure they are making progress on action items

- Election of chair will be on the October agenda

There was an inquiry related to recruiting more subcommittee members. Mr. Burkart agreed to put together an article in upcoming Village communication to help with the recruitment efforts.

**7. Future Agenda Topics and Speakers**

The next Human Relations Commission meeting is October 2 at 6:30 p.m. All members should email Mr. Weiss ideas of reflection questions for the Farmers Market. On the Table MKE is October 10.

**8. Adjournment**

Ms. Spencer moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Ms. Briscoe. Motion approved by 7-0 vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Tyler Burkart  
Assistant Village Manager