



*City of Greensboro*

**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

**September 3, 2014**

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) convened for its regular monthly meeting at 11:45 a.m. on the above date in the Council Chamber, Melvin Municipal Office Building with Chair Kevin Williams presiding.

**PRESENT:** Chair Kevin Williams, Vice-Chair Michael Picarelli, Commissioners Margaret Arbuckle, Jean Brown, Kurt Collins, Zac Engle, Gary Grandon, Jacqueline King and Chantale Wesley-Lamin

**HUMAN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT STAFF:** Donna Gray, HRD Senior Manager; Allen Hunt, Supervisor and Isabel Gil, Administrative Assistant.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES:** Commissioners Adam Marshall, Tonya Doane

**VISITORS:** Councilmember Tony Wilkins

**CALL TO ORDER**

Kevin Williams called the meeting to order at 11:58 a.m. and a moment of silence was observed.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

Council member Tony Wilkins was recognized at the time he joined the meeting.

**REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – COMMISSIONER KEVIN WILLIAMS**

The month of August 2014 has been a busy month that presented some challenges/issues that have occurred in the community that the Human Relations Commission, along with the Human Relations Department, is in the process of monitoring the development. The challenges/issues include:

- The footage of an arrest made by the Greensboro Police Department where part of the arrest was recorded by an adjoining party of the suspect that was in the process of being arrested.
- The renewed call made by the Pulpit Forum and the Beloved Community Center for the development of an independent citizens review board that called for oversight of the Greensboro Police Department in the areas of police complaints that will involve the use of subpoena power.
- The issues surrounding the incident in Ferguson, Missouri. The question here is, “Is there an opportunity for the Human Relations Commission to develop a proactive solution/plan in the event that an incident occurs in Greensboro?”
- The defeat of the economic incentives bill in the NC General Assembly that involved giving the governor’s administration millions of dollars to lure jobs while capping local sales taxes.



Regardless of the attention given to the some of the events mentioned, the Human Relations Commission has and is continuing to be proactive in making critical and strategic maneuvers to ensure the strength and the sustainability of the mission of the Human Relations Commission. The maneuvers include:

- Appointments were made to the Complaint Review Committee (CRC). The appointments are:
  - Commissioner Kurt Collins;
  - Commissioner Jacqueline King; and
  - Commissioner/Vice Chair Michael Picarelli.
  
- Commissioner Zac Engle was appointed to the Employment Committee, in which Commissioner Engle was appointed as Chairman of the Employment Committee.

In addition, Chair Williams along with Commissioner Arbuckle and Commissioner Doane and the Human Relations Department staff, attended the Women's Equality Breakfast that was sponsored by the Commission on the Status of Women.

Chair Williams concluded the report and invited commissioners to have an opening discussion.

Commissioner Arbuckle wanted to raise the question that since CRC has been part the HRC for a long time she wanted to know if the HRC is going to have a taskforce or committee to view these issues.

Chair Williams said that the CRC is being reviewed by the City Council's CRC Enhancement Committee comprised by Council members Wilkins, Fox, Johnson and Mayor Vaughan. They have been holding meetings to decide if it needs to be redeveloped or make it more transparent. Commissioner Arbuckle asked if Chair Williams was in that committee or anyone from HRC. Chair Williams answered that HRD staff Dr. Crossling and Allen Hunt provided input on the current structure. Commissioner Arbuckle asked to have a motion to request to include the CRC chair or other HRC Commissioners to be on that Enhancement Committee in order to have an input on those meetings. Commissioner Wesley-Lamin added that the CRC members were invited to be on the Enhancement Committee meeting in June. Commissioner Arbuckle wanted to recommend that the HRC would have a stronger voice there. Commissioner Collins added that he has been in contact with Council member Wilkins trying to have a meeting to talk about the CRC Enhancement and he wants to make sure to inform him that the HRC wants to be involved in the process as much as possible but he suggested to lean on the HRC liaison, Council member Abuzuaiter because she has more clout with the Enhancement Committee and the Council as a whole, it would be better coming from her to recommend that they play that role. Commissioner Wesley-Lamin says that this process has been going on for months, the Enhancement Committee has had the input and now they have to make a decision but she believes that the conversation should be had. Commissioner Grandon suggested passing a resolution to the Council, Commissioner Arbuckle agreed. He also asked if the Council has statistics of the number of cases reviewed and sustained vs. the number of reviewed and sent back to GPD. Allen Hunt answered that in 2013, eleven cases were reviewed, four were disagreed and two of them were turned by Chief Miller as he reversed the decisions.

Commissioner Arbuckle asked the HRC if they are satisfied with the impact by CRC or have the Enhancement Committee make its recommendations which may or may not result in the CRC remaining in the HRC Commission. Commissioner Collins said that all the HRC can help provide input, when asked,



through Council member Abuzuaiter but at the same time they have to be careful because they serve at their discretion through their appointments. Commissioner Grandon asked if the HRC is not supposed to bring recommendations to Council about their observations central to this activity are not being systematically included in the discussion. Allen Hunt answered there was an Enhancement Committee meeting where they had a discussion with various representatives of the community and members of the CRC to answer questions. Commissioner Grandon thinks it would be appropriate to have a resolution to asking the HRC to be involved. Chair Williams questioned if it would be an assigned committee to develop the appropriate resolution and he thinks it should be done by the CRC committee itself; however, there is not a designated chair. Allen Hunt stated that at the last CRC meeting Commissioner Chantale Wesley-Lamin was elected chair by the committee. For the records, Chair Williams appointed Commissioner Wesley-Lamin as the chair of CRC and Commissioner Wesley-Lamin accepted the appointment; she added she will gladly support the resolution.

By motion made by Chair Williams and seconded by Margaret Arbuckle the HRC voted to provide a resolution to City Council by the CRC chair with input of all commissioners. Commissioner Picarelli asked what the timeline is for the CRC Enhancement meetings, Allen Hunt answered there is no meeting scheduled yet. Commissioner Picarelli added that the HRC holds the right to have the Enhancement Committee abreast them and updated them with the direction they are going. Also he would like to know where all this originated from because it is a missing factor. He stated that having the Enhancement Committee review and discuss the CRC favors the HRC; one of the charges brought to the Enhancement Committee is that the CRC needs more authority. His recommendation would be to know when the Enhancement Committee will meet again and ask for an update to the HRC. Commissioner Grandon stated that they should have an input in the discussion, whether is fair to the group is indifferent. The structure is important to the greater mission of the HRC that is why he supports asking having a seat on the table.

The motion was voted on and passed with six Commissioners in favor and three opposed.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **CRC- Commissioner Wesley-Lamin**

The committee had four cases to review but they only had time to review three; the committee concurred with the findings of two of those and made recommendations for the third one which they actually sent it back to GPD.

### **Education – Vice Chair Picarelli**

Commissioner Picarelli wanted to provide an update which he believes it is going to make an impact with the committee moving forward. He had a meeting with the State Human Relations Commissions in the last week of August; they were able to put together an education committee as well. He had an influence in the overlay of the County's Education Committee and City's Education Committees. There will be other meetings to define key issues and will get a lot of the state support that will help on the City level. The committee will try to implement some of the cultural infusion and discussing further ways to look at the decline of black colleges. They are looking for ways to help with the African American achievement gap as well as other minorities and be able to raise the bar. Commissioner Picarelli spoke of his desire to meet with alumni & College/Educational Institution representatives as part of the goals of the committee.



### **Employment – Commissioner Zac Engle**

Chair Williams stated that the Employment Committee has been in place since 2010 based on the 2025 comprehensive plan, he was appointed to chair the committee and the committee developed the Partnership with Business Initiative. They also did outreach and trainings to business owners so there was an accurate service by the City referring to business owners. There were changes done by City government and also, after a few years, there is time for a change. Chair Williams formally introduced Commissioner Engle as Chair of the Employment Committee.

Commissioner Engle stated that the needs of this community given the loss of many factory based jobs and lot of changes left an opening here, one of his interests is to provide input and participation in Entrepreneurship, both for profit purposes and social entrepreneurship, so the committee can help citizens of the community create opportunities for themselves. At the last HRC meeting it was discussed briefly about a youth focus group that the HRC have posted. Out of that focus group it was recommended to have an educational entrepreneurship program for youth, so one of the first things he would like to put together an education program for youth. Commissioner Engle has had discussions with Dr. Archibong at NC A&T University and she has expressed interest in collaborating and also with Sam Funchess over the Nussbaum Center, who is willing to open the facility for these purposes. They talked briefly about the curriculum to work with the students and they talked briefly about. The primarily focus is how to present the youth that entrepreneurship is an option. 2. Different ways to take an idea and a way to make it a livelihood. 3. Breaking down in the business process. 4. The possibility to have a mentorship program. Commissioner Engle thinks this is as great fit for the HRC. He invites commissioners input and participation in the progress.

### **HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE – Chair Williams**

See attached document with ideas for MLK 2015 breakfast.

### **INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE – Allen Hunt**

Allen Hunt reported that Reverend David Fraccaro has accepted the chair position for the IAC. The attendance has been between 20-25 individuals and members of different organizations representatives like World Relief, Faith Action, CNNC, Latino Coalition and Church World Services. The Council has asked for more solidified structure so at the moment the structure is Rev. Fraccaro as the Chair of the IAC Committee, a member of AFSC for Vice Chair, the other Vice Chair is a member of CNNN and the Program and Planning chair will be Sarah Ivory from Church World Services. It is a concern for David Fraccaro to have as many individuals who are actually Greensboro refugees and immigrants in the body and the focus will be to increase that attendance.

### **MONTGOMERY WELLS/HOUSING COMMITTEE**

Chair Williams stated that he is in the process of to select a candidate to chair this committee.

### **PROGRAM AND PLANNING AD HOC – Commissioner Grandon**

He is planning to have series of community forums, and further discussions about the format.



## **STAFF REPORT**

Allen Hunt provided information about the Envisioning Retreat to be held on October 4 from 12-5 pm and Saturday October 5 from 9-12pm. The goal for that event is to follow up with the report submitted by intern Brandie Williams about the Department of Justice Human Relations Commissions best practices and the evaluation of Commission's Mission, Vision and course of action.

Chair Williams asked if the retreat can be rescheduled because it is a religious holiday and he would like all Commissioners to attend. Allen Hunt said he will ask Dr. Crossling.

Commissioner Arbuckle commented that NCCJ compiles a calendar with religious holidays of all religions represented in the community and commend it to be distributed to all departments in the organization.

Commissioner Picarelli made a motion to suspend the rules, Commissioner Collins seconded it and the motion was unanimously approved. Commissioner Picarelli asked to move to Other Business discussion in the Agenda.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Picarelli welcomed Council member Tony Wilkins and thanked him for joining the meeting. He stated that there are a few concerns regarding the Human Relations Department commitment to the CRC Enhancement Committee.

Council member Wilkins stated that he thinks the committee is heading to the direction to appoint a person to the CRC per Council member and those appointments will follow the Council member's terms. This has not been voted on but it seems to be the general consensus for the Enhancement Committee. It is not a reflection of what has happened in the past, the HRD and CRC have done a great job, but it is way for Council members to be more responsible within their own districts for those appointments. Commissioner Collins asked if those nine appointees to the CRC will include those who are already serving on the CRC or if there are going to be new appointments. Council member Wilkins answered he has asked Mr. Cobbler to continue to serve representing District 5 because he has made a wonderful job. He believes the appointments will be followed as the Council members are elected and asked the HRC to keep in mind that this has not been voted on but this is what he has been getting this from the past CRC Enhancement committee meetings.

As a point of clarification Commissioner Wesley Lamin asked if the members will be comprised of current HRC Commissioners or if they will be selected from throughout the community; Council member Wilkins affirmed it will be appointments from the community residents.

Commissioner Grandon said he is confused since the current CRC has five member of the HRC and asked if it is being discussed now if those five will no longer serve but the new nine appointments by city Council. Councilmember Wilkins reiterated that it will be selections of each Council member but emphasized this has not been voted on.

Commissioner Arbuckle asked what the reason is to make those changes to CRC. Councilmember Wilkins stated he was appointed by the Mayor to this CRC enhancement committee and the sense he gets from that is that the Council members want the responsibility to fall on them so there will be representation



from each district and from the four at large representatives to ensure a city wide, diverse, representation. Commissioner Picarelli added there are currently five representatives of each district serving in the CRC. Allen Hunt introduced current CRC members: Commissioners Collins, Picarelli, King, newly appointed Chair Wesley-Lamin and Commissioner Marshall, who was not present, to Council members Wilkins and he thanked them for their commitment.

Commissioner Wesley Lamin thanked Council member Wilkins for his transparency; he answered he always asks for it and she can always contact him for any concerns, he always welcomes communication.

Chair Williams asked for a motion to move to the next agenda item which is the approval of minutes. Chair Picarelli moved the item and Commissioner Arbuckle seconded it, all commissioners approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- September 3 , 2014 Meeting Minutes  
On motion made by Commissioner Engle and seconded by Commissioner Picarelli the minutes were approved as corrected.

**EVENING MEETING SCHEDULE**

Chair Williams said that according to the poll provided the best day to meet for the majority of the Commissioners is the first Thursday of the month; Commissioner Picarelli agreed to meet on that day. The venue selected to meet is the Board Room at the Cultural Center and the time agreed is 6:00 pm. On motion made by Commissioner Engle and seconded by Commissioner Collins, the Commissioners unanimously approved to permanently hold the HRC monthly meeting on the above mentioned time and venue.

Commissioner Picarelli suggested having future meetings in other parts of the city to be more accessible for other members of the community.

Chair Williams wants to find new venues for the Executive Meeting to be held a week before the monthly meeting preferably in the evening as well; the HRD staff will provide options for meeting space.

**ACKNOWLEDGE ABSENCES**

Excused Absences were acknowledged.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Commissioner Engle and seconded by Commissioner Brown, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.

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**Chairperson**  
**Greensboro Human Relations Commission**

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**