

Human Relations Commission

Meeting Minutes

December 8th, 2018

The Human Relations Commission convened for its regular monthly meeting at 6:00 p.m. on the above date in Room 2 at the Lewis Recreation Center with Interim Chair Issifou presiding.

**Present:** Interim Chair Issifou, Commissioners Lowe, Coleman, Bryant, Arbuckle

**Absent:** Craft, Murphy, Goldberg, and Allen

**HRC Council Liaison:**

**HRC Liaison**: n/a

**Legal Presence:** Rosetta Davis

**Human Relations Department Staff:** Jodie Stanley, Mica Bailey

**Visitors:** Karla B., Kirsten, Pam Parker, Shauna Grady, Erica, Jennifer Klaiber and son Logan

**I. Call to Order**

Interim Chair Issifou called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

**II. Moment of Silent Meditation**

Interim Chair Issifou called for a moment of silent meditation.

**III. Introduction of Visitors and Speakers: see above**

GCS parent advocates who gathered on behalf of the North West “discrimination” video circulated through social media over Thanksgiving break introduce themselves.

**IV. Chair Report**

Interim Chair Issifou states the mission and purpose of the HRC and its monthly meetings and opens the floor for visitors who may want to address the commission.

Karla B., visitor, speaks on behalf of the issue at hand with two students a North West High school in Guilford county. She speaks on behalf of the disciplinary actions that took place and discusses that it is up to the school board to address further disciplinary actions. She states that the issue is not just occurring at the High school level but that the issue has been present beforehand and that another issue had taken place afterward with a little girl who had concerns about a threat made against her. She states that she is outraged and is reaching out to them (HRC) to see what they can do as community members. Second visitor Kristen says she wants to know more about what the commission does and how they can work closely together as the issue is pressing. Pam Parker, third visitor says that she is also a concerned parent and is aware of the issue at hand and believes that we as “Greensboro residents” are not truly addressing the issue. She states that as a parent she is concerned about the relationship between community resource officers and children. She would like to be a part of the solution and not just a voice. Jennifer, another parent, asks to read from her phone a blurb about what she plans to present to the PTA school board. She states that she is here today as this is not an isolated incident and is not reduced just to North Carolina and begins to discuss other issues across the country that exemplify the same behavior that occurred from the two gentlemen at North West H.S. She states that she would like to build on the momentum for the parents present to do the ground work and make space for teachers and parents to be innovative in dealing with conversations about race.

Shauna Grady speaks as a concerned parent for which her daughter attends the school and discusses how her child was afraid to go to school. She recites the letter she sent her daughters principal the day after the incident and says that her daughter was actually in the same classroom as the boy who was in the video. She speaks on micro aggressions that are intentional and unintentional. She recites the definition of a microaggression and begins to state some examples of microaggressions.

Interim Chair Issifou gives a statement on how we are all affected and invites the other commissioners to share their comments. Commissioner Lowe asks if the child Logan can speak as he is a part of this youth being affected. Logan shares his opinion on students when he was in Middle school concerning actions taking place among even teachers that singled out students.

Commissioner Arbuckle shares her thoughts and thanks to the parents for presenting the issue. She states that she has been trying to figure out how to address the issues with socio-economic status and police community relations in her own time. She explains that their role as commission is to present issues to the City Council, however City council is not over the Guilford County School system. Commissioner Arbuckle states that she hopes they can encourage by education and support. She speaks on behalf of racial equity training that took place and that she was there when it was implemented. Arbuckle goes on to discuss her opinion on the issue and welcomes ideas as she has talked with staff at NCCJ. Arbuckle bids a motion to go to the school board in place of the concerned voices present.

Pam Parker asks about the truth and reconciliation council that was to be appointed. She asks in respect to NCCJ having to do the job and thus she is not sure if they are new and “up to date” on how to address the issue. Arbuckle explains that “we have not gone deep enough on how to live together.” Pam speaks and says that her son is also in a class with the student from the video and says she has another son. Commissioner Coleman asks parents about their students’ opinion on the climate of their school and states that no one in school leadership has contacted her, only the women in the room. She states that there needs to be some teachers and the principal to address the parents. Pam continues to speak out about the racist act. Shauna states that there is a lot of information spreading across social media. Kirsten states that the PTA at North West does not seem to care about the issues and explains an issue in the past with them not standing against racial issues.

Commissioner Coleman asks how change can occur and a parent responds that support of the organization would be great at the next PTA meeting. Pam states that an evaluation needs to take place for the principal and the situation to use as a model for another school as this issue will rise again and asks who is willing to stand for diversity. Commissioner Bryant asks about the parents. Concerned parents speak out more about the issue discussing mixed feelings about pinpointing the parents.

Commissioner Coleman asks how many assistant principals are at the school. Parent states that they have about three.

Parent asks how can the Commission assist more hands-on beyond physical presence. Jodie responds that the Commission had the option of coordinating a program to raise awareness. Commissioner Arbuckle states that they can educate through a program and welcomes any other ideas about how to educate others.

In response to an inquiry about the demographics of Northwest High School, numbers are stated from Pam as being 78.5 % being White, 7 % Black and 2,034 students being in total.

Commissioner Lowe states that being supportive agents can help but she would like to invoke who will change or who has power to have an impact on this issue. She states that the students are capable to make that change as change agents and encourages their voice to be present and says they need to be present as the adults have the power to push them to the next level. Jodie mentions to make sure we honor their voices as we address the issue. Commissioner Coleman asks the parents if they had heard from the superintendent and suggests they plan a meeting with the Superintendent of GCS. Pam, a parent, recaps what she is hearing from the commission: the students voices matter and that they should organize a meeting off of campus offering some fully trained and skilled individuals to facilitate a meeting to give voice to how they feel and if they as students want to take action. Pam offers a suggestion of a meeting place along with some ideas shared about what can take place. Commissioner Lowe mentions that she likes the tagline, “This is Us.” Commissioner Arbuckle puts forth two motions.

Motion to Attend and Speak at PTA Meeting

Motion 1st: Commissioner Arbuckle

Motion 2nd: Commissioner Bryant

Unanimous Approval

Motion to Support Coordination of Community Events for Students

Motion 1st: Commissioner Arbuckle

Motion 2nd: Commissioner Bryant

Unanimous Approval

The vote for November meeting minutes is moved up on the meeting agenda in anticipation of Commissioner Arbuckle’s early departure.

**V. Approval of Minutes**

Motion to Approve the November Minutes

Motion 1st: Commissioner Bryant

Motion 2nd: Commissioner Coleman

Unanimous approval

Committee structure is discussed for next approval as quorum was still present before Commissioner Arbuckle would be exiting. Jodie explains some suggestions that are listed on a handout form and mentions that it does not have to be voted on if they are not ready. Commissioner Lowe states that they had discussed it prior to. Commissioner Arbuckle states that the Education committee should stay separate and asks if everyone has to serve on a committee. Interim Chair states that this can occur but does not have to.

Short discussion is held as to which committees should stay and five committees are determined. Interim Chair suggests that others, if not serving as a chair for a committee, should find a committee to serve on. Commissioner Lowe agrees that it allows them to work together as a team. Jodie asks if they would like to vote tonight as quorum was present. Motion is put forth by Commissioner Bryant for the following committees to remain:

Education Committee, Employment Committee, Human Services and Social Equity Committee, International Advisory Committee, and Montgomery Wells Housing Committee.

Motion is put forth with amendments for committee structure to have five committees

Motion 1st: Commissioner Bryant

Motion 2nd: Commissioner Arbuckle

Unanimous Approval

Short discussion is held on where to sit for the PTA meeting to take place in light of the issue presented earlier in the meeting. Jodie mentions that she will send the address and it is acknowledged that snow may postpone the meeting and thus it will be communicated if a rescheduled date comes up. Commissioner Arbuckle exits the meeting.

**VI. Committee Reports**

Interim Chair Issifou gives a statement on his thankfulness to serve as Interim Chair.

**Education Committee:**

Commissioner Coleman states the update or issue at hand to be discussed was addressed through the visitors of parents.

**Employment Committee:**

Commissioner Bryant discusses her plans to move forward with creating an agenda to see what various small business owners are getting from the City and what they are not getting and will report back at next meeting with that agenda.

**Human Services Committee:**

Commissioner Lowe says they will have their first meeting on next Wednesday at 6:00 pm at 1400 battleground avenue suite 214-G.

**Montgomery-Wells Housing Committee:**

Interim Chair discusses first event to occur on February 27for housing series.

**IAC Committee:**

Jodie states that they have decided to open their applications for the committee and says they will be updating the event with a newcomer’s workshop with various agencies present. Jodie states that Janaye Ingram will be the official speaker for the MLK breakfast and states they will be having a youth speaker on the panel along with Lewis Brandon as the experienced perspective.

**Social Equity Committee:**

No report or update as former Chair Hawkins was over the committee.

**VII. Staff Report:**

Jodie states that she will send out a proposal review and timeline and to keep the HRD staff informed so that they can inform City council with any information necessary. Jodie follows up on the commission meeting motion to find new meeting space and states they are trying to get them into the M/WBE as the Cultural center did not have any rooms available on the nights chosen.

Short conversation is held about parking and Commissioner Lowe asks if a sign can be placed outside. Jodie says it can be put up on the entrance doors. Interim Chair states that it would be a great meeting space. Jodie states it will be a permanent space unless changed. Jodie also mentions to review the attendance as it will be reported to the City Clerk.

Interim Chair Issifou asks if there are any comments regarding the North West incident. Commissioner Coleman gives comments on Northwest as a follow up and feedback to the parents who came tonight. Interim Chair Issifou asks if they need to come up with a speech and it is planned that if something is submitted, they can do so to have review by HRD staff.

**VIII. Announcements**

None are given.

**VIIII. Adjournment**

No motion to adjourn meeting as quorum was no longer present.

Meeting ended at 7:33 pm.

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 Chairperson Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION