

BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes of June 22, 2020 Meeting

The Bloomington Human Rights Commission met on Monday, June 22, 2020, beginning at 5:33 p.m. via Zoom. Present for this meeting were commissioners Ryne Shadday, Byron Bangert, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Latosha Williams, Jacob Simpson, Valeri Haughton-Motley and Pam Jackson. A quorum was present. Also present at this meeting were Nathan Mutchler, a member of the public; Nicole DeCriscio Bowe, BHRC legal assistant and Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director/attorney.

Call to order: Chair Shadday called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. DeCriscio Bowe called the roll.

Approval of minutes of April 27, 2020, BHRC meeting: Calloway-Thomas moved that the minutes be approved as presented. Approved by consensus.

Unfinished business

Facebook discussion: DeCriscio Bowe and McKinney said that they had talked to Andrew Krebs in the mayor's office and had gotten approval to launch the BHRC Facebook page. They had some ideas for items to post initially, but need more content from the members of the BHRC. DeCriscio Bowe will be the editor; McKinney will approve all posts. DeCriscio Bowe had sent the commissioners a Google Sheet to add content. The first thing to be posted will be the commissioners' letter in response to the George Floyd shooting.

Bangert asked McKinney to ask the HT why it had not published the BHRC statement; McKinney agreed to do so.

Williams asked when the commissioners should submit content; McKinney said as soon as possible for the launch, and on an ongoing basis.

Petition concerning IU's treatment of Japanese American students during WW II: Members of the BHRC discussed the petition and agreed to write their own letter instead of signing the petition. Bangert agreed to draft a letter and circulate it for input. He asked for a copy of the petition if possible.

New business

Police policy: Simpson brought up general concerns about police policy and BPD's compliance with recommendations that have been made at the national level. Williams asked if the BHRC had a role in responding to citizen grievances about BPD. McKinney said that was the role of the Board of Public Safety, not the BHRC.

Simpson said he saw the mission of the BHRC as to help prevent discrimination before it happened. He said he would like a systematic review to see if BPD is complying with national recommendations.

The commissioners asked McKinney to invite Chief Diekhoff or another representative of the BPD to a future BHRC meeting to discuss how grievances are handled and BPD's compliance with progressive recommendations. McKinney agreed to do so.

Williams said that the county council is having a special session in the near future to talk about funding the sheriff's department and law enforcement. She is helping to facilitate that discussion. The meeting is on June 30; she will share more information as it is available.

New cases: McKinney said the BHRC may have two new cases, one alleging race discrimination in employment and one alleging sex discrimination in employment. Both are ready for the complainants to sign. Calloway-Thomas said that she is willing to take the race case if she is next in line for a case and if she does not have a conflict.

Other business: No other business.

Public input: Nathan Mutchler said he is an activist and appreciates the good work of the BHRC. He said the county needs to publicize its upcoming session better, as there is a lot of passion in this area. He said he had filed a complaint with BPD and had not yet gotten a response. We are all part of the hard work of making all humans safe.

He said he was upset about a post he saw on Facebook about Shalom's trouble finding housing, even for tenants who have their rent guaranteed. Bangert said if people were being denied housing because of their housing status (being or having been homeless, or perceived as such), the person could file a complaint with the BHRC.

Mutchler shared the Facebook post with McKinney; DeCriscio Bowe shared it with the commissioners.

Meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director/attorney