

BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes of March 22, 2021 Meeting

The Bloomington Human Rights Commission met on Monday, March 22, 2021, beginning at 5:33 p.m., via Zoom. Present for this meeting were commissioners Ryne Shadday, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Valeri Haughton-Motley, Latosha Williams and Erin McAlister. Pam Jackson was absent without notice. Byron Bangert was absent due to technical difficulties. A quorum was present. Also present were Nicole DeCriscio Bowe, BHRC legal assistant, Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director/assistant city attorney, and one member of the public.

Roll call: Chair Shadday called the roll.

Approval of minutes of February 22, 2021 BHRC meeting: After correcting a typo in the spelling of McAlister's name, the commissioners approved the minutes unanimously.

Approval of minutes of March 15, 2021 CCC meeting: The commissioners approved the minutes unanimously.

New business

Request to endorse BAPAWF petition to Gov. Holcomb: McKinney said Melanie Castillo-Cullather, director of IU's Asian Culture Center, had asked her if the BHRC would be willing to endorse a petition from the Indiana Chapter of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum to Gov. Holcomb. The petition asks the governor to do the following:

--Take official action to recognize and condemn acts of racism, xenophobia and intolerance against Asian American people, families, faith communities, businesses and institutions.

--Implement procedures and programs to help Asian American people, families, faith communities, businesses and institutions if they are targeted by acts of discrimination and hate, with a focus on restorative justice-based solutions.

--And establish a statewide advisory committee on Asian American and Pacific Islander Affairs to serve as a direct communication pipeline between Indiana's Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and the governor's office.

After discussion, Haughton-Motley moved that the BHRC endorse the petition. Calloway-Thomas seconded. Passed unanimously.

Old business

Facebook Live discussion and 2021 goals and objectives: Shadday asked that these topics be tabled until all of the commissioners are present. Agreed to by consensus.

Ideas for future speakers: The commissioners suggested that McKinney consider inviting the following individuals to a future BHRC meeting: the president of the Monroe County chapter of the NAACP, someone from Beacon, including those who work on Rapid Rehousing, the director of My Sister's Closet, Vickie Pierce from the Community Kitchen, Rafi Hassan from MCCSC and Prof. Jeannine Bell from the Maurer School of Law.

McAlister suggested it might be helpful to have goals and objectives in place before deciding on which speakers to invite. She asked for a list of previous speakers; McKinney said she would provide that.

Assignment of new cases: McKinney explained the BHRC possibly had two new cases to investigate. One case alleged disability discrimination in housing, because a landlord took months to install a grab bar for a tenant with a disability. But the landlord had installed the grab bar by the time she received the complaint, and that complaint may be withdrawn. The other is a possible case of race discrimination in employment. McKinney briefly met with the complainant, a walk-in, earlier today and the complainant said she would follow up with documentation and more information. McAlister accepted the disability discrimination complaint, and Haughton-Motley accepted the race discrimination complaint.

Other business: Calloway-Thomas asked when public meetings would return to being held in person. McKinney said she didn't know.

Public input: Sylvester, a member of the public, said he had moved to Bloomington last fall and was interested in attending commission meetings to learn more about the City.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara E. McKinney, director, BHRC/assistant city attorney