

## **BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

### **Minutes of May 24, 2021 Meeting**

The Bloomington Human Rights Commission met on Monday, May 24, 2021, beginning at 5:35 via Zoom. Present for this meeting were commissioners Ryne Shadday, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Byron Bangert, Erin McAlister and Latosha Williams. Commissioner Valeri Haughton-Motley had notified staff that she could not attend. Commissioner Pam Jackson was absent without notice. A quorum was present. Also present were Nicole DeCriscio Bowe, BHRC assistant, and Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director/attorney. Omavi Banks, an applicant for the BHRC appointment to the CSBM, was present for part of the meeting.

**Roll Call:** Shadday called the roll.

**Approval of minutes from April 26, 2021 BHRC/MCHRC joint meeting:** The BHRC approved the minutes by consensus.

#### **New business**

**BHRC interview for CBSM:** Omavi Banks, an applicant for the BHRC's appointment to the CBSM, was unable to log into the BHRC meeting until Carolyn Calloway-Thomas had to leave. The BHRC tabled the appointment until the June meeting so that more commissioners could participate in the discussion.

**First quarterly report:** After discussion, Calloway-Thomas moved that the director's first quarterly report for 2021 be approved as presented. Bangert seconded. Shadday called the roll; passed unanimously.

**Webpage update:** McKinney said that after the April joint meeting with the BHRC and MCHRC, she had edited the BHRC's web page to incorporate many of the changes that the commissioners had suggested. She and Rice, MHCRC staff liaison, will meet to discuss.

**Electronic meeting policy:** McKinney said that the governor's executive order allowing boards and commissions to meet virtually expires on May 31, unless he renews it. If he renews it, governing bodies can continue to meet completely virtually until it expires. When it expires, each board and commission can meet in a hybrid fashion, with less than a quorum participating electronically, if they pass a policy allowing for such meetings. She said she will have a draft policy for the BHRC to consider at their next meeting.

#### **Unfinished business**

**4<sup>th</sup> of July parade:** McKinney said the parade this year will be on July 3. It will be a reverse parade, with entries remaining stationary while the public drives or walks by. Bangert said he would not be participating, as he thinks the plan sounds hazardous. Other members of the BHRC expressed interest, and some members of the MCHRC had expressed interest as well. McKinney said she had reserved a space for the BHRC and MCHRC. Williams moved that the BHRC give McKinney discretion to choose items to give out to the public; Parks staff will give the first 200 members of the public a bag of swag or merch from the participating entries.

**Human Rights Award:** McKinney said that she had extended the deadline for nominations for the human rights award to May 28, but so far had not received any entries. She urged the commissioners to consider nominations they might make. She said if the BHRC doesn't receive any nominations, they could give the 2020 award to Cindy Stone at a council meeting, once the council begins meeting at least partly in person. (The BHRC delayed an in-person presentation in 2020 because of the pandemic.)

**Facebook Live discussion:** Tabled until more commissioners are present.

**Goals and objectives:** Tabled until more commissioners are present.

**Assignment of new cases:** No new cases to assign. McKinney said several issues had recently been resolved via education instead of having to file a formal complaint.

**Other business:** Bangert said that if all of the commissioners and staff are vaccinated against COVID-19, he saw no reason not to meet in person.

**Public input:** Carol Canfield expressed concern about the City's plan to possibly close the road in Lower Cascades to the public. She said under Title 6, the government is not supposed to exclude anyone from its services, and if it closes the road, people with disabilities won't have access to the park. She said this was both disability discrimination and age discrimination. She said this was the oldest road in Bloomington and she would like for the BHRC to make a statement to preserve accessibility.

McKinney explained the difference between Title 6 of federal law, and the Bloomington Human Rights Ordinance. The BHRC does not enforce Title 6.

Canfield said that people have been actively protesting this proposal for more than a year. She said the parks department has not been sympathetic and she believes the road will stay closed. She said the parks department wants to connect all the parks for pedestrians and bikers. She said their trial closure, which happened during a pandemic, was horribly timed. She said when there is a home IU football game, she can't get out of her house if she

can't use the road that runs through Cascades. She said the park is a vital part of the City's heritage and she doesn't want to lose it.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director/attorney