

BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes of July 26, 2021 Meeting

The Bloomington Human Rights Commission met beginning at 5:45 p.m. on Monday, July 26, 2021. Presently physically in the Alison Conference Room were commissioners Ryne Shadday, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Byron Bangert; Nicole DeCriscio Bowe, BHRC assistant; Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director/attorney, and Phil Bowe, member of the public. Present via Zoom were commissioners Valeri Haughton-Motley and Pam Jackson. Present via Zoom was one member of the public, Sam Dove. Commissioners Erin McAlister and Latosha Williams had notified staff that they might not be able to attend.

Roll Call: Chair Shadday called the roll at 5:45 p.m.

Approval of minutes: Calloway-Thomas moved that the minutes of the June 28, 2021 minutes of the CCC and BHRC meeting be approved as presented. Haughton-Motley seconded. Shadday called the roll. Passed unanimously.

Unfinished business

Webpage update: McKinney reported that the update to the web page to include similar language for both the BHRC and the MCHRC is still a work in progress.

Human rights award: Shadday hopes to present the 2020 BHRC human rights award to Cindy Stone at an upcoming in-person council meeting. McKinney said that the council will start meeting at least partly in person in August, and she has asked the mayor's office for a good time for the presentation at an upcoming council meeting.

2021 goals and objectives: The BHRC discussed goals and objectives submitted by Williams before the meeting and the commissioners in attendance.

Williams suggested the following: revisiting the BHRC ordinance for predetermined purpose and goals; opportunities for visibility of BHRC (Facebook page and website revisions, sharing Rights Stuff via Facebook; human rights or social justice and human rights series with IU speakers; climate survey for Bloomington residents and list of local DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) firms to refer to local businesses and organizations.

DeCriscio Bowe said that she would need to change the format of the newsletter from a PDF for it to work well on Facebook.

The commissioners present agreed that we should not limit speakers to IU representatives. They discussed having a series outside of regular BHRC meetings, maybe quarterly or twice a year.

Shadday mentioned that Jacob Simpson had wanted to do a climate survey. McKinney said that quality surveys are quite expensive.

Calloway-Thomas said she would like to hear from Williams what speakers and topics she was thinking we should sponsor.

McKinney noted that in the past, she often spoke at meetings and conferences arranged by the chamber of commerce, and that business people may be more likely to go to chamber-sponsored events than BHRC-sponsored events. She said she would reach out to the new chamber director, once that person is selected.

Bangert said that the MCHRC is spending time on criminal justice-related issues. He sees criminal justice as a human right. He noted that the county had been studying this issue and that the county needs both a better place to incarcerate people and alternatives to incarceration.

Shadday said he would like to have a list of 2022 goals by January. Working collectively with the MCHRC on criminal issue could be one of the goals.

McKinney warned of mission creep, of taking on issues outside of the Bloomington Human Rights Ordinance where the BHRC has no authority or particular expertise. Bangert suggested amending the ordinance to include criminal justice issues, at least on an educational basis.

Jackson noted that BPD is working on alternatives to arrests, for instance by hiring more social workers, and suggested that we could BPD more ideas for alternatives. Perhaps we could come up with ways to keep BPD out of the equation entirely with people with mental health issues.

Calloway-Thomas noted that she is a member of the future of policing task force, and suggested that the BHRC could be one of that task force's focus groups. Jackson suggested that an IU group, Bring Change to Mind, could be a focus group as well.

Calloway-Thomas suggested holding another meeting of the Indiana Consortium of State and Local Human Rights Agencies, or coming up with other ways to learn what other commissions are doing, to share successes and challenges.

New business

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

Assignment of new cases: No new cases.

Other business: no other business.

Public input: No public input.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director/attorney