

BLOOMINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes of August 23, 2021 Meeting

The Bloomington Human Rights Commission met via zoom at 5:35 p.m. on Monday, August 23, 2021. Present for this meeting were commissioners Ryne Shadday, Carolyn Calloway-Thomas, Byron Bangert, Erin McAlister, Latosha Williams and Pam Jackson. Commissioner Haughton-Motley had notified staff she could not attend. Also present were Nicole DeCriscio Bowe, BHRC assistant, and Barbara E. McKinney, BHRC director.

Roll call: Chair Shadday called the roll at 5:35 p.m.

Approval of minutes of July 26, 2021 BHRC meeting: Shadday noted one correction to the minutes. Bangert moved that the minutes be approved as corrected. McAlister seconded. Shadday called the roll; approved unanimously.

Unfinished business

Webpage update: McKinney reviewed the draft BHRC webpage contents. She said she had tried to incorporate all of the changes that were discussed at the joint BHRC/MCHRC meeting. Bangert suggested several edits. He also suggested including something about the Fair Labor Initiative. McKinney explained the FLI to newer commissioners and said she would make the edits and think about including that on the web page. Williams said if we take up the FLI again, perhaps the Chamber could help with that.

Human rights award: Shadday will be belatedly presenting the 2020 human rights award to Cindy Stone at the beginning of the September 1 City Council meeting. He asked McKinney to see if we could use the law library or the council chambers.

2021 goals and objectives: The commissioners continued the discussion from the July meeting about goals and objectives. Shadday asked that the agenda item be changed to 2022 goals and objectives on future agendas. Williams asked for a copy of the recording of the July meeting.

Calloway-Thomas asked Williams what speakers she was thinking of when she suggested that the BHRC sponsor speakers. Williams said she had no one specifically in mind, but said that IU, Ivy Tech and the community all had people who could speak on our protected categories. She said there was a lot of attention to race in the community but not to veterans, for example.

Calloway-Thomas asked Williams what she meant by "sponsorship." She said that term could mean our name is on the program or it could mean we were underwriting it. Williams said we would want to have talks from a variety of viewpoints. We would want to be inclusive. We might have to say at the beginning that the speaker does not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the BHRC. We would want to make the talks as apolitical as we can.

Shadday asked the commissioners to come up with more goals and objectives and think about specific plans for the next meeting.

New business

Lead Forward Community Grants Program: DeCriscio Bowe said she was a Lilly Scholar Alumni. Lilly has a grants program where alumni may partner with a community group to come up with a program to improve life in the community. The grants go up to \$2500. She is willing to be a sponsor with the BHRC. The community group has to be a 501(c)(3), but apparently they include local governments, as local governments have been awarded grants in the recent past. (Gifts to local governments are tax deductible by law.) Jackson asked if churches could be partners; DeCriscio Bowe said yes.

Williams asked if we were interested in applying, and if so, what kind of partnership do we want. She mentioned CJAM as a possible partner. She said CJAM's values and purposes align with the BHRC.

McKinney said the BHRC could perhaps partner with a commission from the Community and Family Resources Department, as they are able to receive grants and the legal department is not set up to receive grants. This would depend on the program.

Bangert said we need to define a proposal and come up with concrete options.

Calloway-Thomas suggested beautification of Bloomington. People do better work in places that are more edifying.

DeCriscio Bowe suggested having a trash pick-up date; people who volunteer could get a BHRC shirt and BHRC materials.

Calloway-Thomas asked if the program could be tied to IU. DeCriscio Bowe said Wabash College had been a partner in the past. Calloway-Thomas said her department is working with the Jewish Program on programs to encourage discussions on Blackness and Jewishness. Perhaps that program could be a recipient.

McKinney suggested something about eviction prevention.

DeCriscio Bowe will try to come up with a proposal by the September BHRC meeting. McKinney thanked her for her work on this idea.

Assignment of new cases: No new cases to assign.

Other business: No other business.

Public input: No public input.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.