**KIRKWOOD HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

**Minutes**

**April 9, 2019**

**6:30 p.m.**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Denis Hart.

**Present Absent**

Bob Boyd, Vice Chair

Verneda Carrier

Denis Hart, Chair

Josh Lewis

Geoff Morrison

Judy Moticka

Amanda Sher, Secretary

Ronda Wallace

William Winter

**Chief Administrative Officer** Russ Hawes

**Other**  Kathie Valentine, City of Kirkwood Admin. Department

**Visitors** Jeannie Webdell, Paul Ward

**Roll Call**

Roll call was taken by Amanda Sher with attendance reflected above.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion was made by Amanda Sher and seconded by Ronda Wallace to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2019 meeting as amended. All in favor, motion carried.

**City Council Liaison Comments**

Council Member Duwe spoke regarding the Master Plan and the work in progress regarding zoning which is the first step in the plan. She also spoke regarding the forum that was held at the Robert G. Reim Theater, on March 27, 2019, on the proposed City-County merger and reported that the meeting had been well attended and that John Hessel and Russ Hawes had done a remarkable job. Materials presented at the meeting can be found on the City of Kirkwood website.

**Chief Administrative Officer Comments**

Russ Hawes also spoke regarding the recent forum on the proposed City-County merger and reported that more information would be forthcoming.

At this time Bob Boyd asked how much progress had been made so far regarding the sidewalk survey. Russ Hawes responded that it was about 25% complete at this time.

Jeannie Webdell asked if the library would consider holding an additional meeting on “The Truth Will Set Us Free – A New Approach to Race in America” since the first meeting had been held the same evening as the City-County merger meeting. Council Member Duwe offered to check with the library staff.

**Visitor Introductions**

Denis Hart welcomed visitors in attendance at the meeting

**Strategic Plan Reports**

A.1, A.2

Judy Moticka and Amanda Sher continue to post on the KHRC Facebook page. Posts recently have been geared towards Women’s History Month and also postings from AAUW Missouri. A KHRC table will be set up on April 10, 2019 at St. Louis Community College at Meramec for the One Book, One Kirkwood event.

A.3

No Caretaker Alert forms have been submitted to the city that pertain to the KHRC (reported by Russ Hawes).

A.4

Work continues to develop a list of community resources.

B.1

Geoff Morrison spoke regarding the March 14 meeting hosted by the Alliance for Interracial Dignity and the North Webster Neighborhood Coalition dealing with the issue of the decline in affordable housing and its impact on diversity that he had attended. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on May 9, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at the First Congregational Church at Lockwood and Elm in Webster Groves.

B.6

Anne Carroll continues to work on developing a presentation on Community Conversations (Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee).

C.1

Bob Boyd advised that he intends to obtain information from municipalities and/or states that have adopted universal design. William Winter reported that Wesley Bell was scheduled to hold a town hall meeting on April 12, 2019.

D.2

No educational classes are scheduled at this time.

E.1

A draft of the KHRC 1st quarter report was distributed. Bob Boyd asked Commissions to e-mail revisions to him.

F.1

It was noted that the Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee update would be made under item 10 on the meeting agenda.

H.1, H.2

The Kirkwood Police Department 1st quarter report was distributed at the meeting. Geoff Morrison reported that he and Amanda Sher had met with Chief Murphy regarding complaints received and training held for the department. Use of tasers had been discussed at the meeting as well. Officers have been trained with their use; they were deployed 3 times, 1 time effective, 2 times ineffective as deployment hit tree instead of the subject and the other hit the jacket of the subject and did not produce a discharge.

William Winter advised that he had contacted Officer Baldridge regarding the schedule for the Hot Dog Dayz event. Once the schedule is set the KHRC will be advised of the event dates.

I.1

Judy Moticka reported that she would be attending a meeting of the Kirkwood High School Task Force for Equity. Geoff Morrison, Judy Moticka and Amanda Sher had met with the school superintendent regarding the achievement gap and new discipline policy. It is felt that elementary schools have embraced the new discipline policy, with the junior high staff slightly embracing it, and the high school not embracing it.

At this time Ronda Wallace asked Commissioners why she has not received responses to questions sent to them through e-mails. After discussion, Commissioners were asked to check their e-mails every other day and to respond to e-mails within 24 to 48 hours.

Amanda Sher spoke regarding a letter that had been sent to the Commission from students at Nipher Middle School, the Power of One Class, with information on projects they have been involved in. They had also asked if the KHRC would like to partner with them. Judy Moticka mentioned the Maplewood Food Pantry.

Geoff Morrison spoke regarding the Kirkwood Teachers of Color mentoring program. Ronda Wallace stated that the district says they will hire teachers of color but they don’t. Amanda Sher stated that she was told the district had made some offers that were not accepted. Ronda Wallace advised that she has heard a different story and that she intends to speak to the district about it.

**Essay Contest Update**

Commissioners made their top 4 essay selections which were calculated at the meeting with the following results:

1st Place – Kiden-Aloyse Smith & Casey Stark

2nd Place – Anna Retzlaff

3rd Place – Anaka Bretzke

Award letters will be sent with awards being presented at the May 16, 2019 City Council meeting.

**KHRC Award for Excellence**

Awards are scheduled to be presented to Jennifer Sisul, Principal and Julie Cohen, Counselor, at George R. Robinson Elementary School at the May 2, 2019 City Council meeting. It was noted that Julie Cohen will not be able to attend but Jennifer Sisul will be accepting on her behalf.

**Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee**

Denis Hart reported reported that the KHRC is working towards presenting the first window cling/stickers to Kirkwood businesses that hire or allow their stores to be training sites for people with diverse-abilities. The following steps are now being taken by the KHRC Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee:

* The KHRC Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee is working to identify the initial recipients (to be reviewed by the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Kirkwood staff - Russ Hawes).
* A questionnaire letter is being developed that will be used by the team visiting businesses (to be reviewed by the City of Kirkwood staff - Russ Hawes).
* The drafted letter of appreciation is to be reviewed and approved by all parties (the KHRC, City, and Chamber) and formatted with the appropriate seals by Beth von Behren and approved by Russ Hawes. Subcommittee member Brandie Martine will meet with Beth von Behren after Easter to address this matter. The draft letter will be forwarded to Russ Hawes for approval prior to delivering to businesses.
* The signed letter will then be framed by the KHRC with a copy of the letter and questionnaire given to Kathie Valentine, administrative assistant supporting the KHRC, for the record.
* A team of two KHRC Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee representatives will visit each store to confirm their eligibility.

**Other**

* Bob Boyd intends to contact Beth von Behren regarding preparing press releases for the essay contest awards and the KHRC award.
* Anne Carroll has been given permission to plan the event proposed by the Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee regarding aging in place and affordable housing for people with disabilities in Kirkwood.
* Denis Hart advised that May would be his last meeting on the KHRC as his term was ending. He advised that elections should take place in June. The revised KHRC Strategic Plan will be used at the May meeting. Denis also reminded commission members of the importance of taking ownership of their strategic plan assignments. He stated that the work of the commission is about “us”, not “me”, as the best work is done when they collaborate with each other.

**Upcoming Meetings**

The next regular meeting of the KHRC is scheduled to be held on May 14, 2019, at 6:30 p.m., Kirkwood City Hall, Main Level Conference Room.

**Adjourn**

Motion was made by William Winter and seconded by Josh Lewis to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

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 Amanda Sher, Secretary