**KIRKWOOD HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

**Minutes**

**June 11, 2019**

**6:30 p.m.**

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

**Present Absent**

Verneda Carrier Bob Boyd, Vice Chair

Josh Lewis

Geoff Morrison

Judy Moticka

Amanda Sher, Secretary

Ronda Wallace

Paul Ward

William Winter

**Council Liaison** Maggie Duwe

**Staff Liaison** Russ Hawes

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

**Visitors** Linda Sher

**Roll Call**

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

Paul Ward was welcomed to the Commission. He briefly spoke regarding his background, his service on multiple board and commissions at the City of Kirkwood, as well as serving on the City Council.

**Approval of Minutes**

Motion was made by Judy Moticka and seconded by William Winter to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2019 meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

**City Council Liaison Comments**

Council Member Duwe mentioned that an update on the ADA project was on the June 13 City Council Work Session agenda.

**Chief Administrative Officer Comments**

In response to an inquiry from Geoff Morrison regarding the closure of the Clay Avenue bridge, Russ Hawes explained that due to safety concerns, and out of caution, the Clay Avenue bridge was closed for a period of time. An engineer from Horner, Shifrin had examined the bridge and found it to be safe. Stress fractures in the retaining wall had been noted but the bridge structure was deemed safe.

**Strategic Plan Reports**

**B.7**

Due to Bob Boyd not being in attendance, B.7 was tabled to July meeting.

**D.2**

Verneda Carrier intends to e-mail information to Commissioners regarding a movie being shown on July 13 by the Social Justice Coalition at Kirkwood United Methodist Church entitled “Loving”. The Witnessing White group intends to hold a series of meetings from August 18 through December 8.

**F.2**

Discussed under Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee Update

**H.1**

Geoff Morrison had provided Kirkwood Police Department Vehicle Stop Data reports.

* Copies of the 2017 Empower Missouri evaluation of Kirkwood’s 2017 VSR will be provided to Commissioners. The considerations and criticism raised in the report can be applied to the 2018 VSR.
* The increase in the number of stops is due to the stops on the I-44, as well as those associated with grant work.
* 75% of stops were non-resident stops.
* In light of the recent shooting incident in Ladue, Commissioners would like information on taser training/use.
* Geoff Morrison intends to contact Chief Murphy in order to set up a meeting on June 28 at the police department with himself, Amanda Sher, Ronda Wallace and Paul Ward to discuss training, complaints, traffic stops and additional topics as appropriate.

Paul Ward will be added in the responsibility category under H.1 of the Strategic Plan.

**Exhibit A**

* **Alliance for Interracial Dignity/Sisters (Christians Advocating Racial Equality)**

Geoff Morrison advised that the group is scheduled to meet on June 19 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Deer Creek Park.

* **Assembly Series (Washington University)**

Nothing to report.

* **Bridges to Racial Understanding**

Nothing to report.

* **Kirkwood School District Task Force for Equity**

Judy Moticka intends to e-mail information regarding the Kirkwood High School Task Force meeting scheduled on July 29 and 30 to Commissioners. It is anticipated that Commissioners will be allowed to attend the meetings.

Judy Moticka had attended the Diversity Awareness Partnership meeting that had been held at the Kirkwood Public Library, which was a dialogue rather than a debate. Verneda Carrier stated that there were two men in attendance who shared their experiences. Judy Moticka intends to post information on Facebook regarding the group, which she feels could be a good partnership for the KHRC. It was suggested that members of the group be invited to an upcoming KHRC meeting.

**Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee**

Josh Lewis advised that he and Verneda Carrier would be preparing a “white paper” regarding universal design. As the Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee is an ad hoc committee, it is their intention to discontinue meeting in September or October. It is felt that with the implementation of the window sticker program the committee is coming to a natural end. They did what they wanted to accomplish. It is thought that the work on universal design will become a KHRC project. It was suggested that the members of the Diverse-Abilities Subcommittee be invited to an upcoming KHRC meeting.

**School District Concerns**

Paul Ward advised that he had grave concerns regarding an incident at Kirkwood High School regarding students and teachers/coaches.

* Racial remarks were made by teachers and coaches about players (inappropriate text messages that were circulated, went viral on Twitter).
* He believes what happened constitutes a hostile environment for students.
* They should not assume the offense was handled properly.
* The KHRC should investigate and address the issue.
* Geoff Morrison noted that he felt it would be considered a personnel issue at the district.
* They should consider asking the students affected to attend a KHRC meeting so that they can gather information which would be forwarded to the City Council.
* Paul Ward indicated he believed that what happened is an issue of racism.
* Judy Moticka stated that she was bothered by how the offense was handled.
* Some coaches were disciplined, lost coaching jobs.
* One person received a one year suspension from the campus.
* The head coach was suspended for a year, but is still teaching.
* It is felt that Dr. Condon acted quickly but did not go far enough with discipline.
* Paul Ward stated that he has real concerns about the atmosphere at the high school.
* Students of race are treated differently at the high school.
* There was discussion on the role of the KHRC and Ordinance 10283, Section 12.82, investigation, mediation, prosecution.
* Judy Moticka stated that she felt the larger issue is the hostile environment with the teacher and that if she was still teaching there would feel, as a woman, it was a hostile work environment.
* Paul Ward read the Purposes of the Commission from Ordinance 4860.
* It is hoped the students involved will voice their concerns to the Commission.
* Russ Hawes stated that in Ordinance 10283, under Unlawful Discriminatory Acts, it is clear that complaints are to be submitted in writing to the staff liaison to the KHRC.
* Amanda Sher asked if individuals may come to the KHRC to voice their concerns/opinions, with Russ Hawes answering yes.
* Ronda Wallace stated that she did not believe the students would come to a meeting as they believe their voices would not be heard. The students had trusted the coaches so why should they trust the KHRC.
* Paul Ward stated that he has not been in communication with the students.
* He would like to bring a sense of justice to the students.
* Geoff Morrison asked Paul Ward if he would communicate to the family(s) that the KHRC are sympathetic and tell them there is a process to file a complaint in writing to Russ Hawes who is the staff liaison to the KHRC.
* Ronda Wallace stated that she had filed a complaint with the Kirkwood Police Department four years ago with nothing happening.
* There was discussion how none of the teachers at the high school are African American.
* It is felt that the middle schools and high school are dragging their feet on restorative practices.
* The high school is a good ole boys club.
* What the educator said was jarring.
* Amanda Sher suggested that Paul Ward extend an invitation to the students. If the students plan to attend a KHRC meeting Paul Ward was asked to inform the Commissioners in advance.

**Elections**

* **Chair**

Motion was made by Judy Moticka and seconded by Verneda Carrier to elect Amanda Sher as Chair. All in favor, motion carried.

* **Vice Chair**

Motion was made by Geoff Morrison and seconded by Josh Lewis to elect Bob Boyd as Vice Chair. All in favor, motion carried.

* **Secretary**

Motion was made by Geoff Morrison and seconded by Ronda Wallace to elect Judy Moticka as Secretary. All in favor, motion carried.

**Upcoming Meetings**

The next regular meeting of the KHRC is scheduled to be held on July 9, 2019, at 6:30 p.m., Kirkwood City Hall, Main Level Conference Room.

**Adjourn**

Motion was made by Geoff Morrison and seconded by Ronda Wallace to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

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 Judy Moticka, Secretary