

ALEXANDRIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, April 16, 2019  
7:30pm (Private Tour 6pm)  
Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center  
200 S. Whiting Street, Alexandria, VA 22304

Members Present

Danielle Beach  
Amy Blackwood, Vice Chair  
Christopher Harris  
Matt Harris, Chair  
Michael Kreps  
David Rigsby  
Scott Schwartz

Staff Present

Jean Kelleher, Director  
Miladis Martinez Gutierrez

Excused Members

Damien Hammond, Sr.  
Francisco Duran, Vice Chair  
Monika Jones  
Susan Kellom  
Jenny Wade

Guests:

Rachel Hoppe, Citizen  
Scott Campbell

**1. Call to Order/Introductions by Chair, Matt Harris**

Prior to the meeting the Commission had a tour of the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center in Alexandria.

Chair Harris called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. Introductions were made.

**2. Approval of Minutes of March**

Upon a motion by Commissioner Schwartz, seconded by Commissioner Rigsby, the Commission approved the minutes of the March meeting. All Commissioners present voted aye.

**3. Executive Committee Report**

Chair Harris stated that the Executive Committee meet last week.

Fair Housing Testing

Chair Harris reported that Mr. Goodman Okpara from the Housing Department came to inform them about planned Fair Housing Testing. The Executive Committee approved the plan.

VAHR June Conference

Chair Harris stated that the VAHR conference will be held on June 1-2, 2019. He stated that the Commission will pay the dues, but individual Commissioners must cover registration and lodging.

Board & Committee Chair Training by City Clerk

Chair Harris said that this training was postponed because it conflicted with other activities in the City. It will be rescheduled.

ACPD Research on Scooters

Chair Harris stated that the ACPD had a presentation on scooters at their meeting and said that he spoke to the person who is in charge of that. He said the scooters are overwhelming the City and it is particularly bad for people who are physically limited or can't see well. He added that someone from Lime scooter company spoke, and the reality is that there is no enforcement.

#### Legislative

Chair Harris stated that the Governor of North Carolina issued an executive order to address inequality on the basis of gender, and it is now against the law for state agency to ask job applicants about their salary histories. Similar laws exist in Michigan, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania and maybe the Commission would want to consider this for the legislative package next year.

#### **4. Director's Report**

Director Kelleher distributed a list of closed cases and cases that were opened from January to March and briefly explained the list. Director Kelleher also stated that a case that was just closed was one that she brought to the Commission and involved a major Bank. She stated that the office finally got the Bank to respond to the request for information and a position statement and the office received a lot of evidence about policies and procedures. She said that a letter is going out to the attorney for the bank saying that, although the office did not have enough evidence to show that there was intentional discrimination, the office is concerned with the way the complainant was treated and the length of time it took to answer the complaint. She said that the office had real concerns with the fact that Respondent disrespected the office's process.

#### **Budget**

Director Kelleher stated that budget adoption is May 1, and everything is moving through.

#### **Equity Initiative**

Director Kelleher stated that she is working on the City's Race Equity Initiative. She said that, in the budget, the City Manager has added a position for an equity officer. Director Kelleher stated that the City has become a member of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE). She stated that the person who is hired will be part of the City Manager's Office and will take over that responsibility. She said that the Superintendent of the Alexandria City Public Schools is pushing for an equity initiative, and all of the non-profits are working on this through ACT for Alexandria. .

#### **Virginia Tech Summer Interns**

Director Kelleher stated that she is planning to have two summer interns from Virginia Tech and is hoping to have them work, not only on the equity initiative, but on the language assistance plan, and outreach to underserved communities in Alexandria. She added that Anna McClure volunteered to go T.C. Williams next week and work with some of their government classes, where they are going to interview people who work in the government or private industries. Anna will pitch an outreach challenge problem for the kids to solve and we are looking forward to seeing what they will come up with.

Director Kelleher stated that she is part of the Census 2020 Complete Count Committee, which just met in the West End, and it is chaired by Canek Aguirre and the staff for the City are Carrie Beach and Sierra Latham from Planning and Zoning. Director Kelleher said that she will be on vacation next week, but there are a couple of phone calls that she will participate in for the steering committee.

Director Kelleher stated that there was a draft Resolution that was drafted by Canek Aguirre. It is a resolution seeking a complete and accurate count without the citizenship question, and then it will go to all of the federally elected officials that are in this area.

#### EJI Pillars

Director Kelleher stated that she has been asked to serve on a small committee that is getting started on the plans for the Equal Justice Initiative Pillars. Alexandria will get two pillars that will be replicas of those that are at the Equal Justice museum in Montgomery, Alabama, and they will be brought to Alexandria. The City Manager's Office and the elected officials have asked the Office of Historic Alexandria and the Black History Museum Directors to take the lead, to set up a plan to work with EJI.

### **5. Old or New Business**

#### Census Resolution on April 23

Chair Harris stated that the Resolution that Canek Aguirre had sent regarding citizenship question on 2020 census was approved by the Commission and will be heard at the April 23 City Council meeting.

#### State of Black America Summit May

Chair Harris stated that the State of Black American Summit is in DC, in early May.

Chair Harris also talked about the Staff Appreciation Dinner or happy hour and said that typically this is in May. Vice Chair Blackwood suggested providing lunch for the office staff.

### **6. Liaison Reports**

Commissioner Kreps stated that the Commission on Aging focused on medical marijuana at last month's meeting.

Chair Harris stated that National Police week is the week of Monday, May 6 through Thursday, May 9, 2019. He read the invitation to attend Alexandria Police Week events.

### **7. Announcements /Adjournment**

**MOTION:** adjourn the meeting.

Kreps /Schwartz **PASSED** unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.