

ALEXANDRIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019
7:00 p.m., City Hall
301 King Street, Room 2000
The Chet and Sabra Avery Room

Members Present

Francisco Duran, Vice Chair
Amy Blackwood, Vice Chair
Christopher Harris
Matt Harris, Chair
David Rigsby
Scott Schwartz
Jenny Wade

Staff Present

Anna McClure, Investigator
Miladis Martinez Gutierrez

Excused Members

Danielle Beach
Michael Kreps
Susan Kellom

Guests:

Alex Howe, Landlord and Tenant Relations Board
Barbara Wilmer, Grassroots Alexandria

Unexcused member

Damien Hammond, Sr

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

Chair Harris called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. Introductions were made.

2. Approval of Minutes of April

Upon a motion by Commissioner Vice Chair Blackwood, seconded by Commissioner Harris, the Commission approved the minutes of the April meeting. All Commissioners present voted aye and one abstained.

3. Nominating Committee Report/Slate

Commissioner Harris stated that he and Commissioner Wade contacted all the Commissioners and the results are the following: Vice Chair Duran is interested in the Chair position; Chair Matt Harris and Commissioner Danielle Beach are interested in the Vice Chair positions. Vice Chair Blackwood stated that she was interested in running for Vice Chair again.

4. Elections of Chair & Vice Chairs

Upon a motion by Chair Matt Harris, seconded by Commissioner Schwartz, Vice Chair Duran was elected Chair. All Commissioners present voted aye. Chair Harris made a statement on behalf of Vice Chair Blackwood; Commissioner Schwartz made a statement on behalf of Commissioner Beach; Vice Chair Blackwood made a statement on behalf of Chair Harris. Commissioner Rigsby requested that the future Chair consider appointing, to the Executive Committee, the candidate for Vice Chair who is not elected.

Investigator McClure created ballots for the Vice Chair positions because they were contested. Investigator McClure asked Commissioners to cast their ballot and she collected them.

Investigator McClure announced that Chair Matt Harris, and Vice Chair Blackwood were elected Vice Chairs. Upon a motion by Commissioner Rigsby, Seconded by Commissioner Harris the election results were accepted. All Commissioners present voted aye. Chair Duran appointed Commissioner Beach and Commissioner Chris Harris to serve on the Executive Committee.

5. Executive Committee Report

Chair Harris stated that Mr. Goodman Okpara from housing came back to present his findings of the Fair Housing testing and said that those findings are confidential. Chair Harris said they found one issue and said that the chosen categories were Mobility Impairment.

Chair Harris stated that the Alexandria Police Department presented their periodic report. He stated that there were many taser-related incidents and one was not founded, but the police acknowledge that there was video evidence of this incident which came from a third-party bystander. Chair Harris said that he asked the Police Chief whether this makes a case for body worn cameras and the Police said that body cameras have to be approved by City Council and have appropriated funds for that. Chair Harris stated that the Police Department would like to give a training on the protocol for the use of tasers. Chair Harris stated that the Police Department will schedule a video screening of the police-involved shooting for the Commission when the case is adjudicated.

VAHR June Conference Recap and Changes to Bylaws

Chair Harris stated that the VAHR conference was held on June 1-2, 2019. He stated that Commissioner Kellom was going to give him a report on VAHR, unfortunately she wasn't able to make it to the meeting. Investigator McClure stated that VAHR had a steering Committee meeting last night and the highlight is that they are going to ask commissioners to serve on some of the committees and they are also considering moving the June conference to Northern Virginia next year.

ACPD Research on Scooters

Chair Harris stated that the ACPD is still waiting for the final report on that and said that they had a presentation from a representative of one the big scooter companies. Chair Harris also stated that ACPD doesn't think that scooters are going anywhere.

Legislative

Chair Harris stated that Sarah Taylor, the City's Legislative Director, is coming to the July Commission meeting.

EJI (Equal Justice Initiative)

Chair Harris stated that the EJI is having public meeting on Saturday, September 21, from 1-4 pm. Chair Harris that 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.

Staff Appreciation

Chair Harris stated that last Monday was the staff appreciation lunch and said that he, Commissioner Wade, Vice Chair Duran, and Commissioner Kellom attended.

6. Old or New Business

Census 2020 Complete Count

Investigator McClure stated that they are waiting for the Supreme Court's decision and said that Director Kelleher will share whatever emails she has with information.

Chair Harris stated that it is time to draft the annual report.

Commissioner Schwartz stated the he wants to know if the Commission can get a report from Commissioner Kellom on voting access for the elections next year.

7. Liaison Reports

Vice Chair Blackwood reported that the ACPD is also in the process of electing new officers. She said that the Service Dog Committee is working on a communications plan involving the website and trying to provide education to Alexandria businesses on access and compliance with service dog requirements.

Commissioner Schwartz asked if the ACPD is working with anyone on the design of the King Street Metro station to make it disability-friendly. Vice Chair Blackwood stated that there have been a couple of presentations, both about what the ultimate result will be and also about dealing with access issues. Commissioner Schwartz asked if there is anything that the Human Rights Commission can do to help with access issues the ACPD sees with those three Metro Stations, to push Council towards action. Vice Chair Blackwood stated that there is not going to be any more accessible parking than there currently was, which is only three parking spaces at King Street Metro. Vice Chair Blackwood will take this to the ACPD and get back to the Human Rights Commission.

Alex Howe reported that the Landlord and Tenant Relations board had a representative from the Arlington Landlord and Tenant Relations Board come visit them, because they are trying to push the idea of doing more regional coordination work. He said that the Arlington Landlord and Tenant Board is working on adding source of income as a protected class for renting.

8. Announcements /Adjournment

Investigator McClure announced that the ACPD awards event will be held on Thursday, June 27, at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Harris stated that he went to a presentation by a professor at GMU at the Lyceum - Three Centuries of Virginia Women's History, the subtitle is "We Cannot Be Tame Spectators".

MOTION: adjourn the meeting.

Schwartz/Wade **PASSED** unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.