

BEREA, KY Human Rights Commission

Regular Meeting

July 8, 2013

Meeting Minutes

The Berea, KY Human Rights Commission held its regular, monthly meeting on Monday, July 8, 2013, The meeting was attended by:

Attendees: Lisa Vaughn, Jon Rogers, Paula Dunson and Rich Bellando

Absent: Mae Suramek, Bryan Thomas, Carla Gilbert

Introduced guests in attendance included Juan Pena of the KY Human Rights Commission and Mayor Steve Connelly.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lisa Vaughn at approximately 7:05pm. A review of the minutes from the June meeting determined that the minutes were accurate and Rich Bellando moved to accept the minutes and Paula Dunson seconded. Unanimous approval was offered by the commission.

There was initial discussion by and among the commissioners and Mayor Connelly regarding "the ask" which included when and in what format the HRC will make a request to the City Council to add sexual orientation and gender identity to the protected classes under the Berea Human Rights statute. Mayor Connelly reported that a City Council member had asked for a report on the work of the HRC in the last few months.

The Mayor reported that he made outreach to Berea College with the idea that together with Eastern KY University and the cities of Richmond and Berea the four entities could possibly conduct a survey of the status of human rights in both communities and both educational institutions as potential support for the positions the HRC desires to take.

The Mayor and Chair Vaughn reported that Commissioner Mae Suramek had resigned her position on the HRC as a result of accepting employment outside the city and relocating. This opens the officer position of Vice-Chair on the HRC. The Mayor is actively searching for a replacement for the open position.

Jon Rogers made a motion to adopt the previously prepared position paper on Non-discrimination and present it to the City Council. Discussion around the motion included a proposal to schedule a visit to a work session of the Council, to provide the report in advance of the visit and to be strategic in gaining support for the positions the paper supports which is primarily the inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity to the protected classes of the City's ordinance.

Additional discussion moved to the complaint process as raised by Jon Rogers and his concern that the position paper isn't ready to be presented to the City Council until a complaint process is completed and adopted by the HRC. The HRC members reviewed the existing complaint process and its components, outreach to City Council. Chair Vaughn decided to appoint a committee consisting of herself and Jon Rogers to review the existing complain process consider changes to it.

A soft target of the HRC visiting an upcoming City Council meeting was set for Sept. 17 with the understanding that it could well be pushed back.

Chair Vaughn asked that Juan Pena consider some follow-up training on human rights policy and statutes in the near future due to the number of new members which he agree to do so.

A question from an audience member raised a question about enforcement of a revised human rights ordinance should it get passed by the City Council at a future date. The HRC agreed that it is an important question and warrants additional consideration.

Chair Vaughn concluded the meeting by asking for a motion to adjourn the meeting which was made by Rich Bellando and seconded by Paula Dunson.

The next scheduled meeting of the HRC is scheduled for Monday, August 5 at 6:30 at City Hall.

Motion was requested by the Chair and made by Richard, seconded by Paula and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting.

Prepared by Jon Rogers

Secretary/Treasurer