

Berea Human Rights Commission
Regular Meeting
July 5, 2016
6:30 PM
BHRC Offices, Broadway Center
204 N. Broadway, Suite 20 Berea, KY 40403

Present: Rev. Carla Gilbert (Chair), David Shroyer (Vice-Chair), Gene Stinchcomb (Treasurer), Ali Blair (Secretary), Miriam (Mim) Pride, Dr. Janice Blythe

Michael Harrington (Administrative Assistant), Sharyn Mitchell (Middletown School Reunion Association [MSRA]), Sasha Zaring (Kentuckians for the Commonwealth [KFTC])

Summary of Actions Taken:

- Chair ADDS the following items to the AGENDA: 1. Dr. Nakazawa's database project partnership. 2. John G. Fee Award. 3. Middletown School Reunion. 4. Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index.
- Pride MOVES to accept May meeting MINUTES: CARRIED.
- Shroyer MOVES to accept June TREASURER'S REPORT: CARRIED.
- Chair INVITES Sharyn Mitchell of the MSRA to discuss the recently held reunion.
- Stinchcomb MOVES to donate \$500 to the Middletown School Reunion Association for the MSRA's Oral History Projects: CARRIED.
- Dr. Blythe, Blair, and Harrington DESIGNATED to coordinate on drafting a prefatory language to the passed MOTION stressing the importance of the MSRA's efforts for the MEETING MINUTES.
- Vice-Chair INVITES Sasha Zaring of KFTC to address the Commission concerning KFTC's recent efforts.
- Pride MOVES to partner with KFTC on their nonpartisan voter education event and support the event by expending up to \$250: CARRIED.
- Chair DESIGNATES Harrington and Blair to work with Zaring on nonpartisan voter education event.
- Chair DESIGNATES Shroyer, Dr. Blythe, and Pride to discuss the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index with the Mayor.
- BHRC COMMITS to inviting Mayor Connelly to attend the next BHRC regular meeting to discuss the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index.
- BHRC COMMITS to opening an invitation for nominations for the John G. Fee Award, to be bestowed during the fall of 2016.
- BHRC COMMITS to participating in the First Friday Berea festival on August 5, 2016.
- Pride MOVES to purchase a tent costing up to \$250 for outdoor tabling events: CARRIED.

- Stinchcomb MOVES to expend up to \$150 on weight attachments for the tent: CARRIED.
- BHRC COMMITS to reviewing final draft of the newly proposed BYLAWS and to submit any final comments on the draft during the August regular meeting.
- Blair DESIGNATED to discuss potential development and review of a policy addressing the needs of residents with limited English language proficiencies with Councilor Kerby.
- Stinchcomb DESIGNATED to discuss potential development and review of a policy addressing the needs of residents with limited English language proficiencies with Mayor Connelly.
- BHRC COMMITS to developing and discussing a social media policy for the BHRC during the August regular meeting.
- Pride DESIGNATED to develop initial draft of a social media policy and Blair DESIGNATED to provide assistance.
- BHRC COMMITS to developing a policy to guide the Commission in disbursing funds to community organizations and public events.
- Rev. Gilbert DESIGNATED to table during First Friday Berea festival in August, and Shroyer DESIGNATED to assist Rev. Gilbert with set-up.
- BHRC COMMITS to setting a date for the Commission's OPEN HOUSE during the August regular meeting.
- BHRC COMMITS to discussing potential revisions to the BHRC's discrimination intake form during the August regular meeting.
- Shroyer MOVES to adjourn meeting: CARRIED, 9:15 PM.

Body:

Chair calls meeting to ORDER.

Chair ADDS the following items to the AGENDA: 1. Dr. Nakazawa's database project partnership. 2. John G. Fee Award. 3. Middletown School Reunion. 4. Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index.

Pride MOVES to accept May meeting MINUTES: CARRIED.

Stinchcomb submits the monthly TREASURER'S REPORT.

Stinchcomb notes that there are four outstanding encumbrances from Fiscal Year 2015-2016 that have yet to be expended: travel expenses for Administrator's Kentucky League of Cities training session, and contributions to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Human Rights Campaign, and the Madison County Public Library. These expenses were submitted prior to the end of the Fiscal Year and ought to come out of the previous Fiscal Year's budget.

He further notes that the Administrator's salary will be paid from the City's personnel funds as opposed to the Berea Human Rights Commission's budget allocation.

Shroyer MOVES to accept June's TREASURER'S REPORT: CARRIED.

Chair INVITES Sharyn Mitchell of the MSRA to discuss the recently held reunion.

Mitchell distributes information on MSRA activities, including budgets for ongoing and upcoming projects. Projects include an oral history project and grant proposals for historical landmark designation for Middletown School.

She notes that there is limited information available concerning the history of education for black students in Madison County. The Middletown School Reunion Association collected testimonies and oral histories from students and those involved with the Middletown School in Berea to fill in details of this incomplete history. In collecting the stories of Middletown School students, the MSRA provides an opportunity for those who may seek to study this history to have primary resources available to assist in their research. Various groups in addition to the MSRA, including the City of Berea, contributed to the reunion and effort to collect oral histories.

In addition to the MSRA's oral history project, the organization is also seeking to receive a historical landmark designation for the Middletown School. Middletown School was a Rosenwald school. During the early 20th century, Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington coordinated on a philanthropic effort to build schools for African-American students across the country, primarily in the south. The Middletown School was one of these schools; its inauguration drew a student body from three older one-room schools that served black students.

Stinchcomb avows that a financial contribution from the BHRC would be particularly appropriate for the MSRA's oral history project.

Chair maintains that a financial contribution for the MSRA to receive historical landmark designation would be particularly appropriate as well.

Mitchell notes that the deadline for the grant application for historic landmark designation is in September.

Pride inquires if it would be helpful to the MSRA's grant request to not that there are current funding sources and contributors to the MSRA's efforts. Mitchell confirms.

Blair offers to make a professional connection for the MSRA's oral history project with organization working on related efforts for communities in Tennessee. She notes that the Tennessee-based organization may be able to connect the MSRA with further available resources.

Dr. Blythe praises the MSRA's efforts, noting that it is important to acknowledge histories of inequity in education as a core component of our present understandings of human and civil

rights. She further notes that the MSRA's projects highlights issues of historical and ongoing inequities along lines of race, sex, and class.

Blair notes that it is important to hold conversations concerning such historical and ongoing inequities in the community and in Madison County broadly because often such issues are not understood fully and inequities remain unseen.

Dr. Blythe praises the MSRA's efforts, noting that it is important to acknowledge histories of inequity in education as a core component of our present understandings of human and civil rights. She further notes that the MSRA's projects highlights issues of historical and ongoing inequities along lines of race, ethnicity, disabilities, gender, and class in public education afflicting some school districts to this day.

While the MSRA was an excellent opportunity for former students to reconnect and reminisce upon their elementary school days in the 1930s, 40s, 50s, and 60s, this reunion offers a broader context for us all to reflect upon and recognize inequities that still occur in more recent times in public education beyond the lines of race and ethnicity. The Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 (KERA) emerged as a result of inequity among public school systems along the lines of geography, socioeconomic status, and to a large degree, class.

Stinchcomb MOVES to donate \$500 to the Middletown School Reunion Association for the MSRA's Oral History Projects: CARRIED.

Dr. Blythe, Blair, and Harrington DESIGNATED to coordinate on drafting a prefatory language to the passed MOTION stressing the importance of the MSRA's efforts for the MEETING MINUTES.

Pride notes that the BHRC has yet to develop specific policies detailing a procedure for funding community projects. She further encourages representatives from the MSRA to return to the BHRC for inquiries concerning funding for future projects as the BHRC develops its policies.

Shroyer informs MSRA that the BHRC would like to receive a brief but detailed document highlighting the specific uses of BHRC disbursed funds.

Vice-Chair INVITES Sasha Zaring of KFTC to address the Commission concerning KFTC's recent efforts.

Zaring notes that KFTC members are particularly interested in working this fall to urge local governmental leadership to adopt a local URLTA ordinance to protect renters and landlords.

Rev. Gilbert notes that the BHRC will continue its efforts to research housing issues and a potential URLTA ordinance this fall as well.

Zaring further notes that the local KFTC chapter's offices will be relocating to North Broadway in Old Town, Berea. The organization hopes to host an Open House in October. She adds that the

Madison County KFTC chapter is also preparing a non-partisan voter empowerment event designed to educate the community, particularly underrepresented members of the community, about voting rights and responsibilities.

Harrington notes that the Voting Rights Act is intimately related to the history of and issues concerning civil rights.

Dr. Blythe notes that if KFTC is amenable to working with the BHRC as a partner in such an event, that such an event would be a good opportunity of the BHRC to highlight its efforts to resolve inter and intra-group tensions as well as the Commission's various advocacy efforts surrounding equal opportunity in housing, employment and public accommodations.

Stinchcomb notes that the BHRC make sure that the Commission's public efforts fall within the scope of the BHRC's establishment and charge.

Zaring notes that a date has not been set for the event. She notes that County Clerk, Kenny Barger, will be available at the event to address those gathered concerning voting procedures, as well as voters' rights and responsibilities so that Madison County residents are able to knowledgeably exercise their franchise.

Pride notes that it is important for the BHRC to acknowledge public perception of the events the BHRC promotes since the Commission is a public body.

Chair asks if KFTC would be interested in the BHRC partnering with the organization on the event, or if KFTC would be better served with a financial contribution to their efforts.

Zaring notes that a partner would be helpful in organizing and hosting the event.

Harrington notes that the Russell Acton Folk Center is available to the City of Berea departments, and the BHRC could reserve the space to serve as a venue for the event.

Blair notes that the Tourism department runs Foothills trolley service, and that the department may be able to assist with the event in providing transportation.

Pride MOVES to partner with KFTC on their nonpartisan voter education event and support the event by expending up to \$250: CARRIED.

Chair DESIGNATES Harrington and Blair to work with Zaring on nonpartisan voter education event.

Chair briefs Commission that the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), and advocacy organization which promotes LGBT rights, will be evaluating the City of Berea's efforts to ensure equality for LGBT Berea residents in the organizations Municipal Equality Index. The index evaluates cities by several metrics to assess the climate within the community for LGBT residents.

The HRC sent a notice to Mayor Connelly and City Administrator Randy Stone that the City of Berea would be included in the HRC's Municipal Equality Index in 2016. Mayor Connelly passed the information along to the Chair of the BHRC.

Shroyer notes that the upcoming public rating for the City of Berea made available by the HRC presents a good opportunity to reach out to the City Administrator to work to improve the City's standing in this index in various ways. As the City takes step to promote equality for LGBT residents, the City will better be reflected in the index.

Dr. Blythe notes that the City Council should be made aware of this review as well. As the BHRC reviews the notice from the HRC, the City Council should take time to review the notice and upcoming report as well.

Shroyer maintains that it isn't likely that the city will be reflected well in the HRC's report.

Pride concurs and maintains that the BHRC should review the results once they are published and respond with efforts to promote equality for LGBT residents accordingly.

Blair asks that the BHRC request that the Mayor share the scorecard for the Municipal Equality Index he received from the HRC with the Commission.

Chair DESIGNATES Shroyer, Dr. Blythe, and Pride to discuss the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index with the Mayor.

BHRC COMMITS to inviting Mayor Connelly to attend the next BHRC regular meeting to discuss the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index.

Chair notes that the BHRC has typically awarded the John G. Fee Award in the fall. Although there was no award given in 2015, the BHRC inaugurated the award with the intention that it would be given annually. The Chair notes that the BHRC ought to prepare to grant the award again in 2016. To that end, she suggests the BHRC should prepare to solicit nominations for the award.

She notes that the Commission should model an article highlight a request for nominations for the award for the Berea Citizen after previous articles that have ran in the newspaper detailing the BHRC and the John G. Fee Award.

She notes that nominations should be sent via post-mail to the office, or by email. Harrington confirms that nomination should be sent to mharrington@bereaky.gov.

Blair suggests that in conjunction with the John G. Fee Award that the BHRC consider sponsoring an essay contest for students concerning human and civil rights in conjunction with various writers' organizations in the community. She details the structure of this potential sponsored event, which she had proposed during previous BHRC meetings.

Shroyer affirms that an essay contest is a good outreach opportunity for the BHRC but notes that for the 2016 John G. Fee Award, there likely isn't enough time for the Commission to coordinate an essay contest as well and to such a contest justice.

Rev. Gilbert notes that an essay contest can be held in conjunction with any of the BHRC's upcoming events, so that Commissioners should keep an essay contest in mind while planning for future events.

BHRC COMMITS to opening an invitation for nominations for the John G. Fee Award, to be bestowed during the fall of 2016.

Stinchcomb asks that the Commission consider working with the Berea Arts Council to sponsor an art/photography contest for the BHRC to use as decorations for the Commission offices.

Dr. Blythe notes that the Commission offices need to be reflected on the Broadway Center building directory as well as the outdoor sign near the entrance of the building.

Pride notes that Commissioners should send along any photographs from events held or sponsored by the BHRC to Harrington.

Stinchcomb notes that as the Commission prepares for the upcoming Open House, the BHRC should make an effort to invite local and state public and elected officials as well as those aspiring to elected positions.

Chair notes that the Commission needs volunteers to table during First Friday in August.

BHRC COMMITS to participating in the First Friday Berea festival on August 5, 2016.

Pride MOVES to purchase a tent costing up to \$250 for outdoor tabling events: CARRIED.

Stinchcomb MOVES to expend up to \$150 on weight attachments for the tent: CARRIED.

Stinchcomb notes that the process for expending funds includes providing the City Clerk with a copy of the minutes in which the BHRC votes and approves expending funds.

Chair notes that the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) will be hosting a violence prevention workshop from October 1-2. Attendees must attend both days.

Stinchcomb notes to the Chair that the Bylaws Subcommittee has completed its final draft of a new set of bylaws for the Commission.

BHRC COMMITS to reviewing final draft of the newly proposed BYLAWS and to submit any final comments on the draft during the August regular meeting.

Chair seeks report of review of City of Berea services and policies concerning non-English language services.

Stinchcomb notes that the City of Berea website does not include any information in Spanish. He has contacted the Berea Police Department, and officials with the BPD have confirmed that the department has contracted Spanish language interpreters in the past.

Harrington notes that the US Department of Justice has guidelines discussing governmental and public services for those with limited English proficiency. He notes that the BHRC may consider providing City officials and department with a report summarizing the content of these guidelines along with suggestions detailing steps the City of Berea may take to improve services for those with limited English proficiency.

Blair notes that Councilor Diane Kerby spearheaded efforts to pass the City Council resolution to advance inclusive policies. Blair maintains that Councilor Kerby would be a good person discuss possible updates to the City of Berea's policies concerning services for those with limited English proficiency.

Stinchcomb notes that the Mayor should also be included in such discussions.

Blair DESIGNATED to discuss potential development and review of a policy addressing the needs of residents with limited English language proficiencies with Councilor Kerby.

Stinchcomb DESIGNATED to discuss potential development and review of a policy addressing the needs of residents with limited English language proficiencies with Mayor Connelly.

Chair TABLES discussion of BHRC Social Media Policy until the August regular meeting.

BHRC COMMITS to developing and discussing a social media policy for the BHRC during the August regular meeting.

Pride DESIGNATED to develop initial draft of a social media policy and Blair DESIGNATED to provide assistance.

Pride maintains that the BHRC ought to develop policies and protocols detailing how, to whom, and under what conditions the BHRC will disburse funds to community organizations and events. Such a policy will provide assurance that the disbursement of funds is issued in a fair and standard manner.

Blair notes that such a policy ought to be developed in a manner consistent with present City of Berea contract policies. She notes that when the BHRC disburses funds to outside organizations, the BHRC ought to have a contract in place specifying how, when, and under what conditions such funds may be used.

BHRC COMMITS to developing a policy to guide the Commission in disbursing funds to community organizations and public events.

Rev. Gilbert DESIGNATED to table during First Friday Berea festival in August, and Shroyer DESIGNATED to assist Rev. Gilbert with set-up.

BHRC COMMITS to setting a date for the Commission's OPEN HOUSE during the August regular meeting.

BHRC COMMITS to discussing potential revisions to the BHRC's discrimination intake form during the August regular meeting.

Shroyer MOVES to adjourn meeting: CARRIED, 9:15 PM.

Michael Harrington
Administrative Assistant

Minutes Recorded: July 5, 2016

Minutes Approved:

[Rev. Carla Gilbert, Chair]