Berea Human Rights Commission

Regular Meeting

Aug 6, 2018, 6:30 PM

CITY HALL, COMMUNITY ROOM  
212 CHESTNUT ST, BEREA, KY 40403.

Present: Janice Blythe (Secretary), Peter Hille, Randy Dinsmore, Gene Stinchcomb (Vice Chair) and Rev. Carla Gilbert (Acting Chair for the regular meeting in August).

Absent: Mim Pride (Chair), Eef Fontanez (Treasurer)

Eric Hogsten (Administrative Assistant)

Guests: Ali Blair, Jackie Bowling

Summary of Actions Taken:

* Meeting was called to order at 6:28 p.m. by Rev. Carla Gilbert, Acting Chair for this meeting.
* The agenda was presented and approved as distributed.
* Announcements
  + Preferred contact information for members of the commission. Eric will send an email requesting this information.
* Minutes from the July meeting were reviewed and approved.
* June/July Treasurer’s Report
  + Eric Hogsten, Administrative Assistant, announced that the BHRC has received a non-final report for the last year’s budget and that the July Budget only included payroll. It was also discussed that the BHRC’s budget for the next fiscal year will be approximately $5000, excluding any expenses that are associated with the part-time position for the administrative assistant position. The Treasurer and Chair will offer more specific details about their conversation with Mr. Randy Stone, City Manager, at the September meeting.

**New Business**

* Levitt AMP Tabling Update + Presentation
  + Ms. Ali Blair outlined details for the last First Friday Night Gathering. She indicated that the event would have an emphasis on the Hispanic/Latino community. The event starts at 7:00 p.m. and a welcome will be given, along with pertinent announcements about the evening’s participants in the program and so forth. There is a first band scheduled for the first part of the evening. The BHRC was given suggestions from Ms. Blair for the presentation to be given by the commission regarding research to educate the community. It was decided that our presentation will be around 8:00 p.m. Peter Hille indicated that a short visual presentation of summer research conducted by Dr. Alicestyne Turley, Director of the Carter G. Woodson Center for Interracial Education at Berea College will occur, followed by other brief remarks on behalf of the commission. The main band celebrating the Latino thematic event will introduce the main band, followed by other activities for the remainder of the evening. Ms. Blair shared that the event will involve one Berea College student organization, the Latin American Student Association (LASA). These students will have opening remarks toward the beginning of the Levitt gathering. Ms. Blair also expressed her appreciation to the commission for co-sponsoring this cultural event to educate our Berea community. It was decided that Peter Hille, Mim Pride, and Janice Blythe will coordinate and finalize the presentation by the commission for Friday evening.
  + It was decided that the BHRC would have its booth available that evening to provide some of our educational materials to those attending the event. There were brief comments regarding the video and slide presentation and other material for the formal presentation. Ms. Blair indicated she would coordinate the need for the projector and other equipment needed for the video presentation.
  + Discussion occurred about other future events that would occur for our report to the Berea City Council in September. Chair Mim Pride will give this report and other members of the commission will provide assistance. Comments about the 50th anniversary will be given by Chair Pride and Peter Hille.
    - One thing that will occur is the presentation of the “Get on the Bus Project” documentation project which has been conducted and completed by Dr. Jackie Burnside and Ms. Sharyn Mitchell of Berea College. This project occurred in April of 2017 and was sponsored primarily by the Lexington Housing Authority with local partners in Berea—the Berea Housing Authority, Berea College, and the Berea Human Rights Commission. Mr. Juan Pena of the Kentucky Human Rights Commission also attended the actual event held in April at the opening event at the Berea College Forest Outreach Center at Indian Fort. The bus tour (provided by the Lexington Housing Authority) departed from the center and Dr. Burnside and Ms. Mitchell gave the official tour throughout the bus ride. It was discussed the a check for the summative documentation research and presentation for this community emphasis on housing will be given to Dr. Burnside and Ms. Mitchell at the September meeting with the Berea City Council. Commissioners Gene Stinchcomb and Janice Blythe may give this presentation.
    - Nominations for the John G. Fee Award were given and discussed previously. The vote occurred during this August meeting. Recipients of this 2018 year award will be as follows:
    - The John G. Fee Youth Award recipient is Brielle LeMaster
    - The John G. Fee Award recipient is Virginia Bland.
    - At the meeting with the City Council, Rev. Carla Gilbert will make these presentations
* Report on American Disabilities Act (ADA) Training Workshop for the Berea City Council and the public was given by Mr. Rex Sexton of the Lexington Human Rights Commission. This training workshop, coordinated by BHRC Chair Mim Pride, and the designated council member, Bruce Frailey, occurred July 30, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the community room of Berea City Hall. Earlier conversations between the BHRC, Berea City Manager, and Berea City Council led to the decision to begin our educational process with a workshop scheduled at a time convenient with the Berea City Council, followed later by more community conversation and programs. The BHRC will continue to develop continued conversations through another scheduled program for the community. A public announcement for this first stage of our community education was made inviting all members of our community to participate. Approximately 22 persons attended the workshop, including Mayor Connelly and Mr. Randy Stone. All but two city councilpersons were able to participate in this workshop. Five members of the BHRC participated in the workshop. The presentation prepared and delivered by Mr. Sexton lasted for approximately one hour and will be made available on the commission’s/city website and available to the public.
  + October is the member that emphasized disability and employment. Commissioners Randy Dinsmore, Eef Fontanez, and Janice Blythe agreed to conduct further work for the next phase of community education. This panel event will be planned for October. The BHRC will plan a community program that involves discussions led by participants within Berea, including Mr. Chuck Relmly and Mr. Randy Stone, designated city officials; representatives in special needs/disability education for students, staff, and on-campus public accommodations by designated administrative staff at the Berea Independent Schools, Madison County Schools, Berea College, and Human Resource Directors/Coordinators at local businesses and organizations. Because the ADA is a huge piece of legislation and covers many areas, this next phase of our community education will emphasize employment for those with disabilities, along with other critical needs to be considered for public accommodations. Contacts will need to be made with Mr. Rex Sexton, specific employment accommodations in our local community and our educational entities within the Berea community. Specific details for tasks to be addressed ensued. Guest visitor Ms. Jackie Bowling indicated that this meeting should include citizens’ accommodations and be inclusive of everyone in the community. The commission will continue to work on this next phase of our emphasis on disabilities within our community.
* FOIA (Freedom of Information Act/ Open Records)
  + There was discussion of requests and concerns from the community regarding open requests made to the BHRC. There has been some discrepancies and misunderstanding of how specific procedures are conducted between this local commission and the Kentucky Human Rights Commission (KHRC). Our current administrative assistant explained the current process. At this point our current form used is considered a questionnaire and it is up to the KHRC to proclaim information obtained from the questionnaire (the BHRC’s form) an official complaint. Then the KHRC reveals its procedure to address the official complaint. There are still some confusion by the BHRC commission. More follow-up will have to be made to address not only the requests and concerns/discrepancies, but also the confusion in procedures with the KHRC and the BHRC. As a result of future clarifications, there may need to be adjustments made in the By-laws and documents (use of standard vocabulary/terms between BHRC and the KHRC, and other details) currently being used by the BHRC. We will need further updates to support our actions.

Old Business

* Office Report:
  + Line Item. Treasurer. Line item. Line item budget will be cut to 1/3 of the previous amount until next month. It was moved by Peter Hille and seconded by Gene Stinchcomb that we use the provisional budget as a working budget, until we receive more feedback from Chair Pride and City Manager Randy Stone
* Update for “Get on the Bus Project”
  + While all stories related to this project have not been finalized (more important information located through their research, but finalization is about to occur.
* Follow up regarding the history of Human Rights in Berea
  + Chair Mim Pride, Peter Hille, and Dr. Janice Blythe reported previously on a conversation with Dr. Alicestyne Turley regarding her summer research which pertains to some of Berea’s history in human rights. Janice Blythe agreed to do more follow-up with Dr. Turley to learn more about the status of her (Dr. Turley’s) work on Berea’s history.
* Letter to Editor –concerns from the community
  + Chair Mim Pride wrote a letter sometime ago. It was agreed that we will proceed with a formal release of our statement regarding the work of the BHRC to be published in local papers (Berea and Richmond).
* Strategic planning
  + All work this year conducted by the BHRC has been to carry out our three main goals. We not only been putting the plan together, but also working on the plan. It was noted that much of our work in co-sponsorship/partnership have occurred by a major amount of the funding occurring from other groups, such as Lexington Housing Authority. We will need to reflect more about this for future planning.

Public Comments

Jackie Bowling offered an update of comments regarding budget line-items and other community concerns. Ms. Bowling specified the actions of the City Council---passes or amends ordinances and has limitations on its budget. She voiced her concerns that City Council is not totally in charge of spending all aspects of the budget; the Council has limitations. She commented that the Council can amend the budget and add more requirements, but perhaps not line-item budget matters prior to the recent ordinance, added two or three months ago. She also commented about other practices of both the City Council and the Mayor, tourism, the Tourism commission, and other matters. She emphasized that people do not always understand the process and that it’s not always how things happen.

There were no additional comments made by guests at this meeting.

8:05 p.m. There was a motion and second that the meeting adjourn.

Prepared By:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Eric Hogsten, AA]

Administrative Assistant

Minutes Recorded: July 9, 2018

Minutes Approved: January 7, 2019

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Mim Pride, Chair]

Berea Human Rights Commission

July 9, 2018