

Berea Human Rights Commission
Regular Meeting
November 4, 2019, 6:30 PM
CITY HALL, COMMUNITY ROOM
212 CHESTNUT ST, BEREA, KY 40403.

Present: Mim Pride (Chair), Peter Hille (Secretary), Randy Dinsmore, Gene Stinchcomb (Vice Chair), Rachel Burnside, and Virginia Bland

Absent: Eef Fontanez

Eric Hogsten (Administrative Assistant)

Guests:

Public: Jacque Bowling

Summary of Actions Taken:

- Meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM
- The agenda was approved Motion: Hille; Second: Dinsmore. Passed
- Announcements.
 - Cupcakes provided in honor of Dr. Janice Blythe's birthday
 - Pride and Burnside attended the NAACP Banquet and recommend that the BHRC arrange to meet with them and the Richmond HRC to discuss common interests and concerns. Pride will follow up.
 - Peoples Bank continues to support training regarding elder safety. Pride offered BHRC assistance to the effort.
 - Dinsmore wrote a letter acknowledging October as Employment of the Disabled Month. The letter was lost, but will appear in the first Citizen in November.
 - Pride and Dinsmore reported repeated aggressive scam calls that they have received and had reported to them. Elder safety continues to be a matter of concern for the Commission.
- Minutes from the August 2019 Meeting
 - Pride advised that no attachments are attached nor will they be attached. Members who have copies of the attachments supporting the Blair complaint should destroy them.
 - Hille noted that the minutes are prepared based on notes from Hogsten and Pride and after his personal review of the video.
 - Add Colby Lily to the list of members of the public who were present
 - Ms. Bowling was asked and does not have a preference as to whether she is identified as Jacqueline Bowling or Jacque Bowling in BHRC minutes. Note correct spelling.
 - Add third "i" to Virginia Bland's name.
 - Motion: Hille; Second: Stinchcomb to approve with corrections. Passed.

- Minutes from the October 2019 meeting
 - Add third “i” to Virginia Bland’s name
 - Jacque Bowling
 - Delete “r” from Burnside on last page
 - Motion to approve with Corrections: Hille; Second: Stinchcomb. Passed
- Treasurer's report for MONTH
 - Hogsten reports that cost of newspaper announcements of changes in meeting time are still the only expenses. John G. Fee costs encumbered.
 - Action to table for more complete report: Stinchcomb; Second: Hille. Approved

New Business

- Public discussion on comment of meetings (a line by line review @ 15:30 to 57:50 in the video).
 - Chair returned document for further review and editing. Stinchcomb and Hille will follow up.

Old Business

- Office Report
 - Fee Plaques are being prepared. Estimate on two individual plaques is \$18.00 each to be completed next week.
 - Community Resource Gathering sponsored by Zinnia Hensley is scheduled for November 19; 12-4. We will have a table. Hogsten, Stinchcomb, Burnside and Bland signed up to represent BHRC. Pride indicated that if anyone could not attend they should notify Hogsten and Pride can fill in.
 - The Civil Rights Hall of Fame induction is scheduled for November 14 in Lexington. Dr. Blythe was not selected to be honored. No members plan to attend.
 - Hogsten has discovered problems with Google Drive. These have been referred to IT.
 - Hogsten will be out most Fridays this month to attend to his duties as Advisor to the Berea College Debate Team.
- Report on accounting for donations. Stinchcomb
 - Stinchcomb met with Susan Meeks to discuss how donations to BHRC would be handled. He explained that the Ordinance specifically allows us to raise funds.

- Meeks indicated that donations to BHRC would have to go through the budget and be approved by Council.
- Gregory had indicated to Pride that based on the experience of BPD, he thought we would need to establish a 501(c)3. Berea PD was able to find an attorney to prepare the documents pro bono.
- Hille indicated that any organization that is qualified to become a 501(c)3 can operate under the fiscal sponsorship of another organization that is already a 501(c)3. There are entities that would likely be willing to help us.
- Donors who wish to help us sponsor food at an event, for example, could write a check directly to the caterer to cover the cost.
- Pride and Hille will follow up and present the Commission with a variety of options.
- Report on Woodson Center/ Friends Meeting Project
 - No new information. Pride will update in December
- Janice Blythe Award
 - Burnside reported that she had a conversation with Dr. Roelofs at Berea College. He expressed interest and directed her to the Vice President for Advancement.
 - At the NAACP Banquet it was announced that Berea College and the NAACP have combined to create a scholarship for students in Children and Family Studies that would honor Dr. Blythe. There was brief discussion ending in agreement that Burnside would talk with Roelofs about whether the College still wishes to partner with BHRC in honoring Dr. Blythe. Burnside will report.
- Update on training for Berea College students
 - Hogsten reported that Juan Pena has agreed to provide the training. Student Government Assoc. will sponsor. Date to be determined after the holiday break.

Public Comment

Jacque Bowling suggested that the Commission consider preparing and signing confidentiality documents and that the Commission move into executive session when confidential or sensitive matters are being discussed. Open meetings and the video recording of all meetings are serious barriers to members of the community who have experienced discrimination and who wish to speak to the Commission. She pointed out the small number of complaints and believes that the lack of confidentiality is the reason.

Mr. Stinchcomb, based on years of prior public service experience, responded that Open Meetings laws prohibit city entities going into executive session except to deal with personnel matters (employees) and legal matters.

Jacque Bowling believes that the current situation is unacceptable and that there are some different rules for HRC groups.

Those present offered specific examples of occasions in which the lack of assurance of confidentiality was problematic.

Pride described a series of conversations over six years in which she has sought clarification of the open meeting/confidentiality conflict and stated that she had repeatedly been told that executive session is a very limited option. She promised to renew her effort to secure confidentiality training for all members and to seek resolution to this conflict between open meetings requirements and confidentiality.

Hille and others pointed out that the public meeting is public, but that the Commission through the staff and individual members can and do assist those needing assistance and do it in a confidential manner.

Jacque Bowling expressed concern about the lack of clarity in the criteria and process for selecting Fee Award recipients pointing out what she believes are inconsistencies. Burnside and Commissioners committed to a review of the criteria and process for both awards.

8:15 P.M. MOTION MOVED and CARRIED to ADJOURN.

Prepared By:

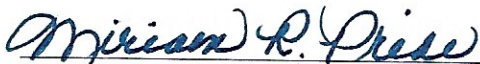


[Eric Hogsten, AA]

Administrative Assistant

Minutes Recorded: November 04, 2019

Minutes Approved:



[Miriam Pride, Chair]

Berea Human Rights Commission

December 02, 2019