



**Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Committee Meeting
April 6, 2023
Virtual/Electronic Meeting
6:30 pm**

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1. WELCOME

- a. CALL TO ORDER
 - i. HRC Chair, Jessica Harris, called the Zoom meeting to order at 6:35 pm
- b. ROLL CALL
 - i. Jessica Harris
 - ii. Mary Bauer
 - iii. Kathryn Laughon
 - iv. Suzanne Lynn
 - v. Ernest Chambers (arrived 6:56pm)
- c. MISSION (recited by all): *Act as a strong advocate to justice and equal opportunity by providing citywide leadership and guidance in the area of civil rights.*

2. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - i. None
- b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC
 - i. None

3. WORK SESSION

- a. HRC Rules & Procedures amendments
 - i. There are some current issues with discrepancies between what the Rules & Procedures say versus what the Commission does in practice, specifically following Martha's Rules
 - ii. Section 4. Commissioners discuss the merits of using Martha's Rules over Robert's Rules
 - 1. The original point of using Martha's Rules was to avoid stalling time during meetings, but this is not a problem for the HRC
 - 2. Rule formalities will change depending on the members of the Commission
 - 3. Commissioner says that Robert's Rules would be less accessible
 - 4. For Martha's Rules, all proposals should be put forward in writing; also, the "in favor, can live with, opposed, abstained" vote is meant to get a preliminary gauge of the Commission's general feelings toward a proposal
 - iii. Commissioner asks what other Commissions do for their rule formalities

1. There is no set style across Commissions
- iv. Commission could keep Rules & Procedures as is with Martha's Rules, but this would mean they would then have to better adhere to the rules
- v. HRC Chair passes Committee Chair position to Kathryn
- vi. **Committee Chair offers to give a presentation about Martha's Rules at the next regular meeting to familiarize the Commission with them**
 1. **Commissioner suggests including an information sheet in agenda packets about Martha's Rules so that Commissioners can refer back to it during meetings**
- vii. Discussion about procedures
 1. Section 2.2. Commissioners discuss the Director's role as Secretary of the Commission
 - a. Decide to keep text as is
 2. Section 3.1. Commissioners address issue with annual meeting timing
 - a. Rules & Procedures currently say that officer election and work plan will occur during the first regular meeting in January, but the Commission does not decide upon its work plan until the month of March during the Annual Retreat
 - b. Commissioner suggests taking out the bit about deciding upon a work plan and instead saying the Commission will decide its schedule for the ensuing year
 3. Section 3.4. Commissioner points out that work sessions are what committee meetings are, so this could change
- viii. **Will present Martha's Rules and the small proposed changes to the Rules & Procedures during the next meeting**
- b. Housing and annual focuses
 - i. HRC Chair would like to have some concrete plans about the three annual housing focuses decided at the Annual Retreat
 1. Commissioners discuss the three focuses
 - ii. Commissioner asks what the HRC would be asking for with the focus about Black homeownership loss
 1. Another Commissioner says that this issue could possibly be included under addressing rezoning
 2. Another Commissioner says that this issue could be something that it constantly reminds Council of and keeps in mind as it does other work
 - a. Also recommends asking residents and experts if there is anything the Commission can do
 3. Another Commissioner says that the solutions to this issue may be a little too complicated for the HRC to focus on given their lack of expertise in the area, and the issue is one with many others under the larger general problem of housing in Charlottesville
 4. Commissioner references documentary *Raised/Razed* and says that HRC could be the entity to raise solutions
 - a. Another Commissioner says he would like to make sure

the Black experience in Charlottesville continues to be shared, as the community has been continually cast aside throughout history

5. Commissioner suggests looping in the historical treatment of Blacks and housing in Charlottesville to zoning and asking Council to address its racist past
 6. OHR Outreach Specialist says Dr. Andrea Douglas and Jordy Yager from the Jefferson School have done lots of work on Charlottesville neighborhoods over time
 - a. HRC could do something similar by working with tracking property values and looking at tax burdens
 - b. The Community Climate Collaborative (C3) also has an open house in a couple weeks, and they also look at how much certain Charlottesville residents pay for energy
- iii. Commissioner asks how the “gathering information from experts” point would work
1. This would be for Commissioners to understand, as well as understand how the HRC can best address housing issues
 2. Commissioner adds this is also to bring experts together in Charlottesville to elevate their voices
 - a. Another Commissioner points out that Livable Cville is already doing this kind of work by hosting webinars, posting information about zoning, focusing on equity, etc.; asks if Commission actually needs to do this work rather than simply amplifying voices that already exist
 - b. Charlottesville Low-Income Housing Coalition (CLIHC) also does this work
 3. Commissioner clarifies that she would like to bring people together who have been doing the work to amplify the information and the solutions that are most widely agreed upon in those circles
 4. Commissioner sends out link for next Livable Cville webinar
 5. Commissioner brings up idea from retreat of holding a summit of local housing experts
 - a. Another Commissioner asks whether this would be helpful for the Commission to do given the pace at which housing issues are moving at the moment
 - b. May be more helpful instead for Commissioners to attend other organizations’ meetings then report back
 6. Commissioner brings up that in addition to significant racial equity issues in housing, there are also significant disability equity issues
 - a. Gender is also disproportionately impacted
 7. Commissioners decide to create list of groups whose meetings the Commission should attend for discussion during the next regular meeting
 - a. Kathryn will compile this list
 - b. Mary will write up notes from this meeting to share with the rest of the Commission about discussion regarding

rezoning with an equity focus

8. Commissioner asks when the compilation of groups' main suggestions will take place
 - a. There could be a standing agenda item during which Commissioners report back what they learned at each housing organization meeting
 - i. Information can be sent out beforehand as well so that Commissioners can come prepared with questions
 - b. Each month, Commissioner who attend meetings will provide a brief written update of their respective organizations' recent meeting(s)
 - c. They will report during regular meetings, and committee meetings will be dedicated to coming up with action items if needed that can be voted upon at the next regular meeting
9. Commissioner asks whether this will be any kind of official liaison position
 - a. This can depend on the organization; for some, it would be helpful that a member of the HRC is attending, while others focus more on information provision than community interaction

4. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - i. Michelle asks in chat to further expand upon Martha and Robert's Rules
- b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC
 - i. Kathryn
 1. Both sets of rules are used to run meetings
 2. Robert's Rules is the standard used by many organizations and is rather complex
 3. Martha's Rules is a simple set of rules developed by a food co-op that includes things like having proposals in writing, having quick discussions about them, and voting quickly and simply

5. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

- a. Kathryn
 - i. April 19 is the next Livable Cville meeting
 1. Meetings are recorded

6. NEXT STEPS

- a. Kathryn
 - i. Present Martha's Rules at the 4/20 regular meeting
 - ii. Compile list of groups whose meetings Commissioners can attend
- b. Mary
 - i. Send Kathryn work plan notes from this meeting
- c. Todd
 - i. Attach information about Martha's Rules to agenda packet
- d. Next meeting
 - i. Presentation on Martha's Rules
 - ii. Small changes to Rules & Procedures
 - iii. Presentation of general work plan for addressing housing

7. ADJOURN

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm