



**Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
June 15, 2023
City Space, 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902
6:30 pm**

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1. WELCOME

- a. CALL TO ORDER
 - i. Chair, Jessica Harris, called the meeting to order at 6:53pm
- b. ROLL CALL
 - i. Jessica Harris (virtual)
 - ii. Mary Bauer
 - iii. Jeanette Abi-Nader
 - iv. Wolfgang Keppley
 - v. Kathryn Laughon
 - vi. Andrew Orban
 - vii. Lyndele Von Schill (virtual)
- 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. MINUTES

- a. Review of work session minutes from 05/04/2023
 - i. Vote
 - 1. In favor: 4
 - 2. Opposed: 0
 - 3. Abstained: 3
 - ii. Motion to approve minutes passes
- b. Review of regular meeting minutes from 05/18/2023
 - i. Minutes listed as 06/12/23 in this meeting's agenda is a typo; should be 05/18/23
 - ii. Vote
 - 1. In favor: 6
 - 2. Opposed: 0
 - 3. Abstained: 1
 - iii. Motion to approve minutes passes

4. BUSINESS MATTERS

a. CHAIR UPDATE

- i. Would like Commissioners to offer more comments and engagement during pauses in in-person meetings, as was the case when meetings were held entirely virtually
- ii. Expresses gratitude to Todd for presenting the CY2022 Annual Report to Council
- iii. Notes that she preferred the OHR to present the report to Council since they created it, but offers HRC's support in report and presentation duties if necessary
 1. Director says that next time, he can ask ahead whether Council would like a representative from the Commission to be present
 2. Commissioner suggests that Commissioners be present to submit annual legislative recommendations to Council
 - a. These are usually written and sent directly, though Commissioners could join during public comment to draw attention to the recommendations
 - b. To be put on the Council agenda, there needs to be about two months of advance notice
 - c. Another Commissioner supports presenting the recommendations to Council since other letters and writings often do not receive a response
 - d. Director says that late August/early September is typically when legislative recommendations should be submitted
 - i. Commissioner knows that there is no availability in agenda items until September at the earliest, so **Todd will ask about the early September agenda**
 - ii. Commissioners may still present their recommendations during public comment

b. OHR STAFF REPORT

- i. HRC Director
 1. OHR is currently working on minimizing the navigational load for staff
 - a. In May, 91% of staff's time was spent on navigational services for one or two individuals
 2. Investigator hiring process is underway
 3. Began incorporating chart of HRC actions for the year in the staff report
- ii. OHR Outreach & Administrative Specialist
 1. Completed the animated OHR video
 - a. Is about 2 minutes long and features the voices of individuals from the OHR, Hope to Hope, and Downtown Job Center
 2. The video will be shown at the Office of Equity & Inclusion Open House
 - a. **Victoria will send the flyer to the Commission**
 - b. RSVP is not necessary, but helpful to get an accurate number for refreshments

3. Juneteenth parade on June 17 at the Jefferson School from about 7 or 8am to 3pm
 - a. OHR was going to table with the Albemarle Office of Equity and Inclusion, but the OHR was told those who table for Juneteenth should be African American
 - i. They will still bring the OHR's materials
4. OHR is participating in community events with Region 10 and PHAR
5. Beginning to work on tabling at Pride and Cville Sabroso like the previous year
- iii. Commissioner asks why the number of incoming and outgoing contacts seems to have tripled in May
 1. There have been a couple individuals who asked for substantial support, which the OHR ultimately had to turn away
 2. Has resulted in thinking about new protocols for these types of situations
- iv. Commissioner asks about status of FHAP workshare
 1. Director had wanted to first focus on the 2022 Annual Report and Investigator
 2. There is a pending FOIA request from HUD to get the estimate on cases the OHR would be receiving based on the past 5 years
 3. OHR staff have begun revising the Ordinance again
 4. Goal to get on Council's agenda in late fall/early winter of this year
 - a. Could ask Council at the same time as asking about the HRC presenting legislative recommendations

5. WORK SESSION

- a. DRAFT Resolution A23-1 Housing Advocacy Priorities (1)
 - i. Commissioner ask about official "Whereas" format
 1. When the Commission passed the Plain Language Resolution, it chose to write all resolutions in plain language from the beginning
 - ii. This is not being sent to City Council, though all Commission work is viewable by the public
 - iii. Commissioner suggests changing second action bullet to "Advocate to City Council to enact policies that will put into practice each of the above recommendations, including preserving and increasing Charlottesville's racial diversity, housing equity, and affordable housing"
 1. Commissioners support this change
 - iv. Commissioner points out red text in the fifth action bullet
 1. Commissioner suggests to change bullet point to "Work to undo racial discrimination codified in our zoning with a focus on the creation of substantially more housing, with an emphasis on affordable housing, such as work to support the rezoning efforts underway in the City"
 - a. Commissioners support this change
 - v. With these two changes, the Commission supports the resolution as is

- vi. Vote
 - 1. In favor: 7
 - 2. Opposed: 0
 - 3. Abstained: 0
- vii. Motion to approve resolution passes
- viii. Completed document will be emailed to the Chair for a signature
- b. Action updates
 - i. Kathryn says there is coalition including Livable Cville that is working on a consensus letter about supporting zoning code changes and providing suggestions for improvement with regards to more affordable, equitable housing
 - 1. Will come out in the next week or so and is looking for signatures
 - 2. Asks Commission if Chair could sign this letter on behalf of the Commission
 - 3. Commission supports this
 - 4. Kathryn will send Chair the letter sign when it comes out
 - a. Director confirms this is allowed
 - ii. Jeanette – Cville Plans Together Steering Committee meeting
 - 1. Had their final meeting during which they reviewed the third module of the zoning ordinances
 - a. End of a two-year community engagement process
 - 2. Presentation is available online, and Jeanette can share it
 - 3. Documents are easily digestible
 - iii. Jeanette – PHA meeting
 - 1. No one was present when she tried to log on
- c. DRAFT Resolution A23-1 Housing Advocacy Priorities (2)
 - i. Commissioner notices that A23-1 has numerous specific action priorities that may be unrealistic for the Commission
 - ii. Suggests reviewing these bullet points to decide on the year's work plan
 - iii. Commissioner says that she sees the priorities more as work that the Commission can support rather than work that the Commission takes on itself; suggests tweaking the resolution's language to reflect this
 - iv. Commissioner says she is fine keeping it as is and moving toward a work plan that reflects the resolution
 - 1. Another Commissioner is in agreement
- d. Discussion of next work session
 - i. Next work session would take place 07/06/23
 - ii. Kathryn says she cannot attend the next work session, but suggests that the Commission discuss legislative priorities
 - 1. Could put it on the work session agenda with time limits, since Council has historically taken little action from legislative recommendations
 - 2. Have a time limit unless the Commission finds something it really to which it wants to devote its energy
 - iii. Commissioner says there is often no follow-up on the legislative priorities the HRC suggests, so says it could be good to be present at the General Assembly session to support legislation that supports Charlottesville

1. Commissioners cannot go directly to the General Assembly
2. Director says it is the HRC's role is to advise Council rather than be independent from Council
 - a. Suggests following the HRC's annual focuses and consulting existing resources to guide its legislative recommendations
 - b. Can then talk about strategies to present the recommendations, as well as talk to Councilors, to draw attention to them
 - c. It is necessary to be consistent and bring up things multiple times to be effective
- iv. Commissioner asks if the HRC is permitted to CC local delegates in the recommendations they send to Council
 1. Director advises Commission to think about how to best foster a working relationship between the Commission and Council
- v. Commissioner says she is having trouble following the progression of the meeting's conversation
 1. Suggests following Todd's advice regarding legislative recommendations
- vi. Chair asks whether Commission would like to hold a work session on 07/06/23
 1. Kathryn, Jeanette, and Andy will not be available this day
 2. Commissioner suggests moving the meeting to the following week, but it would be difficult to move this standing meeting time due to other bodies' reservations
 3. Commissioners agree to not meet due to the low number of attendees, though they will definitely hold a work session in August
 4. Commissioner suggests holding the work session during the regular meeting in July
 - a. Also supports having legislators speak about priorities, though this will be difficult given the Commission will not know who would come speak
 5. Commissioners decide to not hold a work session on 07/06/23 and instead move it to during the regular meeting on 07/20/23
 - a. Will talk about legislative priorities and strategies to foster a working relationship with Council

6. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

a. PUBLIC COMMENT

- i. None

b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- i. None

7. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

- a. None

8. NEXT STEPS

a. Todd

- i. Ask about early September Council agenda item for the HRC's presentation of legislative priorities
- ii. Ask about FHAP revisions presentation date for Council

- iii. Modify A23-1 and send to Jessica for signing
 - b. Victoria
 - i. Send Commissioners flyer for Open House and upcoming tabling opportunities, as well as partner events
 - c. Jessica
 - i. Sign off on Resolution A23-1
 - ii. Sign zoning coalition letter on behalf of the Commission
 - d. Kathryn
 - i. Send Jessica the zoning coalition letter when it comes out
 - e. Jeanette
 - i. Send Commission the third module presentation slides from Cville Plans Together
 - f. Next work session
 - i. During regular meeting on 07/20/23
- 9. **ADJOURN**
 - a. Meeting adjourned at 7:58pm