



**Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Work Session
April 4, 2024
Hybrid Meeting
Carver Recreation Center, 233 Fourth St NW Charlottesville, VA 23902
6:30 pm**

Click [HERE](#) to access rebroadcasts of past Human Rights Commission meetings on YouTube.

Click [HERE](#) to access an archive of past Human Rights Commission work on the City website.

1. WELCOME

- a. CALL TO ORDER
 - i. Chair, Ernest Chambers, called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm
- b. ROLL CALL
 - i. Ernest Chambers
 - ii. Mary Bauer
 - iii. Kathryn Laughon (arrived 6:47pm)
 - iv. Suzanne Lynn
 - v. Heather Roberson-Gaston
- 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 Annual Work Plan (full Work Plan text is available to the Commission)
 - i. Housing is the primary focus, and its sub-focuses are homelessness and systemic barriers
 - ii. Secondary focuses include legislative recommendations, ally/Safe Space training program development, and reparations
 - iii. Last time, the HRC talked about its goals and how they align with the Human Rights Ordinance
 - iv. Charlottesville High School graduation is the evening of June 6---can move this work session to Carver Rec instead
 - v. COIA/FOIA training is currently scheduled for April's regular meeting
 - vi. May work session can be used for proposed Ordinance amendment review
 - vii. Expert panels in work sessions in June and July (Chair, Vice Chair, and OHR staff work on identifying panelists in between meetings)
 - viii. Commissioner asks about outreach about asking the public their opinions on reparations
 - 1. Can gauge public interest earlier in the year to determine

whether the Commission should take further steps on the matter

- ix. Ally/Safe Space training
 - 1. OHR Outreach Specialist will do some information gathering about what resources and collaborators are already available
 - 2. Will leave as an open agenda for the moment
- x. June 3: Chair and Director will present CY2024 Annual Report to City Council
- xi. VA Beach HRC recently sent an email about Virginia HRCs gathering in a non-official capacity sometime during the summer
- xii. July work session will not occur due to July 4th; expert panel will instead occur during the regular meeting
- xiii. Ginny's HRC research presentation will occur during the regular meeting in June
- xiv. Ordinance revisions
 - 1. Considering the Commission's role in individual complaints of discrimination---currently, the Commission's role is minimal, but HRC Director is in contact with HUD about what larger roles may be possible
 - 2. Director would like to hold a training for Commissioners for public hearings after Ordinance revisions are accepted by Council
 - a. Could be conducted by Northern Virginia commissions
 - b. Could occur in September
- xv. Commissioner suggests revisiting the work plan in August to plan out the rest of the year in more detail
- xvi. Commissioner suggests forming nominating committee for officer positions earlier in the year; would require amending the Rules & Procedures to reflect the new time frame
 - 1. Can also amend language surrounding annual planning
- xvii. Director suggests that the Commission consider submitting housing-related City recommendations in addition to state-level legislative recommendations
 - 1. Can coincide with the start of budget season in October
- xviii. Work Plan is meant to be flexible and expected to change
- b. OHR Outreach Specialist says she expects outreach events to pick up in the next couple weeks
- c. New business
 - i. None

4. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - i. Speaker asks question about housing [inaudible]
 - 1. Follow-up question inaudible
- b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC
 - i. Ernest
 - 1. The University of Virginia attracts more people who can afford to live in the city, which pushes longtime residents out, and their actions often do not benefit marginalized, non-University-affiliated Charlottesville residents
 - ii. Heather

1. Other universities across the US pay their locality some kind of fee
2. University Transit Services buses always have driver shortages, but their pay is low
- iii. Suzanne
 1. UVA takes housing away from other people

5. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

- a. None

6. NEXT STEPS

- a. 04/04/24 regular meeting
 - i. FOIA/COIA/VPRA training
 - ii. Expert panel planning discussion
- b. Between meetings:
 - i. OHR staff, Ernest, and Wolfgang: June expert panel outreach
 - ii. OHR staff: prepare draft Ordinance for review

7. ADJOURN

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm