



**Human Rights Commission
Regular Meeting
May 15, 2025
City Space, 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902
6:30pm**

Agenda Packet Attachments

1. Agenda
2. Martha's Rules (for reference)
3. 04-03-2025 Work Session Minutes
4. 04-17-2025 Regular Meeting Minutes
5. OHR Monthly Report
6. HRC Recommendations for Council's 2025 Legislative Agenda
7. Council's 2025 Legislative Agenda

Attachment 1



**Human Rights Commission
AGENDA
Regular Meeting
May 15, 2025
City Space, 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902
6:30pm**

Please take Notice that this in-person meeting of the Human Rights Commission is for the purposes of planning, developing, and drafting management and administration documents for the Human Rights Commission. This meeting will be a limited public forum to discuss the agenda items presented below and to ensure the continuity of services provided by the Commission. The Commission Chair may limit public comments or discussion points that are unrelated to agenda items or that pertain to topics outside the scope of this Agenda.

The Commission welcomes comments and questions and commits to listening carefully and thoughtfully to what is presented. A maximum of sixteen public comment time slots are allotted per meeting. Each speaker will have three minutes to speak. The Commission requests that members of the public refrain from engaging in personal attacks against Commissioners and staff members and asks that comments and questions focus on matters related to human rights within the City.

1. WELCOME

- a. Call to order
- b. Roll call
- 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.*
- d. Notice: For members of the public participating virtually, if you experience technical difficulties, you may call 434-970-3115, and a staff person will assist you.

2. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. Public Comment
- b. Commission response to Matters by the Public

3. MINUTES

- a. 04-03-2025 Work Session Minutes*
- b. 04-17-2025 Regular Meeting Minutes*

4. BUSINESS MATTERS

- a. Chair update
- b. OHR staff report

5. WORK SESSION

- a. 2025 General Assembly Session Updates
 - i. Katrina Callsen, Virginia House of Delegates District 54 vi.
 - ii. Creigh Deeds, Virginia State Senator District 11
- b. Action updates
- c. 2025 Work Plan discussion
- d. New business
- e. Confirmation of next Work Session on June 5, 2025

6. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. Public comment
- b. Commission response to Matters by the Public

7. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

8. NEXT STEPS & ADJOURN

*** ACTION NEEDED**

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the public meeting may call the ADA Coordinator at (434) 987-1267 or submit a request via email to ada@charlottesville.gov. The City of Charlottesville requests that you provide a 48-hour notice so that proper arrangements may be made.

Attachment 2

Martha's Rules of Order
As adopted by the HRC on February 20, 2020

1. The proposal is presented. Clarifying questions are taken.
 - a. Proposal should always be in writing.
2. Friendly amendments are offered. Discussion is allowed only on the amendments.
 - a. Amendments should be prepared in advance when possible.
3. Speakers in favor of the proposal present their views.
 - a. This is not a time for debate.
 - b. Time limits should be set and enforced.
4. Speakers in opposition to the proposal present their views.
 - a. This is not a time for debate.
 - b. Time limits should be set and enforced.
5. General discussion and/or debate OR small group discussion time on the proposal is allowed.
 - a. Time limit on discussion is set by the group.
 - b. Facilitator helps group identify key issues.
 - c. Motion to table or refer is in order and requires $\frac{3}{4}$ vote.
6. First vote is taken.
 - a. People vote
 - i. In favor of the proposal, or
 - ii. Can live with the proposal, or
 - iii. Opposed to the proposal.
 - b. If a majority of those present votes "in favor" or "can live with," proceed to Step 8.
 - c. If less than a majority of those present votes "in favor" or "can live with," proposal dies.
7. Those voting in opposition are allowed to state their objections and concerns.
 - a. No discussion is allowed, only clarifying questions.
8. The second vote is taken as in Step 6.
 - a. It takes a majority of those present to override objections and pass the proposal.

Attachment 3



**Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Work Session
April 4, 2025
City Space, 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902
6:30 pm**

1. WELCOME

- a. CALL TO ORDER
 - i. Chair, Heather Roberson Gaston, called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm
- b. ROLL CALL
 - i. Present
 - 1. Heather Roberson Gaston
 - 2. Jason Melendez
 - 3. Wolfgang Keppley
 - 4. Dawn Lawson (arrived 6:45pm)
 - 5. Suzanne Lynn
 - 6. LD Perry (left 7:42pm)
 - 7. Elizabeth Stark
 - ii. Absent
 - 1. Mariane Doyle
- 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. Freedom of Information Act Training
 - i. On motion by Jason, seconded by Suzanne, the Commission voted 6-0 to convene in closed meeting pursuant to section 2.2-3712 of the Virginia Code, specifically as authorized by Virginia Code section 2.2-3711(A)(8) for consultation with the Commission's legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice, specifically, advice regarding compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Ayes: 6; Noes: 0).
 - ii. On motion by Jason, seconded by Wolfgang, the Commission certified by a recorded vote of 6-0 that to the best of each Commission member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed session (Ayes: 6; Noes: 0).

4. WORK SESSION

- a. 2025 Focus Area Discussion
 - i. Commissioner states that there may not be additional avenues for affordable housing advocacy at the local level, but suggests doing further state-level advocacy around tenant legal protections
 - 1. Commissioner suggests learning about and advocating for the needs of various marginalized populations using a housing lens
 - a. Another Commissioner agrees and adds that this approach may allow the HRC to remain responsive to changing community needs
 - b. Another Commissioner agrees, adding that it may be valuable to look into more specific community needs related to housing rather than general topics like affordability and availability
 - ii. Commissioners discuss proposed low-barrier shelter
 - 1. Commissioner shares that there is ongoing discussion between City Management and other partners to determine which organization might run the shelter
 - a. Commissioner states that there currently appears to be less public opposition to the proposed shelter
 - 2. Director states that the City Manager indicated there is not a need for the HRC to take any action related to the shelter at this time
 - 3. Commissioner suggests inviting experts on low-barrier shelters to a future HRC expert panel
 - iii. Commissioner notes that several ideas relate to expanding outreach to Charlottesville residents to identify and understand needs of particular communities and demographics
 - 1. Outreach Specialist suggests creating an electronic form for Commissioners to share outreach ideas and suggestions with staff
 - a. Commissioner suggests being a guest on a podcast or radio station to discuss human rights topics and raise awareness
 - b. Commissioner suggests that staff make a recommendation for how HRC should prioritize different types of outreach
 - iv. Commissioner asks for more information on proposal to do outreach to large rental property owners
 - 1. Another Commissioner clarifies that the idea was to promote awareness of fair housing law among property owners to prevent discrimination
 - v. Commissioners discuss wording for primary focus area and work on draft 2025 Work Plan
 - 1. Primary Focus Area: Housing Access and Stability Across Protected Classes
- b. Discussion of issue with equitable access to play surfaces in City Parks
 - i. Staff share that there is additional information incoming from Parks and Recreation staff and members of the public
 - ii. Commissioners form ad hoc committee of Wolfgang and Jason to

research this issue

- iii. Commissioners will discuss this issue further at the April Regular Meeting on April 17, 2025

5. NEW BUSINESS

- a. None

6. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

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

7. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

- a. IMPACT Charlottesville is hosting Nehemiah Action on April 8, 2025

8. NEXT STEPS

- a. Lily
 - i. Create Microsoft Form for commissioners to compile outreach ideas
 - ii. Invite Delegate Callsen and Senator Deeds to a May meeting
 - iii. Summarize information provided by Jackie Temkin for inclusion in agenda packet for April Regular Meeting
- b. Todd
 - i. Summarize conversation with Riaan Anthony for inclusion in agenda packet for April Regular Meeting
- c. Wolfgang & Jason
 - i. Research play surface equity & access issue

9. ADJOURN

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:37pm

Pending HRC Approval

Attachment 4



**Human Rights Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2025
City Space, 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902
6:30 pm**

1. WELCOME

- a. CALL TO ORDER
 - i. Chair, Heather Roberson Gaston, called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm
- b. ROLL CALL
 - i. Present
 - 1. Heather Roberson Gaston
 - 2. Jason Melendez
 - 3. Mariane Asad Doyle
 - 4. Wolfgang Keppley
 - 5. Dawn Lawson (left 8:38pm)
 - 6. LD Perry
 - 7. Elizabeth Stark
 - ii. Absent
 - 1. Suzanne Lynn
- 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. Jackie Temkin discusses concerns regarding tennis court booking process for City Parks and impacts to girls' access to play surfaces
 - ii. Alexandra de Guzman discusses concerns regarding tennis court booking process for City Parks and impacts to girls' access to play surfaces
- b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC
 - i. Commissioners ask clarifying questions regarding play surface allocation and booking processes as well as community members' experiences

3. MINUTES

- a. Review of minutes from 2-20-2025
 - i. Vote
 - 1. In favor: 5
 - 2. Opposed: 0
 - 3. Abstained: 2
 - ii. Motion to approve minutes passes
- b. Review of minutes from 3-10-2025
 - i. Vote
 - 1. In favor: 4
 - 2. Opposed: 0
 - 3. Abstained: 3

- ii. Motion to approve minutes passes
- c. Review of minutes from 3-22-2025
 - i. Vote
 - 1. In favor: 6
 - 2. Opposed: 0
 - 3. Abstained: 1
 - ii. Motion to approve minutes passes

4. BUSINESS MATTERS

- a. CHAIR UPDATE
 - i. None
- b. OHR STAFF REPORT
 - i. Outreach Specialist's Update
 - 1. Worker Protections During Pregnancy and Lactation brochures are now available. Commissioners are welcome to assist with outreach using these brochures.
 - 2. There are now OHR advertisements on all City buses.
 - 3. The Human Rights Newsletter is now quarterly rather than monthly.
 - 4. There is currently one vacancy on the HRC. Commissioners are encouraged to share the application with anyone that may be interested in serving.
 - ii. Director's Update
 - 1. "Total Unique Individuals Served" in the Service Provision Data section of the Agenda Packet has been corrected and is now accurate.
 - 2. Fair Housing Assistance Program is pending the provision of a contract from the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.
 - 3. OHR staff are discussing capacity at current staffing levels and considering potential opportunities for growth.

5. WORK SESSION

- a. Work Plan Discussion
 - i. Commissioners discuss potential next steps on tennis court issue
 - 1. Director proposes facilitated dialogue between community members and Parks and Recreation staff
 - 2. Commissioner suggests requesting that Parks and Recreation policies be available publicly on their website
 - 3. Commissioner suggests that individuals file a complaint with the OHR and expresses concern about the HRC becoming involved in management of a Director of a City department
 - a. Director clarifies that the OHR cannot receive complaints against the City of Charlottesville
 - b. Commissioner suggests submitting a formal letter of complaint to the Deputy City Manager for Social Equity
 - 4. Commissioner states that low-income students, girls, and members of other historically marginalized demographics may be included in the Covenant student body and may therefore be served by the existing Parks and Recreation play surface allocation policies and practices

5. Commissioner states that the Parks and Recreation policy clearly states that non-profit organizations are prioritized over private schools during the allocation period
 6. Commissioner asks how many seasons have been affected by this issue
 - a. Another Commissioner states that this concern has been ongoing for several years
 7. Commissioner notes that there may have been differential treatment with regard to the allocation period opening date for Girls Rule the Court and Covenant
 8. Commissioner asks what resolution the members of the public are seeking
 - a. Ms. Temkin states that Girls Rule the Court needs 2 courts from 3:15-4:45pm on Thursdays
 - b. Ms. Temkin requests that Parks and Recreation adhere to the existing allocation policies and designate Covenant and other private schools as "private school" rather than "non-profit"
 9. Jason Melendez makes motion, seconded by Wolfgang Keppley, for the Chair to draft a letter to the Director of Parks and Recreation regarding this concern
 - a. Vote
 - i. In favor: 6
 - ii. Opposed: 0
 - iii. Abstained: 1
 - b. Motion to direct Chair to draft a letter passes
 10. Commissioner suggests conducting further research on gender equity in sports and access to City Parks and Recreation services
- ii. Commissioners discuss proposed goals in draft 2025 Work Plan
1. Commissioners discuss proposed goal of doing educational outreach to an audience of large corporate landlords in the city
 - a. Staff member cautions against potentially empowering landlords to subvert Fair Housing law
 - b. Commissioner suggests conducting educational outreach to an audience of neighborhood associations or tenant associations instead
 2. Commissioners discuss proposed goal of hosting an expert panel with immigration service providers at an upcoming meeting
 - a. Commissioners discuss using May Work Session for this purpose
 - i. Commissioner expresses concern about plans for ensuring safety of participants
 3. Commissioners discuss proposed goal of hosting a meeting to improve collaboration between the City, Albemarle County, and the University of Virginia
 4. Commissioners discuss proposed goal of advocating for Albemarle County to create an Office of Human Rights and/or

Human Rights Commission, or alternatively to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Charlottesville and the County of Albemarle allowing the Charlottesville OHR to address complaints originating in both jurisdictions

6. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

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

7. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

- a. Commissioner states that CRHA recently evicted about 40 tenants, which is impacting a large portion of Charlottesville residents
- b. Commissioner states that the CRHA board currently has a vacancy

8. NEXT STEPS

- a. Heather
 - i. Draft letter to Parks and Recreation
- b. Jason
 - i. Invite service providers to May Work Session expert panel

9. ADJOURN

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:46pm

Pending HRC Approval

Attachment 5



City of Charlottesville Office of Human Rights Monthly Report: May 2025

Administrative Updates:

- Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP) workshare agreement
 - January 6: Scheduled first reading of amended Ordinance by City Council (meeting was canceled due to inclement weather).
 - January 21: Amended Ordinance adopted by Council in one reading.
 - January 23: Amended and adopted Ordinance sent to HUD for interim FHAP certification consideration.
 - March 14: Met with Director of HUD FHAP. Interim certification being considered and is likely.
- Fair Employment Practices Agency (FEPA) workshare agreement
 - On hold until the FHAP certification is complete.
 - The FHAP agreement provides substantial opportunities and resources to expand and improve the OHR, whereas the FEPA increases workload with insufficient support to increase staffing or training.

Outreach Updates:

- The number of events that OHR staff table will be significantly reduced going forward. If Commissioners are aware of an event and would like to take the lead on tabling for it, please reach out to Lily!
- The Human Rights Newsletter will be paused as priorities and staff responsibilities shift.

Outreach Data:

Measures	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTALS
<i>Open office days in the month</i>	18	19	20	22	21	20	18	21	21	23	17	21	241
<i>Total service provision events</i>	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
<i>Total education & awareness events</i>	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
<i>Total collaboration & leadership events</i>	14	6	8	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38
<i>Total outreach activities</i>	16	7	10	13	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	47
<i>Total unique primary collaborators (estimate)</i>	<i>No monthly count only total count</i>												18
<i>Total collaborative activities</i>	15	3	9	13	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41
<i>Total attendees at service provision events</i>	8	0	15	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55
<i>Total attendees at education & awareness events</i>	0	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
<i>Total newsletter opens</i>	271	186	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	457

Service Provision Data:

- Current status
 - Complete data entered through April 2025.
 - Partial data entered for May 2025.
- Updates
 - Values may change in subsequent reports if an error is caught and corrected.

Reporting:

Report	Status
CY2024 HRC & OHR Annual Report	In progress.
CY2025 First Quarter Report to Council	Submitted to Council on April 28, 2025.
CY2025 Second Quarter Report to Council	To be completed and submitted to Council in July 2025.
CY2025 Third Quarter Report to Council	To be completed and submitted to Council in October 2025.
CY2025 HRC & OHR Annual Report	Projected completion February 2026.

Active Complaints:

Case #	Protected Activity	Protected Class(es)	Status
2021-5	Employment	Sexual Orientation, Race	Investigation in progress.
2023-2	Employment	Religion, National Origin	Alternative dispute resolution in progress.
2024-2	Housing	Age, Disability	Alternative dispute resolution in progress.
2024-3	Public Accommodation	National Origin, Sexual Orientation	Alternative dispute resolution in progress.
2024-3R	Public Accommodation	Retaliation	Alternative dispute resolution in progress.
2024-4	Housing	Disability	Alternative dispute resolution in progress.
2024-7	Housing	Race, Religion, National Origin	Resolved through informal dialogue. Case closed.
2024-8	Employment	Race, National Origin	Investigation in progress.
2024-10	Employment	Marital Status	Investigation in progress.
2024-11	Employment	Sex, Marital Status	Investigation in progress.
2025-1	Employment	Sexual Orientation, Race	Investigation in progress.
2025-2	Employment	Race	Investigation in progress.
2025-3	Employment	Disability	Alternative dispute resolution in progress.
2025-4	Housing	Source of Funds	Alternative dispute resolution in progress.
2025-5	Employment	Race	Alternative dispute resolution in progress.
2025-6	Employment	Disability, Sex	Investigation in progress.
2025-7	Public Accommodation	Disability, Race	Investigation in progress.
2025-8	Housing	Familial Status	Offer of alternative dispute resolution sent to respondent. Awaiting response.
2025-9	Public Accommodation	Race	Offer of alternative dispute resolution being considered by respondent.
2025-10	Employment	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity	Investigation in progress.

HRC Work Summary:

Date	Roles (Ordinance Sec. 433)	Primary Action	Summary & Analysis
2/7/2025	Sec. 2-433. (b)(1) Awareness and Guidance - Community engagement	Public Poll	The HRC released a public poll to solicit feedback on human and civil rights issues that are important to the community. The poll ran from 02/07/25 to 03/07/25 and received 271 responses. Commissioners will use this information to inform their annual planning for CY2025.
4/17/2025	Sec. 2-433. (b) Awareness and Guidance	Community Event	Commissioner conducted service provision outreach with OHR staff at the One Stop Shop.
1/23/2025	Sec. 2-433. (b)(1) Awareness and Guidance - Community engagement	Other Action	HRC Chair promoted HRC vacancies and application on NBC29 Community Conversations.
2/20/2025	Sec. 2-433. (b)(1) Awareness and Guidance - Community engagement	HRC Resolution	HRC passed Resolution HR25-1 expressing the Commission's position relating to access to gender-affirming care.
2/27/2025	Sec. 2-433. (b)(1) Awareness and Guidance - Community engagement	Other Action	HRC Vice Chair promoted HRC public poll on NBC29 Community Conversations.
4/24/2025	Sec. 2-433. (c) City Policies and Practices	Other Action	HRC Chair and OHR staff met with Riaan Anthony, Director, and Annie Sechrist, Management Specialist, of Charlottesville Parks and Recreation to discuss a concern raised by a community member related to equity and access to play surfaces in City parks.

Attachment 6



CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

To be a place where everyone thrives

Human Rights Commission
P.O. Box 911
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902
Telephone: 434-970-3023
www.charlottesville.gov

September 3, 2024

Dear Mayor Wade and City Councilors,

Pursuant to Sec. 2-433.(e) of the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance, it is the role of the Human Rights Commission to “make recommendations regarding the City’s annual legislative programs and policies that will address discrimination.” During their annual planning meeting on March 9, 2024, Commissioners identified housing as the primary focus of their work in 2024. Commissioners sought feedback from community members and subject matter experts regarding specific, state-level legislation that may have both local and regional impacts on housing.

At its regular meeting on August 15th, 2024, the Commission voted to recommend the following housing-related legislative priorities for your consideration as Council prepares its legislative recommendations for the Thomas Jefferson Area Planning District Commission for referral to the General Assembly. The Human Rights Commission recommends that Council support enabling legislation related to the following key areas:

1. Access to Housing:
 - a. **Limit application fees for rental applications and/or allow groups of tenants to submit a single application.**
 - b. **Require more transparency during the tenant screening process.** Require landlords to list minimum criteria before an application and provide reasons for a tenant’s application denial. Require any fee increases to coincide with the terms of a lease.
 - c. **Establish a state-sponsored voucher program** to increase the accessibility of rental subsidies.
 - d. **Support voucher portability**, permitting voucher holders to apply a voucher outside of where that voucher was administered.
 - e. **Increase state funding for rent relief programs.**

2. Tenant Rights:

- a. **Reinstate 14-day pay or quit notices.** Tenants are currently given 5 days to pay, or an eviction proceeding can commence. This legislative recommendation would expand the time tenants are able to pay.
- b. **Amend the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act to allow tenants to raise unsafe or unsanitary conditions** as an affirmative defense to non-payment of rent.
- c. **Increase protections against landlord retaliation.** Include harassment, non-lease renewal, etc., as forms of landlord retaliation.
- d. **Require that critical lease information be made available in languages other than English.**
- e. **Create an option for rental payment plans.**
- f. **Allow indigent tenants to waive their appeal bond.** This would grant indigent tenants the same rights that exist for indigent people in other types of civil cases.
- g. **Prevent eviction or threats of eviction as being used as methods of coercion for rent payments.**
- h. **Include provisions in the VA Residential Landlord and Tenant Act and the Manufactured Home Lot Rental Act to prohibit mid-lease rent increases** except in cases where the renter has agreed in writing that the proposed mid-lease rent increase is permissible.
- i. **Take rent control out of the Dillon Rule process,** making it more possible for localities to add rent stabilization to their local control.
- j. **Improve manufactured homes (mobile homes) to give them the ability to buy their communities when an owner wants to sell.** This would give tenants first right of refusal and keep a property as a mobile home park.

3. A Focus on Homelessness:

- a. **Support comprehensive probation reform bill** that would offer more support to those experiencing re-entry.
- b. **Allocate Medicare and Medicaid funds for addressing homelessness and affordable housing.**
- c. **Recognize homelessness as a protected class** in the Virginia Human Rights Act and Virginia Fair Housing Law to prohibit discrimination based upon an individual's housing status.
- d. **Require that each county and city in Virginia maintain a public shelter for individuals or fund a private equivalent.**

4. Wrap-around Services:
 - a. **Support the development of increased services for those experiencing mental illness and substance abuse.**
 - b. **Increase public mental health care funding.**
5. Other:
 6. **Implement a progressive income tax and taxes for consumer services.** The resultant increase in the tax base should produce a subsequent increase in funding available for affordable housing.

The Commission welcomes questions, feedback, and dialogue with City Council about these recommendations. The Commission also requests that Council communicate regarding the recommendations included in its proposal to the Thomas Jefferson Area Planning District. Commissioners look forward to planning with Council in advance of submitting legislative recommendations next year. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or the Office of Human Rights should you have any questions prior to making your recommendations or if you wish to schedule a time to meet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ernest Chambers". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Ernest Chambers
Chair
Human Rights Commission

Attachment 7



CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

City Council

City Hall, P.O. Box 911
Charlottesville, VA 22902
(434) 970-3113
council@charlottesville.gov
www.charlottesville.gov

November 4, 2024

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2025 GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

As in the last two years, Charlottesville's most important legislative priority is to seek permission for Charlottesville to ask the electorate for permission to levy an extra one cent on the sales tax to fund school construction.

Our other important legislative priorities are focused on two issues – affordable housing and environmental protection.

Affordable Housing Initiatives That We Support:

1. Amend Virginia Code §55.1-1308.2 to make it easier for residents of mobile home parks that have been offered for sale to a developer to make an intelligent counteroffer:
 - a. The owner of a mobile home park that is being offered for sale should be required to furnish to the residents the terms of the offer from the developer.
 - b. The timeline for submitting a counteroffer should be lengthened, and supporting purchase documentation should be required to be shared with tenants as it becomes available.
 - c. The compensation to mobile home residents facing displacement should be increased, and the amount should be indexed to inflation.
 - d. Mobile home park residents should be given a right of first refusal if they can make a qualifying counteroffer of at least the same value.
2. Give localities a right of first refusal to purchase publicly supported housing that is being offered for sale or that is coming out of its mandatory affordability period.
3. Create and fund the 5,000 Families pilot program to provide monthly rental assistance to low-income families.
4. Support recommendations to permit building codes to allow single-stair apartment buildings.
5. Amend §58.1-3221.1 to add Charlottesville to the list of localities permitted to tax improvements to real property at a different rate than the tax imposed upon the land on which the improvement is located, provided that the tax rate is not zero and does not exceed the tax rate imposed on the land.

6. Amend the Virginia Residential Landlord-Tenant Act to increase the rights of tenants. In particular:
 - a. Allow tenants to raise unsafe or unsanitary conditions as an affirmative defense to non-payment of rent.
 - b. Allow indigent tenants to appeal without having to post an appeal bond. This would grant indigent tenants the same rights that exist for indigent people in other types of civil cases.
 - c. Amend §55.1-1415 to turn the 5-day “Pay or quit” notice into a 14-day notice.
 - d. Give tenants more procedural protections against eviction.
 - e. Permit localities to adopt a rent control or rent stabilization program.

Environmental Issues:

7. Preserve the Commonwealth’s participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.
8. Ensure the full implementation of the VCEA and the Clean Cars Standard.
9. Support legislation to require electric utilities to reduce demand for electricity through energy efficiency measures rather than to build new fossil-fuel plants.
10. Support legislation that creates an efficient distributed energy environment to achieve both grid reliability and climate goals.
11. Support legislation that expands opportunities for net metering programs.
12. Support adequate state resources for localities to invest in EVs and EV infrastructure.
13. Fund the statewide Green Bank.
14. Expand powers granted in §15.2-961.3, to allow a locality to require more than a twenty percent tree canopy in flood plains and riparian areas.
15. Fund the Commonwealth Corridor train from Roanoke to Hampton Roads via Charlottesville and Richmond.