



**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