



**Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Work Session
June 5, 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 6:32 pm
- b. ROLL CALL
 - i. Present
 - 1. Heather Roberson Gaston
 - 2. Jason Melendez
 - 3. Wolfgang Keppley
 - 4. Dawn Lawson (arrived 6:34 pm)
 - 5. Suzanne Lynn
 - 6. LD Perry
 - 7. Elizabeth Stark
 - 8. Jayson Whitehead
 - ii. Absent
 - 1. Mariane Asad 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. WORK SESSION

- a. Work Plan Discussion
 - i. Commissioners discuss option to conduct small meetings with service providers to gather information about issues currently facing the community
 - 1. Commissioners determine that it may be more effective to offer choice for invited service providers to either attend a panel during an HRC meeting, participate in one-on-one meetings, or submit state and local policy recommendations by email
 - a. Commissioner notes that it may be useful to consult with people personally experiencing housing issues or homelessness in addition to service providers
 - b. Commissioners decide that given time and capacity constraints, they will proceed with consulting service providers specifically

- c. Staff member suggests asking service providers broad questions about what people are experiencing rather than asking about root causes and policy solutions for housing insecurity
 - 2. Commissioner states that input received this year may be similar to input from last year
 - a. Commissioner adds that there may be concerns about federal or state funding changes that have affected service organizations
 - i. Commissioners discuss the potential impact of voucher funding cuts and the proposed 5000 Families voucher program
 - 3. Commissioners discuss invitations for the panel discussion
 - a. Invited providers: Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless, Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Church of the Incarnation, Cville Tulips, Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) of Virginia, International Neighbors, International Rescue Committee, Legal Aid Justice Center, NAACP Housing Committee, Piedmont Housing Alliance, Public Housing Association of Residents, Sin Barreras, The Haven, People and Congregations Engaged in Ministry (PACEM), The Salvation Army, and Virginia Poverty Law Center
 - 4. Commissioners discuss possible questions to ask panelists
 - 5. Commissioners decide to change the start time of the July 17, 2025, HRC meeting from 6:30pm to 6pm to ensure there is time for each guest to speak
 - 6. Commissioners and staff discuss logistics for sending invitations and running the meeting
- ii. Commissioners discuss the issue with the allocation process for Parks and Recreation play surfaces
 - 1. Commissioner states belief that community members should submit formal complaints to the City regarding issues with City services
 - a. Another Commissioner suggests that the City could develop a process for receiving constituent complaints, such as adding a feature for this to MyCville
 - i. Commissioners consider creating a form for community members to submit concerns to the HRC
 - 1. Commissioner suggests continuing to receive public comment, but developing a more uniform process for determining how the HRC responds to public comments received

4. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

a. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

5. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

- a. Commissioner states that there many community members are currently being evicted
- b. Commissioner expresses concern about recent use of FLOCK Cameras in Charlottesville and across the state

6. NEXT STEPS

- a. **Todd and Lily**
 - i. **Invite service providers to participate in 7/17 meeting**

7. ADJOURN

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm