



MELROSE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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April 23, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Bonnie Clapp (Chair), Linda Apple, Randall Carter, Jake Rogers, Kelsey Lima, Jay Stapp, Joe Philips, Fatma Ulku Duru

Members Absent: Rev. Dr. Susanne Intriligator (Clergy Liaison), Lizbeth DeSelm (City Council Liaison), Manjula Karamcheti (City Council Liaison)

Members of Public: [none]

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order by Chair Bonnie Clapp at 7:05 pm with a quorum of 7 Commissioners present.

READING OF THE MINUTES

Prior Meeting Minutes:

- Meeting minutes from March 26, 2024 were presented
 - Commissioner Stapp proposed a motion to accept previous meeting notes; commissioner Philips seconds. The motion carries 7-0.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair noted that 0 member(s) of the public were present. The Chair stayed motion to open public comment.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Chairperson's Administrative Report:

- Commissioner Carter began taking Meeting Minutes for the remainder of the meeting.
- **Recruitment Efforts:**
 - Chairperson noted two current vacancies, one upcoming
 - One prospective new commissioner has accepted offer to join MHRC from Mayor's Office
 - Point of clarification: commissioner terms expire on last day of February
 - Chairperson Clapp opened discussion re: recruiting to MHRC
 - Coffee with a Commissioner format discussion
 - Commissioner Apple suggested each commissioner use letter for outreach, individualized recruitment
 - individual commissioners also to send personalized letter to Melrose DEIB stakeholders

- Chairperson Clapp suggested getting members from various orgs to serve on HRC
- Student internship—Commissioner Rogers spoke to Whittier at MMS; waiting for MHS response
 - Commissioner Rogers has drafted a description of HRC’s solicitation for interns
 - Working with MHS/MMS faculty contacts to solidify parameters of student internship program; targeting approx 2 students from each school
 - Internships tracking to start Fall 2024
 - Internship posting to be finalized by 5/13, with goal of having it ready to share at GEM graduation on 5/20
 - Commissioners to work on posting offline
- Commissioner Clapp to attend annual hearing, discuss how HRC spent its budget
- Commissioner Apple raised suggestion of fund to allow orgs to solicit HRC/city for money
 - More in line with HRC’s intended shift in role within executive branch
 - Commissioner Rogers noted importance of continuing to invest in community, as well as growth/development of HRC itself; trainings for community
 - Commissioner Phillips raised previous suggestion for future of HRC as more of a facilitator/co-sponsor of city events
 - Also raised possibility of difficulties/stricture of bylaws, municipal laws re: transfer of money
- Commissioner Clapp noted that budget meeting conflicts with next scheduled HRC meeting; proposed moving May HRC meeting, pending commissioner availability
 - Commissioner Clapp to follow up with commissioners offline
- **Conflict of Interest Training:** Chairperson Clapp noted that she is not aware of any commissioners delinquent in their training.
- **Annual Election:**
 - Chair Clapp noted that executive position elections take effect immediately, not at the new fiscal year
 - Therefore: clerk, vice-chair, treasurer electees have assumed their positions
 - With consent of Mayor’s Office, Chairperson Clapp to remain in chair role until a replacement can be found

Treasurer’s Report:

- Treasurer resigned between Feb 2024 meeting and the instant meeting
- Commissioner Apple is currently serving as treasurer
- \$2500 remaining in appropriation account; \$2425 in donation account

UPDATES

Potential Partnership & Collaborations Action Items:

- MelroseKind Community Conversations
 - Commissioner Apple recommended commissioner participation in this year's event
- **Pride 2024:**
 - Commissioner Carter gave update re: Pride 2024 meeting
 - Next meeting TBD
 - Ad hoc planning of Pride 2024 continues with HRC support
 - Date, venue secured—6/14 at Beebe Estate/Milano Center. 5-8pm
 - Commissioner Carter to investigate feasibility of HRC contributing funds to Pride
 - and/or Pride solicitation of specific sponsorship for some part(s) of the event from HRC/City
- MLK Day of Service 2025
 - Commissioner Clapp to schedule kickoff/handoff meeting with community stakeholders, similar to what HRC held for Pride; Iftar

Potential Advocacy Action Items:

- None to Report

Potential Communications & Community Awareness Action Items:

Restructuring Tasks:

-

Partnerships & Collaborations Report:

- DEI Task Force (JP)
 - There was no update to report subsequent to the most recent regular meeting.
- Melrose Public School's PTO DEIB Reps (BC)
 - There was no update to report subsequent to the most recent regular meeting.

Communication & Community Awareness Report:

- **Hotline, HRC City of Melrose Email, and Social Media Messaging (BC)**
 - There was no update to report subsequent to the most recent regular meeting

Other and/or Unfinished Business:

- MHS GEM celebration 2024
 - Chairperson Clapp asked feasibility of one commissioner to attend and give opening remarks—opportunity to liaise with community; possibly find new HRC members
 - Commissioner Lima volunteered to attend this year's ceremony
 - Remarks to be developed with HRC input
- Letter of support for City application for a Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) action grant
 - Commissioner Clapp stated that Mayor's Office inquired whether HRC is willing to draft a letter in support
 - Commissioner Apple suggested further consideration of this, especially with respect to relation to HRC mission; particular aims of study

- After discussion, and especially given extremely close deadline, commissioners decided against drafting LoS

New Business:

- HRC Commissioner Reflection
 - Offline, Commissioners responded to questions about their reasons for joining HRC, what they think HRC's role is within the city, and what the HRC can do to further its goals going further
 - Chairperson Clapp led reflection on commissioners' answers to these prompts, as a brainstorming/growth exercise
 - Commissioner Lima shared her willingness to present on topics including microaggressions to HRC commissioners, drawing on her professional training
 - Commissioner Apple emphasized the importance of identifying most pressing needs/objectives raised, in order to best direct & inform direction of HRC going forward
 - Commissioner Carter suggested a separate meeting to discuss and brainstorm re: future role of HRC in City's executive branch
 - Commissioners to devote time to discussing this at May meeting
 - Chair Clapp will solicit clarification of bylaws, charter, etc. as it pertains to parameters of HRC's powers and purview

Adjournment:

- A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Carter, seconded by Commissioner Lima.
Motion passed with no objections
- Meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm