

Minutes Human Relations Commission November 14, 2023

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, 6:00 p.m., held both In-Person & Virtually: Tempe Public Library 2nd Floor Conference Room, 3500 South Rural Road, Tempe, AZ 85282 & Microsoft Teams at the following link: [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#) or by telephone: (480) 498-8745, United States, Phoenix (Toll), Conference ID: 762 995 762#

(MEMBERS) Present:

Hugo Tapia, Chair
Jose Rojas
Tom Brown
Candyce Lindsay
Rabbanni FurQaan
Melissa Farling
Peggie Simmons, Vice Chair

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Pamela Chan
Kate Vawter

City Staff Present:

Elena Hale, Cultural Programs & Public Education Coordinator
Dr. Velicia McMillan Humes, Chief Diversity Officer

Guests

Jessica Wright,
Christopher Groesbeck,
Irma Hollamby-Cain,
Kris Baxter,

Call to Order

Chair Tapia called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

None

Agenda Item 2 – Consideration of Minutes: HRC – September 12, 2023

Motion to approve September 12, 2023 Minutes: Commissioner Farling, Seconded by Commissioner Rojas. Approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 3 – Housing: Jessica Wright and Christopher Groesbeck

Commissioner Tapia introduced and welcomed Jessica Wright, Christopher Groesbeck, and Irma Hollamby-Cain to the meeting.

Jessica gave a report on the regional collaboration and success of the City of Tempe's homeless solutions. Jessica reported on the various committees and workgroups that work together to create a

more wholistic approach to our houseless populations, ensuring their immediate and long-term needs are met.

Dr. Humes asked Jessica to elaborate on what makes our shelters different from other cities. Jessica noted that the City of Tempe is taking the leadership on the following work; creating shelters for families, singles, couples, and honoring households with pets. She described the differences between bridge shelters (provided by Tempe) vs. long-term shelters, and other housing options located in Tempe .

Commissioner Tapia asked about the utilization and occupation rates within the city facilities. Jessica mentioned that the housing is over 90% full, and that they are working with additional management entities to help city staff oversee these spaces to increase their outreach efforts.

Jessica closed out her presentation by mentioning the increase in staff access; the Care 7 team went from Monday-Friday availability to 24/7 care for our community.

The commission thanked Jessica for her time.

Christopher and Irma presented on Hometown for All, noting that Tempe is being proactive and making intentional investment into long-term housing for current and future residents. This effort was started by Mayor Woods and Tempe City Council in 2021, and a priority for staff. Through donations from developers and the community, the City is able to invest in the next generation of affordable housing.

Staff highlighted the voucher program, and the internal support for residents and for landlords.

Commissioner Rojas asked where the team plans to build future affordable housing options, with limited real-estate. Staff responded that they believe the City will need to be creative with plans, and consider options to build upwards.

Commissioner Tapia wanted to know how developers are informed about Hometown for All. Staff responded that communications concerning the program is spear-headed by the Economic Development team. However, there are two entry points: a developer developing on city land, and the city developing on their own land.

Commissioner Tapia thanked the staff for their time and presentation.

Agenda Item 4 – Crown Act: Kris Baxter

Kris Baxter facilitated an open discussion with the commission, talking about next steps for a marketing campaign for the Crown Act. The commission weighed-in on a campaign that would include posters, hand-outs, and educational material for community members, businesses, and schools.

Kris will begin a draft and will share with the commission as soon as possible.

Commissioner Tapia thanked Kris for her time and expertise.

Agenda Item 5 – Announcements

Elena reminded the commission of the Regional HRC meeting at The Parsons Center for Health and Wellness, November 12 at 6:00 PM.

Agenda Item 6 – Proposed Future Agenda Items

Future agenda items discussed by the commission were the Unity Grant presentation by Ron Denne, Performance Measure 3.14, and a continuation of the BLM Phoenix Youth Diversion Program and how the commission may support this work directly.

Agenda Item 7 – Discussion of Upcoming Meeting Date – December 12, 2023

Nothing to report.

**Motion made by Commissioner Farling to adjourn the meeting.
Second by Jose Rojas approved unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 8:01 PM.**

Prepared by: Elena Hale

Reviewed by: Velicia McMillan Humes