

## Minutes Human Relations Commission June 8, 2021

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, June 8, 2021, 6:00 p.m., virtually through Microsoft Teams at the following link: [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#) or by telephone: +1 480-498-8745 United States, Phoenix (Toll), Conference ID: 936 327 717#

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

Beth Dietz, arrived late  
Rabbanni Furqaan  
Jana Lynn Granillo  
William Ortega  
Jeanne Powers  
Joe Rojas  
Peggie Simmons  
Hugo Tapia  
Kate Vawter

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Melissa Farling  
Michelle Donati-Grayman

**City Staff Present:**

Jonae Harrison, Equity & Inclusion Manager  
Megan Hutchison, Executive Assistant to the City Manager's Office

**Guests:**

Marge Zylla, Government Relations Officer  
Sharon Kirsch, Save Our Schools Arizona Network  
Rachel Clawson, Save Our Schools Arizona Network  
Bibiana Rivera

**Call to Order**

Chair Vawter called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances**

None

**Agenda Item 2 – Consideration of Minutes: HRC – May 11, 2021**

Motion made by Commissioner Granillo to approve the meeting minutes of May 11, 2021; Second by Vice Chair Tapia. Motion passed on an 8-0 vote. Ayes: Chair Vawter, Vice Chair Tapia, and Commissioners Rabbanni Furqaan, Jana Lynn Granillo, William Ortega, Jeanne Powers, Joe Rojas, and Peggie Simmons. Nays: None. Absent: Commissioners Beth Dietz, Michelle Donati-Grayman, and Melissa Farling.

**Agenda Item 3 – Status of Schools in Legislature**

Jonae Harrison introduced Marge Zylla to the Commission. Marge began to go over the State Legislative Update and Background Information memo, see attached. Marge then let the Commission know that the Mayor and Council will view items through two lenses when deciding what the City will focus on: 1. Local resources and 2. Retaining local decision making. The Commission thanked Marge for her presentation.

Commissioner Rojas introduced Sharon Kirsch and Rachel Clawson from Save Our Schools Arizona Network to the Commission. Sharon and Rachel then began their presentation, see attached. Once the

presentation was completed, they opened the floor to questions. The Commission asked what the argument is for privatizing schools and why do people want vouchers. They also inquired if the schools attempt to control the ideology of students by limiting what the teachers can instruct. Rachel shared multiple reasons from the Save Our Schools' perspective for school privatization including politics and profitability and reasons why curriculum content and ideological instruction can be controversial. The Commission asked if there was anything they could do as a Commission or as individuals. Rachel responded that as a Commission they could inform people how the government functions and what it takes to make changes. As individuals they could get more involved in SOS by reaching out to Sharon or following the link on their website. Also, attending school board meetings regularly to help change the funding problem is crucial. The Commission thanked Rachel and Sharon for their presentation.

#### **Agenda Item 4 – HRC Reporting Template**

Chair Vawter asked the Commission if there was a draft of the template available. Vice Chair Tapia responded that he will have the template created for the August meeting for the Commission to review.

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Discussion: Unity Walk 2022**

Jonae Harrison reminded the Commission that at the last meeting they voted to move back to the traditional model. She recently met with the sister city HRC's and they let her know that they could not participate in a physical walk in 2022. They proposed doing a virtual event similar to what was done in 2021 with a complete overhaul of the event in 2023. This would allow them more time to prepare for a large and meaningful event. The Commission voiced their disappointment as the physical walk was monumental in bringing people together. They discussed and decided they would like to explore doing something in person for the Tempe community. Jonae will invite budget to the August meeting to discuss funding.

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Update: Status of Return to In-Person Meetings**

Jonae Harrison informed the Commission that she had spoken to the Library staff and they let her know that their usual room, BRiC, may not be available in August. She has put in a service ticket with the City to have the tech upgraded to do hybrid meetings and will provide an update to the Commission at the next meeting. The Commission discussed possibly using a different room in the meantime but decided to wait for the BRiC room to be available and functional.

#### **Agenda Item 7 – Proposed Future Agenda Items**

Chair Vawter reiterated items that should be added to the May Commission meeting as discussed earlier in the meeting. Items are: Discuss HRC Reporting Template, UW & MLK Updates, and Transportation staff presentation. Chair Vawter let the Commission know that if they have any additional items they would like added to future agendas, they should contact Jonae Harrison or Megan Hutchison.

#### **Agenda Item 8 – Upcoming Meeting August 10, 2021**

Meeting will be held virtually through Microsoft Teams

**Motion made by Commission Rojas to adjourn the meeting**

**Second by Vice Chair Tapia**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.**