

# Minutes

## Human Relations Commission

### December 14, 2021

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, 6:00 p.m., Held both In-Person & Virtually: Tempe Public Library 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, 3500 South Rural Road, Tempe, AZ 85282 & 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  
Michelle Donati-Grayman  
Melissa Farling  
Jana Lynn Granillo  
William Ortega  
Jeanne Powers  
Joe Rojas  
Peggie Simmons  
Hugo Tapia  
Kate Vawter

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Rabbanni Furqaan

**City Staff Present:**

Jonae Harrison, Equity & Inclusion Manager  
Megan Hutchison, Executive Assistant to CMO  
Paul Bentley, Deputy Human Services Director  
Jessica Wright, Homeless Solutions Supervisor

**Guests:**

David Reynolds, incoming HRC Commissioner  
Reverend Larry Fultz, AZ Interfaith Movement

**Call to Order**

Chair Vawter called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

**Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances**

None

**Agenda Item 2 – Consideration of Minutes: HRC – November 9, 2021**

Motion made by Commissioner Ortega to approve the meeting minutes of November 9, 2021; Second by Commissioner Farling. Motion passed on an 9-1-0 vote. Ayes: Chair Vawter, Vice Chair Tapia, and Commissioners Beth Dietz, Michelle Donati-Grayman, Melissa Farling, Jeanne Powers, Joe Rojas, Peggie Simmons, and William Ortega. Abstains: Commissioner Jana Lynn Granillo. Nays: None. Absent: Commissioner Rabbanni Furqaan.

**Agenda Item 3 – Presentation: Human Services, HOPE Team**

Paul Bentley introduced himself and Jessica Wright to the Commission. Jessica then provided background on the Human Services department. The HOPE street outreach team was established in 2016 after a need was identified in the community for residents either currently experiencing

homelessness or those in danger of experiencing homelessness. In 2017, the Tempe Works program was launched to connect individuals that are experiencing homelessness in the community, with City of Tempe employment. And finally, in 2020 during the pandemic, a temporary shelter was started at a local motel. This will be expanding soon since they recently accepted Federal funding which will include federal guidelines. Jessica informed the Commission that they have designed all their programs to provide fair and equitable service, respect, and support to the most vulnerable in our community. This aligns with the values of the HRC. Jessica then let the Commission know that their key priority for this presentation is to ensure the HRC knows how to reach them with the hopes that that information would be relayed to anyone in need. There are currently have two ways of reaching them, making a report through 311 or sending an email at [hope@tempe.gov](mailto:hope@tempe.gov). They will deploy assistance throughout the day based on reports and emails received. Paul then opened the floor to any questions.

The Commission asked about any trends they are seeing and the concerns of Tempe having similar issues as seen in California with tents on the streets and sidewalks. Paul and Jessica responded that they typically see trends in areas where individuals are visible, and this will impact the calls they receive. They have specific strategies in place to ensure individuals don't just move from one area of Tempe to another. They can geographically deploy their outreach workers so there is a constant presence throughout the city.

The Commission then inquired if the outreach team was ever accompanied by other city staff when they go to meet with someone for the first time. Paul and Jessica let the Commission know that they typically do the introductory meeting themselves to offer resources and services.

The Commission mentioned a program in New York, Red Hook Community Justice Center, where the Department of Housing is in the Court House to help solve neighborhood problems. Paul and Jessica responded that they have staff representation in the Mental Health Court, and they recently added two new positions, Resource Navigators with are intended to help make connections even easier.

The Commission then asked if the new shelter would have full time staff at the site, would that staff include CARE7, and what is currently being done to make sure this doesn't become a place that is overrun and causing other issues. Paul and Jessica replied that the shelter is based off referrals and there will not be any walk ins so there would not be a need to have CARE 7 staff onsite. Also, CARE 7 is a mobile unit and will spend time there. They will have two staff members there for 40 hours per week and a Property Manager. A monthly report is presented regarding what is going in the shelter to help hold staff accountable. Also, everyone coming into the shelter will have a housing plan to make sure they are continuing to move through the system. The shelter is not a permanent housing solution, it is a temporary transitional housing facility.

Finally, the Commission asked how those individuals addicted to drugs are being supported. Paul and Jessica let the Commission know that is part of the outreach done by CARE 7. One of their functions is to be responsive 24/7 for crisis in our community through social services.

The Commission thanked them for their time.

#### **Agenda Item 4 – Presentation: Golden Rule City**

Commissioner Rojas introduced Reverend Larry Fultz from AZ Interfaith Movement. Larry thanked the Commission for the invitation, he then provided background on the AZ Interfaith Movement. He informed the Commission that on December 21, 2021, the City of Tempe became a Golden Rule City. They are asking Golden Rule members to nominate an individual who has made a difference in the community over the past two years. Also, they would like Tempe to attend the upcoming Annual Golden Rule Awards Banquet were Tempe can be welcomed as the newest Golden Rule City in Arizona. Larry then opened the floor to questions. The Commission thanked Larry for his presentation and requested that he

send an email to Jonae Harrison with nomination specifics so it can be added to an upcoming meeting agenda.

**Agenda Item 5 – Discussion: Neighborhood Watch Signage Memorandum**

Commissioner Donati-Grayman provided a draft version of the Neighborhood Watch Signage Memo for review and approval. The Commission reviewed and recommended a few changes.

Motion made by Commissioner Ortega to approve the memo as edited and send to Mayor & Council; Second by Commissioner Simmons. Motion passed on an 10-0 vote. Ayes: Chair Vawter, Vice Chair Tapia, and Commissioners Beth Dietz, Michelle Donati-Grayman, Melissa Farling, Jana Lynn Granillo, Jeanne Powers, Joe Rojas, Peggie Simmons, and William Ortega. Nays: None. Absent: Commissioner Rabbanni Furqaan.

**Agenda Item 6 – Update: MLK Diversity Awards 2022 and Unity on Your Block 2022**

Jonae Harrison provided an update on the upcoming MLK Diversity Awards on Friday, January 14, 2022. Dr. Proctor has agreed to be the keynote speaker. Breakfast will be available at 7:30 a.m. and the run of show will be 8 – 9 a.m.

Jonae provided an update on the upcoming Unity on Your Block events. She provided the general language for the invitation to the community and let the Commission know that mailers will be sent out to promote the two upcoming events: January 21, 2022 at Kiwanis Recreation Center and January 29, 2022 at Escalante Multi-Gen Center. Each event will have a host, facilitators, and scribes. Facilitator training for those interested, will be held on either January 18 or January 19. If anyone is interested, please send Jonae an email.

**Agenda Item 7 – Update: Annual Report**

Jonae Harrison shared the draft of the Annual Report. The Commission discussed and approved the report as written. Motion made by Commissioner Donati-Grayman to approve the Annual Report; Second by Commissioner Farling. Motion passed on an 10-0 vote. Ayes: Chair Vawter, Vice Chair Tapia, and Commissioners Beth Dietz, Michelle Donati-Grayman, Melissa Farling, Jana Lynn Granillo, Jeanne Powers, Joe Rojas, Peggie Simmons, and William Ortega. Nays: None. Absent: Commissioner Rabbanni Furqaan.

**Agenda Item 8 – Presentation: Acknowledge Outgoing Commissioners**

Chair Vawter recognized the two departing Commissioners: Beth Dietz and Jeanne Powers. The remaining Commissioners thanked the outgoing Commissioners for their support.

**Agenda Item 9 – Proposed Future Agenda Items**

Chair Vawter reiterated items that should be added to the February Commission meeting as discussed earlier in the meeting. Items are: Belonging Dialogues w/ Raquel Gutierrez and Voting for Chair/Vice Chair. 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 10 – Upcoming Meeting – Tuesday, February 8, 2022**

Meeting will be hybrid, virtually through Microsoft Teams & in-person at the Tempe Public Library Board Room.

**Motion made by Commissioner Powers to adjourn the meeting  
Second by Commissioner Dietz**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.**

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Prepared by: Megan Hutchison

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Reviewed by: Jonae Harrison