

CITY OF TERRE HAUTE

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Minutes: April 17, 2024

Present: AT Ryan, Director; Sandy Mutchler, Chair; Commissioners: Dana Simons, Nichelle Campbell-Miller, Mike Reed;

Absent: Commissioners Uzziah Hutchinson, Emmitt Tyler, and Jeff Trotter; Non-voting Members: Katie Lugar, Justin Sears

The meeting was called to order at 5:37 PM by Chair, Sandy Mutchler.

Proclamation

Hon. Brandon Sakbun - Mayor of the City of Terre Haute – Mayor Sakbun welcomed guests present including the Terre Haute Area Association of Relators, Mental Health America, and Jordan Marvel the new Director of the Terre Haute Redevelopment Department. He gave a public thank you to multiple organizations in the community for their efforts relating to Fair Housing. He began by thanking Mental Health America for their work with permanent supportive housing and their building of a low-barrier shelter. He next gave thanks to the Next Step Foundation for their development of multiple housing facilities serving individuals in recovery from substance use disorders. He then gave thanks to THAAR for their efforts in developing tiny homes for veterans. He lastly gave thanks to THRIVE West Central for their housing programming including Homes for the Future. He ended the presentation with a proclamation for Fair Housing Month where he officially proclaimed April as Fair Housing Month in Terre Haute.

Guest Presentation

Hon. Brandon Sakbun - Mayor of the City of Terre Haute – Mayor Sakbun provided an update sharing that he had received positive feedback about the Human Relations Commission from the State Legislature. Mayor Sakbun shared that the Human Relations Director's role has continued to grow including the addition of the ADA Coordinator responsibilities. He provided an update about the Board and Commissions within the City of Terre Haute sharing that there has been a conscious effort to diversify who serves on the City's Boards and Commissions. He shared that the City continues to look at its hiring, recruiting, and training practices to ensure more equitable and inclusive policies. He mentioned that he appreciated that the Human Relations Director is more involved in the community. He discussed that the ordinance is under review. He mentioned that he originally had some concerns regarding removing the political affiliation, but came to the mindset that Human Relations has no political party. He discussed that he thinks the ordinance review is going in the right direction with good consideration of the capacity and abilities of City and specifically Human Relations Commission staff. He mentioned that the Community Listening sessions have been positive and that he will be encouraging the community plan to also use this feedback and information. He also shared about the intended expansion of the City's social work program and the collaboration with the City of Noblesville. He mentioned plans to bring in more staff to help bring more resources to addressing the mental health needs of the community.

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Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the March minutes was made by Nichelle Campbell-Miller and seconded by Dana Simons.

Director's Report

All members received a copy of the director's report and financial report.

Director AT met with a few community members and city officials. Director AT, along with the Mayor, met with the team at Reach Services regarding the Warming Center. She also met with Camille Wallace regarding the potential for training and consulting services for the City. Director AT also attended many meetings and events, some including: the United Way's Strong Neighborhoods Council, Homeless Coalition Meetings, city council meetings, and several more.

There were two inquiries with the office, one for housing and one for employment. There are no active cases.

The office expenses included \$21.76 for public notices and \$166.44 for the strategic planning retreat.

A motion to approve the report was made by Nichelle Campbell-Miller and seconded by Dana Simons.

The Director's Report and Financial Report were accepted by common consent.

Old Business

Community Engagement Workshop Series - Director AT presented each commissioner with an update about the final session being postponed. She asked that commissioners again serve as group facilitators to help keep groups on topic and on time. The group discussed a new date and location. Nichelle Campbell-Miller offered for the final session to take place at Sarah Scott Middle School. AT also mentioned that the Terre Haute Ten would be meeting the following week and that all commissioners are invited to attend that meeting. No action needed.

Strategic Planning – Director AT shared the draft of the Strategic Plan with the group. AT mentioned it would be best for the group to wait to officially adopt the strategic plan until the Ordinance Review has been completed. No action needed.

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Council Committee – The Committee met on March 26, 2024 and AT and Sandy attended. AT presented information from the meeting. A few members from the committee met later with AT and the City’s legal team to discuss the specific language for the ordinance. The plan is for the committee to reconvene in May and then vote as a council in June. No action needed.

New Business

Women’s Leadership Mastermind Group – AT met with Amy Demchak, who leads the Women’s Leadership Mastermind. The purpose of the group is to develop professional skills. AT has been invited to participate. The total cost is \$900. AT is requesting the commission spend \$450 from the 2024 budget and then \$450 from the 2025 budget since the program takes place during both budget years. Dana Simons made a motion to approve the spending and Sandy Mutchler seconded. The motion carried.

ADA Coordinator Training and ADA Symposium– AT serves as the City’s ADA Coordinator. The University of Missouri’s College of Human and Environmental Sciences, School of Architectural Studies and the Great Plains ADA Center offer an ADA Training Certification Program. The initial membership fee is \$300. Mike Reed mentioned that the ADA Coordinator role is not in the ordinance and suggested we wait to spend the money until the role is officially in the ordinance. Dana Simons said that since we anticipate this happening that we should not wait because we might miss the opportunity or costs would be much higher if we waited. Sandy also added that this would be the time to do this program. Dana Simons made a motion to approve the spending for the ADA Coordinator Training Program and the ADA Symposium and Nichelle Campbell Miller seconded. The motion carried.

ISU Doctoral Class – AT presented that the Human Relations Commission will be partnering with a PhD Class at ISU to develop plans for cultural and heritage celebrations for the City of Terre Haute. The discussion brought up the consideration for celebrations beyond Black History month and MLK Day. AT shared that she has and will be ensuring there is consideration from the class on how these programs can be replicable for other cultural and heritage months/celebrations. No action needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 PM.

Minutes submitted by Anne-Therese Ryan, HRC Executive Director

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