

DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

The Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) meeting was held on August 24, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman Henderson presiding. Members present were Mr. Fleming, Mr. Gaddis, Mrs. Herbert, and Mr. Offredo. Ms. Mullen and Ms. Paige were absent.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Offredo moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Gaddis and unanimously carried.

DHRC Committee Updates

Government Policy, Programs, and Practices Committee (Gaddis)

Mr. Gaddis advised that, on August 9, 2017, he had mailed correspondence Police Chief Marvin Mailey to introduce himself and had not yet received a response. Mr. Gaddis stated that he assumed he was supposed to touch base with various organizations within the government, introduce himself, and ask to get together to discuss any concerns or, at the very least, to get to know each other a little. Mr. Henderson suggested that Mr. Gaddis keep up with this and not be discouraged, noting that he thought that Chief Mailey would respond.

Community Engagement Committee (Mullen)

No report was provided.

Education Committee (Fleming)

Mr. Fleming indicated that, prior to the DHRC meeting, he had attended a planning committee meeting for an empowering parents conference that would be held on September 30, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. through 1:00 p.m. at Wesley College and would include lunch. He advised that the conference was in the planning stages and was coming together nicely. Mr. Fleming stated that he had secured the parent of a girl with special needs to be on a panel to discuss the subject of navigating school boards and ways of making sure that his child got the kind of special treatment that she needed. Mr. Fleming indicated that there would be more information forthcoming as meetings are held.

Mrs. Herbert asked if the DHRC would have a table with brochures at the conference. Responding, Mr. Fleming stated that he was unsure if the DHRC would have a table, noting that this had not come up yet. He indicated that he would be willing to sit at a table and, if the DHRC brochure was approved, he would take copies with him.

Mr. Gaddis asked if members could go to the conference as citizens, as opposed to Commission members. Responding, Mr. Fleming asked members who are available to come and wear their DHRC shirts.

Mr. Fleming stated that the planning committee planned to utilize parent-teacher associations at the schools to get the word out, and the event would be advertised in the *Delaware State News* and the *Dover Post*.

Communications Committee (Paige)

Mr. Offredo provided a draft Dover Human Relations Commission brochure (**Attachment #1**), stating that he had worked on the brochure with Ms. Paige. He explained that the brochure was in draft format and that they would be happy to make changes if there were any edits or suggestions. Mr. Offredo stated that there was one (1) glaring omission, which he and Ms. Paige had consciously left out, and that was the section under “What We Do.” Mr. Offredo advised that he, Ms. Paige, and the Commission as a whole were still going through the soul-searching process of figuring out what the DHRC does, or at least a way to successfully communicate it to the public. He asked members to review the brochure, noting that it was 90% complete.

Mr. Offredo advised that he and Ms. Paige were starting to cultivate a media resource sheet that would include reporters that they know in the area and their contact information, which could be used when the Commission is ready to reach out to the media to get coverage about the Commission, its mission, what members are doing, and how they are going to try to be active in the community. Mr. Offredo stated that he and Ms. Paige wanted to start to lay the groundwork for publicity; however, he indicated that they thought that the Commission had to determine what message they will tell the media and what role the DHRC will play in the community before deciding to actively pitch local media.

Mrs. Herbert pointed out that the back of the brochure stated, “Meetings are the fourth Thursday of each month from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.” She stated that Mr. Henderson had previously indicated that it would be nice to meet every month; however, she was unsure whether or not that had been decided. Mrs. Herbert advised that she thought that the DHRC should meet monthly. Mr. Henderson stated that he would leave this up to the pleasure of the Commission. He noted that Future Meeting Dates would be discussed during the latter part of the meeting.

Mr. Henderson stated that the brochure was still a draft in progress and asked members who had input to let Mr. Offredo and Ms. Paige know.

Mr. Fleming stated that he had a penchant for a logo that was used in a previous DHRC brochure and thought it was a nice effect for the DHRC. Mr. Offredo asked if the City had the logo on file in the form of a JPEG which he could drop into the brochure. Responding, Ms. Denise Devine, Assistant City Clerk, stated that the Clerk’s Office could look into this.

State Human Relations Commission Liaison Report (Herbert)

Mrs. Herbert advised members that the State Human Relations Commission (SHRC) meets at 5:30 p.m., upstairs in the Cannon Building, 861 Silver Lake Boulevard and, on the day of their meetings, individuals must look to see whether or not a meeting is canceled or ongoing. She explained that she and Mr. Henderson attended the SHRC meeting on August 10, 2017 and asked, during the open period at the beginning of the meeting, if the DHRC would be able to liaise with the SHRC. Mrs. Herbert informed members that during the SHRC meeting she read Long-Term Objective C.2 of the City of Dover Human Relations Commission Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018, which states, “Develop an understanding with the State Human Relations Commission that will delineate the roles and procedures of the two Commissions in the solution of alleged discrimination complaints which fall within the jurisdiction of the State Human Relations Commission, and identify

and maintain specific ways the two Commissions will work together.” Mrs. Herbert advised that Mr. Calvin Christopher, Chair, SHRC, stated that he would include the DHRC’s request on the September 14, 2017 SHRC meeting agenda.

Mrs. Herbert informed members that Mr. Christopher had several suggestions regarding what the SHRC and DHRC needed to talk about, and she had made it clear that the DHRC understood that the DHRC was over Dover and the SHRC was over the whole State. Mrs. Herbert stated that she would be attending the September SHRC meeting and hoped that other members would also attend in case there were questions to which she did not know the answers. Mr. Henderson indicated that he would like to attend the September SHRC meeting.

Mrs. Herbert stated that the meeting that she and Mr. Henderson previously attended was the SHRC’s Executive Committee meeting, and the DHRC request would be considered by the full Commission.

DHRC Vacancies

Responding to Mr. Henderson, Mr. Offredo advised that he represents the Fourth District on the DHRC, as does Ms. Paige.

Mr. Henderson indicated that all districts were currently represented by at least one (1) member and the Commission was to have two (2) members from each district and one (1) at-large member. He noted that one (1) additional member is needed from the First District and one (1) from the Second District. Mr. Henderson noted that he had spoken to Council President Timothy Slavin, who stated that he was comfortable with the current number of members. Mr. Henderson stated that he himself would rather have a functioning few than a cluster.

Future Meeting Dates

Mr. Henderson noted that the draft DHRC brochure discussed during the meeting stated that the Commission meets on the fourth Thursday of each month from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. He indicated that one (1) of the reasons that he had continued monthly meetings was that he felt that it was necessary to keep the Commission going or it would be lost; however, he stated that since Mr. Gaddis and Ms. Paige became members, the Commission had more or less got itself in a general direction.

Mr. Gaddis moved to recommend that the DHRC meet on the fourth Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Herbert.

Mr. Henderson stated that he wondered if this recommendation needed to be stated in the by-laws and noted that the by-laws state that the DHRC will meet at least three (3) or four (4) times per year. Responding, Ms. Denise Devine, Assistant City Clerk, reminded members that the Commission had rescinded its by-laws. She explained that the Dover Code states that the DHRC meets quarterly, and special meetings can be called by the Chair or three (3) members of the Commission. *(City Clerk’s Office Note: Chapter 58 - Human Relations, Article II - Human Relations Commission, Section 58-33(c) - Meetings states that “the commission shall hold at least five meetings per year; one each*

quarter and one to be determined by the commission. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or three members of the commission. . . .”)

Mr. Fleming, referring to the DHRC Workshop of January 25, 2017, noted that members had discussed the possibility of presenting proposed amendments to Chapter 58, Article II of the Dover Code for Council consideration. He stated that members had not done this because they had been busy; however, he had drafted proposed language regarding an amendment, and asked if the Commission wanted to consider it.

Mr. Henderson asked Ms. Devine if, in her opinion, the DHRC would have to go to Council to approve the fact that they are meeting once per month. Responding, Ms. Devine stated that she did not think that a Code amendment would be necessary, since the Commission can call special meetings. She noted that regular meetings are held quarterly, and when additional meetings are held the agendas indicate that they are special meetings. Ms. Devine explained that regular meeting dates are set quarterly.

Ms. Devine advised that the Commission had been meeting on the Thursday prior to the fourth Monday of each month, not the fourth Thursday of each month as members indicated. She explained that City Council meets on the fourth Monday, and the DHRC usually meets on the Thursday prior to that, since the City Clerk’s Office Staff is typically at City Hall that evening. Ms. Devine indicated that if members preferred to meet on the fourth Thursday of the month, due to their schedules or to make the wording easier in the brochure for the public, staff could definitely work around that.

In regard to the proposed Code amendment Mr. Fleming stated that he drafted, Ms. Devine explained that a Code amendment was not on the current meeting agenda, so members would not be able to consider an amendment at this time. She stated that a proposed amendment could be placed on the next agenda, if the Commission wanted to consider making recommended Code changes to City Council.

Mr. Fleming read the proposed language which he drafted regarding an amendment, as follows:

Chapter 58 - Article 2 - Meetings:

The Commission will hold as many meetings as is necessary to conduct the business of the Commission. Special meetings may be called by the Chairmen or three members of the Commission. No fewer than five meetings per year. Meetings shall be held at City Hall and other places in the community in accordance of the laws of Delaware regarding the Freedom of Information Act and the City of Dover procedures. The Commission will distribute its agenda and minutes through the City Clerk’s Office.

Mrs. Herbert stated that she was concerned that the DHRC does not announce in the paper when they are going to meet, noting that it was necessary for her to go through a lot to find out whether or not the State Human Relations Commission (SHRC) was meeting. She advised that she was concerned

that if the DHRC states that they will meet and then they do not have a quorum of members present, or if a meeting is canceled, the public may come to an empty room. Mrs. Herbert stated that there is not an easy way to find a statement on the website that something is canceled or it is going to continue. She advised that there are a lot of people who do not have computers, and the DHRC's business may happen to include people who are not able to easily figure out when the Commission is meeting and when it is not.

Mr. Henderson asked if this matter was something that the Communications Committee could look into. He indicated that the *Dover Post* has a community page where the Rotary Club and other businesses are posted. Mr. Henderson suggested that, after members get the wording straight, this could be an avenue to announce on a regular basis when the meetings are and some of what is talked about.

Ms. Devine explained, for example, that the City's Economic Development Committee has regularly scheduled meetings, as the DHRC is proposing, and does not have a meeting next week. She advised that when a committee has no agenda items to consider, an agenda cancellation notice is posted stating that no meeting will be held. Ms. Devine advised that this notice is posted on the City's website; on the bulletin board in City Hall, per State and Federal law; and in the agenda racks. She noted that if there had not been a quorum of members for the current DHRC meeting, then the door would have been closed, and if the public came at 6:30 p.m., they would not have been able to get into the building to know that there was no meeting. Ms. Devine explained that, similarly, if a DHRC meeting ends by 6:30 p.m., then everyone goes home and, if the public comes, they do not know that a meeting has already been held. She stated that if the public is not present when a meeting begins, there is no way to make it known that the meeting ended early because members finished their business. Mrs. Devine advised that she thought that this was the same for all of the meetings in the community.

Mrs. Herbert suggested that the DHRC allow the first 10 minutes for the public to speak their concerns, as the SHRC does. She stated that the public would know that they need to be present on time and members could find out the feelings that the public have.

Mr. Henderson indicated that an Open Forum could be held once the DHRC gets the public to show up and noted that City Council has an Open Forum before Regular City Council meetings. Mrs. Herbert reiterated that the SHRC has an Open Forum, although they did not at the first meeting she attended; however, she was noticed halfway through the meeting and invited to come to the table. She stated that, based on her experiences trying to get in touch with the SHRC and to find out when their meetings are and where their minutes are, the DHRC should make this as easy as possible, especially if someone is coming with a concern.

Ms. Devine noted that currently those who are interested in City meetings can sign up for meeting notifications for specific boards on the City's website under Meetings and Agendas, or can contact the City Clerk's Office to request notification through the Agendas and Notices email distribution list.

Mr. Fleming stated that he thought that Mrs. Herbert had a good idea regarding holding a 10-minute time period at the beginning of DHRC meetings to allow people who come an opportunity to speak. Mrs. Herbert stated that since members are only allowed to meet between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., they may have to go ahead and meet if no one from the public is present to speak. Mr. Henderson advised that City Council allows speakers three (3) minutes, and some people do not use up the whole three (3) minutes and others have to be added on. He noted that he had been to quite a few Open Forum segments when he served as a City Chaplain.

Mrs. Herbert asked if the DHRC would have to wait until 6:10 p.m. if no one from the public was present at 6:00 p.m., noting that they would have lost 10 minutes. Responding, Mr. Fleming stated that he thought that if no one was present at 6:00 p.m., the DHRC would begin their meeting, and if someone arrived at 6:05 p.m. they would be allowed to speak.

Mr. Henderson asked if the Council Chambers would be available if the Commission decided to meet on the fourth Thursday of every month. In response, Ms. Devine stated that she could not answer that question without looking at the Council Chambers schedule.

Mr. Gaddis moved to table the motion to recommend that the DHRC meet on the fourth Thursday of the month pending further research regarding Chapter 58 of the Dover Code and potential other dates. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fleming and unanimously carried.

Responding to Ms. Devine, Mr. Henderson stated that he typically works with Mrs. Jody Stein, Administrative Assistant, City Clerk's Office, to schedule meetings and then provides the information to members. He advised that, whether or not this matter was tabled, he was sure that it was members' wish to meet next month.

Mr. Fleming stated that he and Mr. Offredo would both be unable to attend a meeting on the fourth Thursday of September. Responding, Mr. Henderson indicated that if it was the Commission's intention to meet in September, it would be a special meeting and they could consider meeting on the third Thursday of the month. Mr. Offredo advised that he would be unavailable on the third Thursday as well; however, Mr. Fleming stated that he would be available. Mr. Henderson stated that members would be informed of the next meeting date.

Mr. Gaddis moved for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Offredo and unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Theodore A. Henderson
Chair

TAH/DD/js

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Attachment

Attachment #1 - Draft Dover Human Relations Commission brochure, provided by Mr. Offredo

OUR MEETINGS



Meetings are the fourth Thursday of each month from 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Open to the public, these meetings are held in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

The Commission begins each regular meeting by inviting anyone present to address the Commission. Comments must be limited to three minutes.

Meeting information and agendas are posted on the bulletin board at City Hall and on the City of Dover's website at www.cityofdover.com

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Alan Gaddis
Government Policy
Programs and Practices

Wanda Mullen and Sara Herbert
Community Engagement

Paul Fleming
Education

Rita Mishoe Paige and Jon Offredo
Communications

Sara Herbert
State Human Relations Commission Liaison



CITY HALL

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(Between the Dover Public Library and PNC Bank)
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ATTACHMENT #1
DHRC Meeting of 08/15/2017

DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION



*Working together toward understanding,
Fairness. diversity and mutual respect.*

WHO WE ARE

DHR Commission Members

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OUR MISSION

Committed to a philosophy of inclusion, intergroup cooperation and fair treatment, the City of Dover Human Relations Commission works to ensure that the City of Dover has and utilizes policies, programs, ordinances, organizational practices, specialized resources and appropriately trained employees to support diversity, inclusion and cultural competency in its organization and services.

Additionally, by involving all segments of the community, the Commission promotes an understanding and appreciation of the benefits of diversity, inclusion, and positive intergroup relations among residents of varying backgrounds in the city; and, advocates for an environment of fairness and respect.

The Commission works with the City Council and the City Administration and other community organizations to strengthen inter-group relationships and to eliminate discrimination; and, to anticipate, prepare for and resolve incidents of intergroup conflicts and disputes within the city.

WHAT WE DO



OUR VISION

The Commission's vision is a city whose government, organizations, groups and individual citizens value diversity, inclusion, respect and trust.