

MINUTES
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
February 15, 2022, 6:00 p.m.
First Floor Conference Room, City Hall

CITY CLERK
2022 MAR 11 PM 2:55

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Members' Term Attendance</u> (mtgs attended-mtgs absent)	<u>End of Current Term of Office</u>
MEMBERS PRESENT:	Juniper Brown	(06-00)	10/08/22
	Sean Connors	(11-00)	10/08/23
	Terri Lowdon	(22-07)	10/08/23
	David Mason	(08-01)	10/08/24
	Joyce Starr	(04-00)	10/08/24
MEMBERS ABSENT:	Derek Evans	(02-01)	10/08/24
	Kristina Hannon	(01-03)	10/08/24
	Daniel McGaughy	(05-05)	10/08/23
STAFF PRESENT:	Lisa Robertson, City Attorney Ben Williams, Recording Secretary		

Item #1 Call to Order

Connors called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Item #2 ROLL CALL: McGaughy – absent, Brown – Present via Zoom, Connors – present, Evans – absent, Hannon – absent, Lowdon – present, Mason – Present, Starr – present. Quorum is present.

Item #3 Approval of Minutes

Lowdon moved to approve the January minutes. Starr seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Item #4 Old Business

Item #4a. Update on Human Rights Commission Facebook Page

Connors stated that he is making several daily posts due to black history month. Starr invited all members to attend the Black Archives Hall of Fame induction. Connors stated that if any of the members wanted anything shared on the Facebook page then they need only contact him.

Item #4b. Update on status of Rainbow Crosswalk recommendation to City Council

Connors stated that he met with Commission members Brown and Hannon that Brown would put the proposal together after compiling all the information. Brown stated that they hoped to have the proposal ready before the next meeting. Connors inquired if it was his responsibility to find a sponsor for the proposed ordinance or resolution. Robertson replied that once the proposal they should ask someone on the Council if they would be interested in sponsoring the recommendation, knowing that the Commission would talk to the City Manager. Connors inquired if they would give the proposal to the City Manager first. Robertson replied that this would be a good idea, while also informing the City Manager that there is someone on the Council interested in sponsoring the crosswalk project.

Lowdon stated that it would go better if the Commission already had a plan on how to pay for the crosswalk. Starr stated that she did not believe citizens would want the crosswalks. Starr stated that she believed the citizens would rather have their money spent on sidewalks for kids near local elementary schools. Connors replied that their proposal was not taking money away from kids. Starr stated that she knew that but that the Commission was talking about infrastructure, referencing the \$5,000 Kansas City spent on their rainbow crosswalks. Lowdon stated that it would be easier if private money was used to pay for the crosswalks.

Item #4c. Update on status of Linking Immigrants with Employers

Lowdon stated that they spoke with Natalie Redmond, President, and CEO of the Chamber. Lowdon relayed some of her concerns about highly qualified immigrants not having the certificates here in the US to work in the same capacity as they did in their home country. Lowdon stated that she spoke to Redmond about matching immigrants with other employers and that they would schedule another meeting to discuss this issue further.

Redmond and Maria Ramirez asked Lowdon to discuss a concern with the HRC about the immigrants who are not able to receive local emergency warnings due to the language barrier. Lowdon stated that although Ramirez tries to send out messages to the immigrants via text with warnings about different weather events or Amber alerts, these messages will not reach everyone who needs to be made aware. Lowdon stated that she is unsure how the emergency information systems function and is unsure who to speak with to address concerns related to language barriers. Brown stated that there should be a portal for alerts in Spanish that people can sign up for on the city's website.

Starr stated that another issue is the lack of diversity on City boards and commissions. Starr also inquired if there was any good data related to how many homeless people were in the community, or if that data is being tracked. Robertson responded that the police department or the Community Action Partnership might have some idea as to the number of homeless. Lowdon stated that Kansas City tracks the percentage of ethnicities in the local population and that Kansas City uses this information to write and apply for grants. Brown inquired if there was a demographer at the county level. The group replied that they did not know. Lowdon stated that the city needs to start tracking ethnic and homeless population data because the city would be able to apply for more grants to help these populations if this type of data was available. Lowdon stated that other cities in the state of significant size track this information. Connors explained that local agencies could each send a representative to a common space and help immigrants with their initial needs.

Item #4d. Update on meeting with Midland Empire Equality Coalition (MEEC)

Connors stated that this meeting would include the MEEC, as well as various other LGBTQ groups. Connors stated that the location of the meeting would be First Christian Church, 927 Faraon Street, on March 15th at 6 p.m. Connors relayed the other groups invited to the event, which included the leadership of the gay straight alliances from some of the local high schools. Connors invited a few speakers and tasked them to speak about what they believe is needed from the city.

Item #4e. Update on Black History Month

None.

Item #4f. Report on Black Archives Hall of Fame Induction

Starr stated that on February 24th from 5-7pm the Black Archives Hall of Fame would induct James Dodd and Ecy Bullock. Connors stated that the induction started at 6 p.m. Starr stated that it would be held at the St. Joseph Museum on Frederick Avenue. Starr stated that the town hall meeting at Bartlett Center would take place on March 3rd.and informed the Commission of those who would be in attendance.

Item #5 New Business

Item #5a. Other

None.

Item #6 City Staff Update

None.

Item #7 Public Comment

None.

Item #8 Future Agenda Overview

Connors stated that he would like the agenda to remain the same.

Item # 9 Adjourn

Lowdon moved to adjourn the meeting. Mason seconded. No member opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Ben Williams, Recording Secretary (Legal Assistant)