

**Members Present:** Sylvia Nery-Strickland (Chairwoman), Dr. Virginia Jenkot (Vice Chairwoman), Teresa Stanley, Rabbi Israel Zoberman, Joe Burnsworth, Beatriz Amberman, Tommie Cubine, JoJo Orenca Jr, Allison White, Ron Taylor, Rajeeb Islam, Luis Rivera, and Jamal Gunn

**Members Absent:** Cheryl Caalim, David Calliott, Frances Knight-Thompson, Pearl Renwick (Excused), and Carla Hesseltine (Excused).

**Staff Present:** Mary Graessle (Human Resources), Roderick Ingram, (Deputy City Attorney), Sara Mbanden (HRC Liaison) Tony Zucaro (Deputy Chief), and Michele Meister (Lieutenant)

**Liaisons Present:** Deputy Chief Zucaro and Lieutenant Meister

## **I. Call to Order/Roll Call/Minutes Approval**

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Nery-Strickland at 4:05 p.m.

Roll call was taken of the Commissioners. Commissioners Caalim, Calliott, Renwick, Thompson, and Hesseltine were absent.

The November 14<sup>th</sup>—Meeting Minutes were reviewed. Commissioner Taylor suggested the minutes be accepted without correction.

Commissioner Cubine requested the following corrections be made on Page 2, Forums/ Dialogue Committee section, Paragraph 3, Line 2:

“Following presentations, attendees will have the ability to sign up to be contacted regarding advocacy activities. Additionally, Commissioner Cubine will assist with the draft for STEP VA pamphlet, and will contact more organizations.”

Commissioner Amberman proposed on page 2 instead of “Commissioner Amberman proposed the next forum be titled, the program hasn’t been titled yet, instead the Commissioner asked that the minutes be revised to read that the next forum issue be Race and Racism.

Madame Chair made a motion to approve the minutes with the corrections. Commissioner Amberman seconded the motion. The November 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting minutes will be revised and posted to include the corrections provided by Commissioners Cubine and Amberman.

## **II. Human Rights Commission By-Laws Revisions/Vote**

Deputy City Attorney Ingram indicated that based upon the tonight’s attendance, the Commission did not have a two-thirds vote in order to approve any by-law changes. but they could discuss the proposed changes.

For that reason, a motion was made by Commissioner Rivera to table the discussion and vote until the next Human Rights Commission Meeting on January 9, 2020. Commissioner Stanley seconded the motion.

Roll call vote was held, and the following commissioners Nery-Strickland, Jenkot, Zoberman, Burnsworth, Amberman, Taylor, Stanley, Cubine, Orenca, and White voted in favor. Commissioner Gunn voted against the motion.

Deputy City Attorney Ingram noted that several weeks ago, City Council adopted a resolution to reestablishes Citizen's Committee on Boards and Commissions. The committee will be comprised of citizens who examine numerous activities including how individuals are appointed to various boards and

commissions. Anyone interested in being part of that Citizen's Committee on Boards and Commissions can contact the City Council's office to express interest.

Commissioner Islam stated that he had questions regarding the recent HRC Awards Program and the police ribbons. Chairwoman Nery-Strickland stated that this discussion could occur at the next meeting with the Awards Committee which had not been scheduled yet. Once a date has been scheduled, she will send an invite to the commissioners which would provide him an opportunity to share his concerns.

Commissioner Islam also reminded the Commission that he had previously asked if the commission could write a letter to City Council seeking health care assistance for the May 31 victims and families other than COBRA. Deputy City Attorney Ingram stated that since the family members were no longer employed by the city, COBRA was their only option and the coverage was being provided at no cost. The length of care was unknown; however, if the Commission wanted additional information as to what was being provided to the victims and their families, he could have someone from City benefits to come and speak at an upcoming meeting. The speaker could provide some clarity regarding healthcare benefits to help alleviate any questions and concerns.

Commissioner Stanley reminded the commissioners about the Homeless Memorial Vigil scheduled for December 20<sup>th</sup> at 6 P.M. and she invited everyone to attend.

Chairwoman Nery-Strickland concluded the meeting by indicating the Mental Health Forum was fantastic and executed smoothly. She reminded the commissioners that the first part of tonight's meeting was to facilitate the regular HRC monthly meeting and the second part of the meeting would be devoted to the HRC's Retreat.

### **III. Legal Presentation – Rod Ingram**

Deputy City Attorney Rod Ingram provided a legal overview of the HRC, attendance requirements, the HRC by-laws, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and the State and Local Government Conflict of Interests Act, and he offered advice regarding interactions with the press, HRC sponsorship procedures, and reporting of volunteer hours. His presentation was videotaped in hopes that the video could be provided to new members, along with the packet he prepared that contained copies of pertinent City Code provisions and the HRC by-laws.

### **IV. Facilitator's Agenda**

Orelious Walker and Carrie L. Brandt, analysts from the City's Strategy, Transparency, Innovation and Resiliency (STIR) office are the HRC Retreat facilitators. During the retreat, the facilitators conducted several group exercises to kick off the development of the HRC's 2020 Work Plan.

### **V. Adjournment**

Chairwoman Strickland adjourned the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

**Next Meeting:**  
Thursday, January 9, 2020 @ 4:00 p.m.  
City Municipal Center (STIR Office)