

**ROCKVILLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Cisco WebEx Conference
Wednesday, January 26, 2021
7:30 p.m.

Member Attendance: Amina Shafi Rogers (Co-Chair), Andrew Lin (Co-Chair), Oyebisi Olatoye, Gabrielle Zwi, Kindra Jones, Jeannie Shen, James Pearce, Bethany Pereira, Molly Cullen, Sinan Wolf-Gazo

Staff Liaisons: Ali Hoy, Council Member David Myles

Student Ambassadors: Rokia “Riki” Doumbia, Anastasia Caruso, Dylan Studley

Guests: Brian Rogers (Cultural Arts Commissioner)

- I. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm.
- II. **Welcoming of Guests** – The Commission welcomed new members, Molly Cullen and Sinan Wolf-Gazo
- III. **Adoption of Meeting Agenda and Minutes** – Upon motion, seconded, and approved, the meeting agenda and November meeting minutes were adopted.
- IV. **Staff Report**
 - A. **Update on Commission Vacancies**
 - i. Liaison Hoy introduced Commissioner Cullen and Commissioner Wolf-Gazo as new members of the Human Rights Commission and the group introduced themselves. Liaison Hoy reported that there are no Commission vacancies and that expression of interest forms are still being accepted for when vacancies arise. Co-Chair Rogers discussed working with the Membership Subcommittee to formalize the intake process for expressions of interest.
 - ii. Liaison Hoy reminded the Commission members that the Open Meetings Act training, referred to in the City Clerk’s welcome packet, is required. Upon completion of the training, the certificate must be sent to Liaison Hoy.
 - B. **Updates on Program of Events**
 - i. **2022 MLK Event Recap**
 1. The MLK Subcommittee shared that the virtual MLK event held on January 17, 2022 went well and the feedback from the public and members of Mayor and Council was positive, particularly for the use of prompted breakout sessions. Some of those giving feedback had expressed interest in ongoing discussions about race,

which Co-Chair Rogers said might be appropriate for future HRC meetings or events.

2. The MLK Subcommittee reviewed four MLK Youth award and four F. Michael Taff award nomination applications, and the winners were announced during the MLK event. The winners were Riki Doumbia for the MLK Youth award winner and Sunflower Bakery for the F. Michael Taff award winner. Liaison Hoy is in the process of ordering plaques to recognize the winners.

ii. **Pride**

1. Commissioner Zwi spoke on behalf of the Pride Subcommittee to outline the current plans for Pride, which include a virtual event in early June and an in-person event to be held on June 26, 2022. She noted additional assistance was needed in organizing and fundraising for the event, and that a theme had not yet been selected. Student Ambassador Doumbia and Commissioner Cullen expressed interest in joining the Subcommittee.
2. Ms. Zwi discussed potential topics for the virtual event, such as talks about culture and religion, legislative updates, and media representations.

C. **Mayor and Council Presentation – April 4, 2022**

- i. The HRC has been asked to make a 20-30 minute presentation to Mayor and Council about the Commission's past work and future goals in serving the City of Rockville. Co-Chairs Lin and Rogers volunteered to present, but asked others if they are interested in taking on that role. Liaison Hoy mentioned that the list of presentation talking points would need to be submitted at the end of March.

V. **Chair Report**

A. Board of Supervisors of Elections

- i. Co-Chair Lin reported on the joint project with the Board of Supervisors of Elections and the Asian Pacific American Task Force to explore ways to increase voter participation among the City's Asian American population. The group met at the end of December and the next meeting was planned for the end of January and updates will be provided during the next meeting.
- ii. Co-Chair Lin spoke about the training requirements to be authorized to assist with voter registration by the Montgomery County Board of Elections. Several commission members were interested in the training and Co-Chair Lin said he would send a link to the voter registration and training website.

VI. **Other Committee Reports**

A. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Initiative

- i. The DEI Subcommittee have discussed holding a DEI training in the Spring, with program developer David Smith. Commissioners Jones and Olatoye have met with him to discuss a completely remote program, with

an interactive component that could be led by HRC members, outside consultants or David Smith. They discussed a potential date in March and Liaison Hoy requested more time to provide outreach support for this training event.

- B. Commissioners Pearce and Zwi discussed developing an HRC complaint resolution subcommittee and would like to review how other HRC's have set up something similar for their communities.

VII. Old Business

- A. Human Services Nonprofit "Caregiver" Grant
 - i. Commissioner Jones reviewed her experience serving as a grant panelist for the Caregiver grant process, which provides \$700,000 in funding to nonprofits providing direct human services to Rockville residents.
- B. HRC and HSAC Survey
 - i. Co-chair Lin announced that the HRC and HSAC survey received over 400 responses between Spring 2021-October 2021. The results of the survey will be presented to Mayor and Council on March 7th.
- C. Montgomery County Reconciliation Commission
 - i. Commissioner Olatoye provided an update on the County's Reconciliation Commission, which met for the first time since Thanksgiving. She shared that the commission is wrapping up its 2022 activities with a December remembrance. The Commission is interested in partnering with local groups and participating in City events.

VIII. New Business and Announcements

- IX. Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.