

**ROCKVILLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

Cisco WebEx Conference  
Wednesday, April 27, 2022  
7:30 p.m.

**Member Attendance:** Amina Shafi Rogers (Co-Chair), Andrew Lin (Co-Chair), Vice-Chair Gabrielle Zwi, Oyebisi Olatoye, Molly Cullen, Sinan Wolf-Gazo, Kaoru Sakabe

**Staff Liaisons:** Ali Hoy, Councilmember Dr. David Myles

**Student Ambassadors:** Rokia “Riki” Doumbia, Anastasia Caruso

**Guests:** Brian Rogers (Cultural Arts Commissioner), Andres Roa (MyMCMedia)

- I. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm.
- II. **Welcoming of Guests** – The Commission welcomed two student ambassadors, Riki Doumbia and Anastasia Caruso, and Brian Rogers from the Cultural Arts Commission. They also welcomed Andres Roa from MyMCMedia.
- III. **Adoption of Meeting Agenda and Minutes** – Upon motion, seconded, and approved, the meeting agenda and March meeting minutes were adopted.
- IV. **Staff Report**
  - A. **“IDEA” – Diversity and Inclusion Workshop** - Liaison Hoy reported that the “IDEA” Workshop, which stands for “Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access,” had a turnout of between 15-20 students. Commissioner Olatoye shared that the curriculum was developed with David Smith, a consultant who has run the workshop in the past. The workshop emphasized leadership roles and provided guidance and information about diversity, inclusion, equity and access. Commissioner Olatoye and Mr. Smith began the event with an interactive conversation about Diversity and Inclusion. A section about Equity was led by Shannon Wilson, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Senior Advisor for the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Global Public Affairs. Commissioner Zwi led an Access discussion relating to work as a college disability justice advocate.

Commissioners Olatoye, Zwi, and Lin and student ambassadors Riki Doumbia and Anastasia Caruso were thanked for leading discussions during the event. Liaison Hoy shared that students who attended the event would earn service learning hours and a follow-up email about other upcoming HRC programs.
  - B. **Pride 2022** – Liaison Hoy shared that the HRC is planning a virtual event on June 5, 2022 with prompted breakout rooms and an in-person event on June 26, 2022. The list of topics on the Pride agenda, including fundraising, outreach, volunteers

and performances, were discussed. The HRC Student Ambassadors offered to assist the Pride subcommittee members with event planning and will help lead a Youth LGBTQ+ discussion during the virtual event. Co-Chair Rogers reported a need for additional sponsorship outreach to solicit monetary and non-monetary donations for the event, to support a donation to an LGBTQ+ cause or organization.

Rockville Reports published articles in the March and April editions to advertise for event sponsors and performers. Liaison Hoy has received requests to perform and four performances are planned. Another article has been planned for the May/June issue of Rockville Reports, followed by social media outreach.

The Cultural Arts Commissioner (CAC) liaison, Brian Rogers, stated that the CAC will assist with crafting stations for children during the Pride event. Liaison Hoy will coordinate with volunteers and provide a few to support these stations.

- C. **NAACP Freedom Fund** – Liaison Hoy reminded the commissioners that the Montgomery County Branch of the NAACP is hosting its Annual Freedom Fund event on Sunday, May 15, 2022. The City of Rockville purchased tickets to attend this event and Liaison Hoy confirmed which members were attending on behalf of the HRC.

## V. **Chair Report**

- A. **Board of Supervisors of Elections** – Co-Chair Lin recapped the purpose of the joint project with the Board of Supervisors of Elections and the Asian Pacific American Task Force, which is to explore ways to increase voter participation among the City’s Asian American population. The group has been meeting since December and has been focusing on translation, registration and overall voter assistance at the polls. The group will be developing voter promotion materials for the Asian community.
- B. **Mayor and Council Presentation** – Co-Chairs Lin and Rogers discussed the April 18, 2022 presentation to Mayor and Council of the Human Rights Commission’s annual accomplishments and future goals.

They received good feedback from Mayor and Council about the work the Commission does each year and plans for the future. Mayor and Council commented that adding additional members to the Commission may be beneficial to support the existing programs and future program growth. The Commissioners held a discussion about increasing the number of members to 15. Commissioner Olatoye brought up previous periods where commission vacancies were long and that the commission should keep community interest levels in mind when discussing membership expansion. Co-Chair Rogers requested additional members on the Membership Subcommittee.

## VI. **Other Committee Reports**

- A. **Current Affairs Committee** – Co-Chair Rogers discussed upcoming proclamations on the Mayor and Council agenda and recommended that a commission member be assigned to keep an eye on annual proclamations to make sure they are balanced from a human rights perspective.

Commissioner Cullen gave an update about the Montgomery County School Board's discussions about police in schools and mental health needs. Montgomery County Public Schools entered into an agreement with Montgomery County Police Department to bring in community engagement officers, who will not be permanently staffed in the school but can be called in for incidents and school events. Each community engagement officer is required to complete training on emergency preparedness, conflict resolution and childhood development. She also noticed that the County approved creation of a 9-member civilian board to review police misconduct complaints.

In response to requests from parents and advocacy groups, Montgomery County Council approved funds for additional Wellness Centers and mental health staff. Liaison Hoy will invite Rika Granger, Community Service Manager, to attend a future HRC meeting and share updates about youth mental health needs in Rockville area schools. She also noted that Rockville High School will be the first in the County to receive one of the new wellness centers.

Commissioner Cullen also gave an update about state child marriage laws. Governor Hogan passed a ban on child marriages under the age of 17, which was previously allowed for children as young as 15. There are also additional protections for 17 year olds, including a review process to determine impropriety and restrictions on marriages from out of state residents.

Finally, Commissioner Cullen reported on the near completion of the anti-racist audit that was conducted by MCPS throughout March. The audit surveyed students, parents, and guardians about the school district's policies and practices. MCPS is also engaging in community conversations and focus groups. Commissioner Cullen was thanked for her in-depth report.

## **VII. Old Business**

- A. **Montgomery County Reconciliation Commission** – Commissioner Olatoye provided an update on the County's Reconciliation Commission, which plans to meet again in May. The Reconciliation Commission chair is seeking partnership with the HRC for Remembrance and Reconciliation month in November.

- VIII. New Business and Announcements** – Liaison Hoy invited meeting guest, Andres Roa, to make comments or ask questions. Mr. Roa asked questions about the Rockville Pride event, including anticipated attendance, safety measures and involvement with Montgomery County Pride. The Commissioner shared information about the event logistics and what they hope to accomplish during Pride.

**IX. Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 pm.