

**ROCKVILLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Cisco WebEx Conference
Wednesday, August 25, 2021
7:30 p.m.

Attendance: Andrew Lin, Oyebisi Olatoye, Gabrielle Zwi, Bethany Pereira, Amina Shafi Rogers

Staff Liaison: Crystal Gorham

Guests: Council Liaison David Myles, Karina Zvobgo

- I. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 7:36 pm. It was noted that because Allison Hoy was unavailable due to medical leave, Crystal Gorham was serving as the liaison for the meeting.
- II. **Welcoming of Guests**
 - A. The Commission welcomed councilmember David Myles and community member Karina Zvobgo.
- III. **Adoption of Meeting Agenda and Minutes** - Upon motion made, seconded, and approved, the meeting agenda and July meeting minutes were adopted.
- IV. **Chair's Report**
 - A. Update on Commission Vacancies
 - i. There were no reported updates on Commission vacancies.
 - B. Updates on Program of Events
 - i. Student Ambassador Program
 1. Commissioners Zwi, Lin, Olatoye, and Pereira reported on the SAP. Program materials had been reviewed and updated. The City was preparing to send the promotional materials to Rockville high schools.
 - ii. MLK Jr. Day 2022
 1. Chair Lin reported that he had recently been informed that contrary to earlier plans, Parks and Recreation will not be planning the 2022 MLK Jr. Day event. Rather, the Commission itself would plan the event, as with prior years.
 - iii. Diversity & Inclusion Initiative
 1. Commissioner Olatoye noted that the committee recently discussed the program with David Smith. The general view was that a spring event was preferred over a fall event. Planning the event for spring also opens the possibility for an in-person event.
 - iv. Current Affairs Committee

1. Commissioners Pereira and Rogers summarized several developments currently being monitored.
 - a. Afghan Refugees: Efforts were underway to resettle and support Afghan refugees in Montgomery County and the Washington DC metro area. A google doc had been prepared with compiled information.
 - b. Police: Several updates regarding police incidents or issues were discussed
 - i. A man was killed in a police shooting in Gaithersburg in January. There were issues concerning a general lack of available information.
 - ii. A man was shot by police at a McDonald's, also in Gaithersburg. The shooting stemmed from an alleged trespassing claim.
 - iii. Montgomery County has announced that police officers will not be present in schools this year.
 - c. Housing: The Bethesda African Cemetery Coalition has sued the Montgomery County Housing Opportunities Commission over its approval of the sale of a cemetery where freed slaves were buried.
 - d. Law and Policy:
 - i. The Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 comes into effect October 1, 2021. The law, among other things, prohibits intentional use of excessive force by police, requires officers to intervene to prevent another officer's use of excessive force; prohibits a law enforcement officer from intentionally refusing to promptly provide or obtain medical treatment for a person injured by police.
 - ii. Senators Warren and Haaland are reintroducing legislation that would create a commission to investigate, document and acknowledge past injustices of the federal government's boarding school program for Native Americans.
2. Commissioners Pereira and Rogers noted they would send out details about the covered issues to the other members.

C. Finalize Committees and Commissioner Roles

- i. Chair Lin reviewed the program subcommittees and solicited additional volunteers to join.
 1. Commissioner Rogers expressed interest in the Commission Membership Committee.
 2. Commissioner Rogers noted that her husband is a member of the Cultural Arts Commission and could potentially assist with joint projects. Commissioner Zwi noted the CAC's past assistance with events such as Pride.
 - 3.

V. Staff Report

A. Ms. Gorham introduced herself to the Commission.

B. Hate Has No Place Here Resolution

- i. Liaison Gorham briefly reported on the “Hate has no place here” resolution scheduled for September 13, 2021.

VI. Old Business

A. HRC and HSAC Survey

- i. Chair Lin provided an update on the joint community survey. The survey subcommittee is attempting to increase participation with awareness. Mr. Lin requested additional volunteers.

B. Montgomery County Remembrance and Reconciliation Commission

- i. Commissioner Olatoye provided an update of the MCRRC’s last meeting.
- ii. Councilmember Myles and Commissioner Olatoye noted that the MCRRC will host a march and ceremony on September 26, 2021 as part of Remembrance Weekend, recognizing victims of racial lynching in the County.

VII. New Business

A. Commissioner Zwi noted a potential time conflict due to class scheduling. It was noted that the Commission would consider 8 pm meeting times rather than 7:30 pm.

VIII. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 pm.