

**ROCKVILLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Cisco WebEx Conference
Wednesday, September 22, 2021
7:30 p.m.

Member Attendance: Andrew Lin (Interim Chair), Kaoru Sakabe, Oyebisi Olatoye, Gabrielle Zwi, Amina Shafi Rogers

Staff Liaisons: Ali Hoy, Council Liaison David Myles

Guests: Connor Lee (Cultural Arts Commission), Judy Rudolph (Rockville Resident)

- I. Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm.
- II. Welcoming of Guests**
 - A. The Commission welcomed community member, Judy Rudolph, and Cultural Arts Commission (CAC) member, Connor Lee.
- III. Adoption of Meeting Agenda and Minutes** - Upon motion, seconded, and approved, the meeting agenda and July meeting minutes were adopted.
- IV. Chair’s Report**
 - A. **Update on Commission Vacancies**
 - i. Liaison Hoy reported that there are three Commission vacancies. The website has been updated and the City Clerk office has been notified.
 - ii. The membership committee is planning to meet to discuss outreach and review procedures.
 - iii.
 - B. **Updates on Program of Events**
 - i. **Student Ambassador Program**
 1. Liaison Hoy shared that the application deadline has been extended to October 15th and that many students have been dealing with the transition back to in person learning.
 2. Assistance is needed from committee members to help with PTA outreach. City staff are posting about the program on social media, resending the flier to school staff and reaching out to Student Government Associations.
 - 3.
 - ii. **MLK Jr. Day 2022**
 1. Liaison Hoy circulated the draft plan, developed by the Department of Housing and Community Development, for review. The plan consists of four parts: a video compilation of past MLK Jr. Day celebration events narrated by the Mayor, an interactive event focused on Dr. King’s message and barbershop culture, the

F. Michael Taff and MLK Youth award ceremony and a week of volunteer events. Volunteer events may include stream cleanups, restoration of African American cemeteries, and self-guided volunteer activities. The MLK Jr. Day subcommittee will continue to be notified of changes. The Commissioners inquired about selection of a keynote speaker for the event. Several suggestions were made. Liaison Hoy said she would check with the Department and report back.

2. For the F. Michael Taff and MLK Youth awards, outreach will be conducted by City staff to schools, youth organizations and organizations that support people with disabilities.
3. The Commission members brainstormed volunteer ideas, including coordinating directly with an organization that needs volunteers, like Rockville Rainbow Coalition, Manna Food Center, A Wider Circle or Mount Calvary Baptist Church. It was also mentioned that the Senior Center may need help with food distribution or home repairs.
4. Alternative ideas to in person activities could include a citywide initiative to reach a biography about Martin Luther King Jr. to learn more about his legacy.

iii. **Diversity & Inclusion Program**

1. Liaison Hoy notified the group that a Diversity, Inclusion and Equity coordinator is being hired soon, so it might be best to hold the program until the Spring when they can be involved.

C. **Chair Nominations**

- i. Interim Chair Lin reminded everyone that those who are interested in the Chair position should submit a statement of interest. The position has a one-year term and a vote is planned for the October meeting.

V. **Staff Report**

A. **Hate Has No Place Here Resolution**

- i. Liaison Hoy shared that the resolution was passed at the September 13th Mayor and Council meeting and that there is a copy available in the agenda book.

B. **Budget**

- i. Liaison Hoy outlines the Fiscal Year 2022 event funds, including approximately \$12,000 for special events like MLK celebrations, \$5,000 for Pride (and the expectation of fundraising \$5,000), \$2,250 for the multimedia scholarship and \$600 for other events like the NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner. Since no HRC members were able to attend the NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner, there are funds available for future events. It was noted that the City had separately made its own contribution to the Dinner.
- ii. Dates for the Fiscal Year 2023 budget have not been released. Council liaison Myles and staff liaison Hoy will keep the group informed.
- iii.

VI. **Other Committee Reports**

- A. Pride Committee – There were no reported updates.
- B. Current Affairs Committee – Commissioner Rogers provided some current affairs and legislative updates about the Maryland Police Accountability Act. The group discussed efforts to resettle Afghan refugees and Councilmember Myles noted a local home goods donation effort at Walter Reed to support families in need.
- C.

VII. Old Business

A. HRC and HSAC Survey

- i. Chair Lin provided an update on the joint community survey and encouraged another outreach push for participation in the survey.

B. Montgomery County Remembrance and Reconciliation Commission

- i. 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.

VIII. New Business and Announcements

- A. Connor Lee noted that the CAC is currently selecting artists for a public display and they are holding an upcoming listening session with artists to learn how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted artists. The listening session was planned for October 13th and a flier was sent to the commission members.

IX. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.