

City of Pekin Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes February 9th Via Zoom Submitted by Roy Beckham

The regular meeting of the human rights committee is called to order February 9th, 2021 at 6:05pm via Zoom with the following members present: Roy Beckham, Nicholis Hall, Josie Esker, William Calvert, Tonya Calvert and Tonya DeGroot. Heather York, and Sharon Collins joined the meeting in progress. Josie Esker left the meeting in progress.

Members Absent: Sarah Newcomb and Chief John Dossey

I. Welcome

Pledge of allegiance is recited by members of the group.
Tonya DeGroot welcomes the group

II. Correspondence and feedback

A. Public Input.

Hall says he received public input from Zach Getts regarding discussion about the pretrial fairness act. Discussed the purpose of the bill to move Illinois from incarcerating people based on wealth pretrial to moving people into pretrial services with purpose of respecting human rights. Zach says bill will improve oversight and our legal system. Bill also focuses on pretrial fairness.

B. Committee Advisory

Heather supports the passing of pretrial fairness act discussed by Hall.

C. Coalition for Equality (COE)

Beckham introduces Maureen Naughtin, Director of Coalition of Equality along with COE member in attendance Judy Kennedy. April Foster joins later.

Maureen Naughtin thanks the HRC for the opportunity to speak to the group.

Naughtin states the HRC was once known as the Human Rights Commission. Naughtin states the HRC and Coalition for Equality had a long history together. Back in 1989, a group of Pekin residents got together and wanted to do something about the reputation of Pekin. That group became known as the Human Rights Commission. As the group changed and got involved in different activities, the core group became the Coalition for Equality. By 2003, the Coalition for Equality landed at the YWCA. In the meantime, under the direction of Pamela Anderson several years ago, she started the Human Rights Commission back up. Afterwards, the Coalition for Equality and Human Rights Commission worked hand in hand and partnered a bit. However, the difference between the two groups is that the Coalition for Equality is more education based. COE does the Martin Luther King event in January. In 2021, the event went virtual. However, provided books, treats and videos to teachers interested in district 108. COE celebrates black history month in February, Women's history month in March with the Girl Up Club at the High School and Junior High School, does the Stand Against Racism in April, Asian American Pacific Islander in May, Kids Fun Day Partners with the Housing Authority in July, disbursed school supplies with the Housing Authority as well, Participates in the Marigold Festival while embracing the mission of the COE which is eliminating racism and empowering women. September/October, does Latinex, year round does "Feeding Through Reading" in which they focus on all diversity themed books.

Maureen states that she's interested in being apart of the HRC and would like to have someone from the HRC represented on the COE.

Beckham motions to nominate Maureen and Judy as Advisory Committee members. Sharon

Collins seconds the motion. All in favor aye. None opposed.

Maureen welcomes someone from the HRC to join the COE. Hall, DeGroot and Collins state that they're interested in representing the Human Rights Committee at meetings of the Coalition for Equality.

Tonya Calvert thanks Maureen for supplies provided by the COE to her students.

III. Old Business

A. Approval of minutes from January 12th

Motion to approve minutes by Hall, seconded by Beckham. No discussion. All present voted aye. None opposed.

B. Discuss progress on current projects

- **Art Collaboration-City Murals**

Josie states that we're still in the construction phase on getting the project started. States that it could be two years out. Discussion ensues on the location of the proposed project and other possible locations. Not opposed to other locations. Beckham proposes partnering with a business at another location to shorten the timeframe. Hall suggests drafting a letter to send to businesses asking for a possible location of a mural. De Groot suggests posters and banners to raise awareness on certain topics as well. William and Calvert suggests a location downtown. Hall suggests collaboration idea with Beautification committee. Calvert states that we should be clear on the type of mural we'd like to propose within the letter.

- **Podcast-Minute with the Chief- No report.**
- **Town Hall Meetings-Collaboration Pekin Chamber**

Heather York states that she will contact Amy McCoy to follow up.

- **Human Race Festival-Shazam Racing**

Beckham states that he spoke with rep at Running Central that helps with Shazam Racing in Central Illinois. Rep from Shazam Racing provided costs and briefing on the process of collaborating to sponsor a race in Pekin. Beckham shares estimates of cost, benefits and goals of the festival as well. Naughtin shares experience on working with the Diversity Festival and states that the HRC had worked on the diversity festival in Pekin before. Beckham states the HRC could possibly collaborate with the TCRC who held a race before in Pekin. Hall suggests that we also establish purpose and goals of the race whether it's for improving conditions for the homeless or people experiencing poverty or others in need.

IV. New Business

Tonya Calvert mentions the Pekin Outreach Initiative (POI), a new day service for the homeless in Pekin and explains the services and the needs of the POI.

April Foster, from Prairie State Legal Services asked if she could speak. April comments on POI stating that Prairie State Legal, an organization she is apart of will have a presence at POI as well to help clients with legal matters.

Tonya Calvert discusses needs for POI which recently had a ribbon cutting and opening. Maureen says that she's a member of the POI as well and states that Lynn Johnson would be the person to contact. De Groot asked that we ask someone from the POI to come speak with the committee about the POI's needs. Calvert explains that POI is a place that the homeless can come to during the day and handle many issues dealing with hygiene and other issues. William states that it can even be a place to warm up at as well. Calvert suggests that it also needs volunteers and would welcome donations.

Foster explains that transportation is one of the issues many homeless people face. Hall suggests communicating some needs to public officials. Beckham states that the

committee think outside of the box on other ways to help besides monetary. Beckham suggests sponsoring a clearing the closet or garage drive. Sharon advises that coat drives and clothing drives are a good idea to also give to people that may not be at the POI.

- **Reallocated funds/Donation of Mayor Salary to HRC**

Tonya states that the Mayor donated \$20,000 of his salary to the HRC with 1/12 accumulating and available per month.

- **Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget Draft**

Beckham discusses the draft budget displayed on a shared Zoom screen to committee members. Discussed an idea of how much money could be allocated to all of the projects and ideas the committee has expressed sponsoring since the first HRC meeting in 2020. William Calvert expressed that its tough to decide on a budget when none of the events are etched in stone and that many projects are far out from now. Also expressed that Outreach can be higher than \$5,000. Beckham suggests that the idea of the budget discussion is to get the committee to talking about how we'd like to move forward with spending during the fiscal year 2022. Hall suggests that we should have controls and procedures in place before we decide to allocate money to organizations through our outreach initiatives. Hall asks when is money available to spend? Beckham explains the process that the money the Pekin City council reallocated to the HRC is available at \$1,666 per month at the time Mayor Luft would've been paid. Beckham suggests that committee members who are chairing an event or project communicate their results of their due diligence on what their projects/events would cost. Collins volunteers to come up with budget numbers for the Outreach line item with a focus on obtaining IDs for the homeless and other needs. Hall suggests that there are organizations that help the homeless with purchasing IDs and will connect Sharon with that organization. Collin expresses excitement about the budget process. Collins states there are kids in schools that need help as well. Beckham suggests that committee members start as soon as possible on researching possible costs on their projects.

- **Police Shared Principles and Accreditations**

No report as of now in the absence of Chief Dossey.

Hall states that he wanted to know more about the Chief's stance on adopting a law regarding Breonna Taylor which was done by a City Kentucky for Breonna Taylor. Hall makes a motion to table the discussion until the next meeting. All in favor vote aye. None opposed.

- **Pekin Proclamation on African American History Month**

Beckham discusses the City of Pekin's recent proclamation on African American History month with the NAACP Peoria Branch in attendance. States that he has a signed copy and can provide it to the committee. Suggests that we make it a goal to suggest a proclamation every month to recognize a certain group or raise awareness on certain issues.

V. Other business to come before the committee

Hall asks if Naughtin if there is any focus the COE has for next month. Naughtin says that Women History Month is the focus for March. Girl Up is the organization of focus in March. Tonya Calvert suggests that she can invite members from Girl Up to the next meeting. Hall suggests that we need someone at the meeting to receive the proclamation. Naughtin volunteers to draft a proclamation with guidance. Halls states that he can help.

VI. Adjournment

De Groot motions to adjourn. Seconded by Hall. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm. Next Meeting March 9th 2021 at 6pm via Zoom.