

**City of Pekin Human Rights Committee
Minutes December 8, 2020
Submitted by Sarah Newcomb**

Meeting is called to order at 6:04 via Zoom with Tonya Earhart, Stephanie Rhodes, Sarah Newcomb, John Dossey, Sarah Newcomb, Nicholis Hall, Tonya Calvert, Josie Esker and Roy Beckham were present via zoom

Public Input – there was no public input

Committee Advisory – Hall wants the committee to focus its attention on the intention to create policies to recommend to the City Council. He feels the committee was re-launched in response to issues in our nation this year and reminds the committee of its official purpose and goals. Hall would like the committee to look at policies regarding police reform. Heather York joins the meeting. Beckham agrees that we need to focus on the purpose and goals of the committee and thanks Halls for his statements. Beckhams says that de-escalating tactics and other preventions measures were a focus at the first meeting and reiterates his support. York also comments on the need to help Pekin make impactful changes and reform and suggests one long-term project and 2 short-term projects as well. Dossey tells the committee they are working on policy changes as well as getting the Pekin police department accredited. He will bring information back to the HRC once he knows more about the process and timeline. Dossey thinks the short-term goal should be the use-of-force policy updates. He notes the Pekin PD does have early warning procedures and monitors use-of-force issues. Beckham says we are just stating the purpose and goal of the committee and the projects and plans will support the mission. Dossey will look into getting the current policy to the committee. Tonya Calvert joins the meeting.

Approval of minutes from November 10, 2020, Beckham comments that he wants the minutes to include under the social media section that he told the committee that he would ask Nick Fitzanko to help us with the social media and that Nicole does the posting for the City on social media. The Committee decided to continue to research the social media aspect to ensure the committee has control over those accounts until the due diligence is completed. Beckham makes a motion to approve the minutes with his recommendations. Second by Josie, all present voted in approval

Current Projects

Art Collaboration – no updates, Calvert will reach out to another person at the high school as well. Calvert will follow up during the Christmas break with the high school teacher regarding the art and discussion groups. York supports the collaboration and perhaps that can be a long-term goal.

Need Based Drive – Sharon was heading this project up, because City Hall closed to the public, the police department did notify her that the City would not be a drop-off center. Calvert said she reached out to her school regarding the project and received response from the administration and there were concerns about the drop-off issues related to COVID. She may try to do it after Christmas as a winter drive etc, but the students aren't allowed to bring anything in the building at this time. Dossey also explains that there are other issues with homeless and COVID is definitely making it more difficult to have a drive. City employees discuss the families the City employees are sponsoring as well. Hall suggests

coordinating with the United Way to set up collection locations after COVID dies down. Dossey explains the police department is working with some of the social agencies and Newcomb also states the City is looking at re-allocating some CDBG funds to help with warming centers and other needs of social agencies for the homeless and to meet needs within the community

Podcast Dossey says all of the equipment is in and the first topic will be an introduction of the HRC and the committee members should think about topics and who to contact. Newcomb suggest reaching out to the Dirksen Center for one of the first podcasts in the series. Esker suggests that may be a good collaboration with the first podcast as well.

Town Hall Meetings – Beckham talked to York about spearheading these. Beckham said the Pekin Chamber of Commerce will be discussing these topics as well and they are planning to have Big Table meetings according to the contact at the Peoria CEO Council. Beckham suggests reaching out to the Pekin Chamber of Commerce to collaborate and sponsor virtual big table discussions.

Human Race Festival – Beckham states he will try to reach out to the Pekin Chamber but it will not be until the 4th quarter of 2021 probably after the Marigold Festival.

New Business the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month is in January and Nicholis Hall would like to have the Committee suggest a proclamation for the City Council to read into the record at a meeting. Hall explains human trafficking and the Center for Prevention of Abuse will be having events to increase awareness and Hall suggests changing the City Code regarding prostitution and that we should get input from advocates in the community. Dossey makes a motion to create a proclamation in support of the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. All present vote in favor. Beckham says it is important to have conversations about these topics and the terminology related and Hall will reach out to the Center for Prevention of Abuse. Sharon Collins joins the meeting at this time and states she has received many donations for which she shares a video. She will be sending them to the Youth Farm and she and De Groot will be helping feed families at New Testament Fellowship Church in Peoria Christmas Day. She asks about the bikes the City picks up on the streets. Sharon says the kids are ages 13-17. Dossey will reach out and find out how many age appropriate bikes we have. Beckham re-iterates that the city may receive donations for the HRC and suggests the HRC could make a donation to family in need. York agrees that supporting people in need is an option.

Beckham says he will talk to the Mayor about the advisory members.

Next meeting will be January 12, 2021

Adjournment at 7:26

The City of Pekin is a progressive community that recognizes the fundamental equality of all individuals and thus strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all. Pekin welcomes people of varied backgrounds and their contributions to the City –
a community made stronger by the presence of diversity.