

City of Morgantown
Human Rights Commission
Meeting Notes April 17, 2014

Present: Brian Jara
Don Spencer, Chair
Fran Whiteman

Meeting called to order by Don Spencer, Chair, at 6:40 p.m. Mike Fike, Jan Derry and Anne Marie Lofaso as well as Dave Bott and Tim Hairston reported that they would not be able to attend. Due to a lack of a quorum, those present agreed that the meeting would be unofficial, would include no actions, and would be utilized for communication purposes only.

Announcements: Don Spencer reported on the Benedum lecture by Anne Marie Lofaso and made a copy of the program available. The Fair Housing Proclamation presented by City Council and received by Jan Derry was commended. The Commissioners also reviewed the City Home Rule application, the Gay-Straight Alliance information distributed by Fairness WV, and local articles on the human rights need survey prepared by Amanda DeProspero in the DP Goodwill City column and Evelyn Merithew in the DA.

On the matter of the WVU Volunteer Opportunity Survey due the following day, it was decided that no response was possible at the present time even though the volunteers could have been helpful for projects such as survey distribution in recent months.

Minutes of the March HRC Meeting: No action was taken on the minutes for the March meeting.

Progress Reports: No reports were discussed on WVU interns, the upgrade of the City web site or progress, or the WVU Community Human Rights Film Festival.

Human Rights Need Survey: In the absence of Bob Jones, Don Spencer reported that the survey monkey version of the need survey questionnaire has 369 completions and that hard copy surveys continue to be received from neighborhood association meetings. The Commissioners present were concerned about the homogenous profile of survey participants to date and agreed that efforts need to be continued to include greater diversity in respondents. The contact list of partnering organizations was reviewed and updated according to known progress completed.

Don Spencer presented a list of neighborhood association meetings and contacts for the month of April. Continued contact with neighborhoods is underway. Fran Whiteman agreed to represent the Commission at the South Park meeting. Three neighborhoods have postponed meetings until May. The Commissioners discussed the possibility of extending the survey period from April 30 until May 15. Don Spencer agreed to make

contact with Bob Jones to determine if the extended schedule would create difficulties for his contacts that have planned to work on data processing and analysis.

It was agreed that a re-profiling of the contacts with partners would be useful for all Commission members. Spencer agreed to provide the new format.

New Business: On the matter of Home Rule options in human rights, there was consensus that the Commission could not responsibly prepare a human rights option for the May 2014 deadline for the City's Home Rule application but that consideration could be given for any future submission.

The possibility of recommending a history of civil rights course at WVU was considered. Brian Jara agreed to explore the current status of such course availability.

The matter to generating annual membership profiles for city boards and commissions was introduced.

Docket, Calendar, Commissioner Reports and "Tools": Brian Jara reported on the City and University plans for applying to the National Safety Council for a grant to address injury prevention through the Safe Communities America Program. He agreed to provide additional updates at the next HRC meeting.

The matter of the human rights impact of the cuts projected in the House of Representative budget was also discussed. Don Spencer agreed to draft a letter which the Commission could send - after full Commission review - to the City Council on the matter.

The next meeting will be held on May 15, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p. m.