

AN ORDINANCE BY THE CITY OF MORGANTOWN AMENDING SECTIONS 153.01, 153.02, 153.04, 153.05, 153.07, AND 153.08 OF ITS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE, AS THE SAME APPLIES TO THE CITY OF MORGANTOWN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION.

The City of Morgantown hereby ordains that Sections 153.01, 153.02, 153.04, 153.05, 153.07, and 153.08 of its Administrative Code are amended as follows: (new matter underlined, deleted matter struck through):

153.01 DECLARATION OF POLICY.

In order to build an inclusive community, the City will dedicate deliberate and continuous attention to the human relations and human rights of its residents and visitors.

It is the public policy of the City to provide all of its residents equal opportunity for participation in local governance, employment, equal access to places of public accommodations and equal opportunity in the sale, purchase, lease, rental and financing of housing accommodations or real property. Equal opportunity in the areas of employment, public accommodations, housing accommodations or real property is hereby declared to be a human right or civil right of all persons without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness or handicap.

The denial of these rights to properly qualified persons by reason of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness, handicap or familial status is contrary to the principles of freedom and quality of opportunity and is destructive to a free and democratic society.

This City policy is based on the recognition and vision that the diversity found in our city brings forth richness in our community, a greater understanding of our world, a multitude of talent to benefit collective needs, and an opportunity for enhanced living and learning for all. Inherent in this policy is a commitment to encourage and endeavor to bring about equal opportunity, mutual understanding and respect for persons of all ages, abilities, ancestry, blindness, color, disability or handicap, ethnicities, familial status, national origins, sex, sexual orientations, races, religion and other backgrounds or orientations.

153.02 DEFINITIONS.

When used in this article:

- (a) "Person" means one or more individuals, partnerships, associations, organizations, corporations, labor organizations, cooperatives, legal representatives, trustees, trustees in bankruptcy, receivers and other organized groups of persons;

- (b) "Commission" means the Human Rights Commission of the City.
- (c) "Inclusive City" and "Inclusive Community" as used in this ordinance, shall mean the same thing, e.g., a city that helps people thrive by: supporting hospitality; welcoming diversity; promoting civility; promoting safe, affordable dwellings; enabling participation in community, services, and local government; supporting fairness in access to opportunities and services; reducing violence; supporting social justice; encouraging awareness and understanding of opportunities/limitations; making residents aware of the West Virginia Human Rights Commission; and working for a more sustainable community for present and future citizens.
- (e) (d) "Discriminate" or "discrimination" means to exclude from, or fail or refuse to extend to, a person equal opportunities in employment, public accommodations, housing, or other real property transactions because of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness, disability, sexual orientation or familial status. Discriminate includes to separate or segregate based on any of these characteristics;
- (d) (e) "Race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness, handicap or disability, and familial status" are defined herein to be equivalent to the definitions in the West Virginia Human Rights Act, Code 5-11-3;
- (e) (f) "Sexual orientation" means having a preference for heterosexuality, homosexuality, being transgendered, or bisexuality, having a history of such preference or being identified with such preference.
- (g) "National League of Cities" means the National League of Cities and its various institutes and programs which relate to diversity in municipal populations throughout the United States and to efforts to support development of more equitable and sustainable communities.
- (h) "Neighborhood Coordinating Council" means the inter-neighborhood entity established by the City in 2005 to facilitate information exchange between the City administration and neighborhoods and among neighborhood organizations within the City.
- (i) "Sister City Program" means a national intercultural exchange program established in 1956 to promote global cooperation and intercultural understanding at the municipal level; stimulate connections, competitiveness and collaboration as well as development in a global market; and support citizen diplomacy on the part of individuals of all ages. The City of Morgantown has established a Sister Cities Commission to support its Sister City relationships established since 1978.

- (j) “Martin Luther King Day” celebrations means special observances related to the national holiday to celebrate respect for individuals of all backgrounds and origin.
- (k) “Teen Court” program means the Teen Court Program established by resolution August 2007.
- (l) “Youth Commission” means the Youth Commission of the City established by ordinance.

153.03 CITY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ESTABLISHED.

There is hereby established in the City a Human Rights Commission.

153.04 COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP.

The Human Rights Commission shall consist of ~~eleven~~ seven members to be appointed by the ~~Mayor with the approval of City Council.~~ The ~~nine~~ members, ~~who are not West Virginia University students,~~ shall be residents of and in the City. ~~And shall serve for terms of three years. Of those nine non-West Virginia University student members, one member shall be a member in good standing on the City Board of Realtors; one shall be a member in good standing in a labor union; one shall be a member in good standing in the area of Chamber of Commerce; one shall be a member in good standing in the County Teachers Association; and one shall be a member in good standing in the County Ministerial Association. In addition to the foregoing nine members there shall be two West Virginia University students on the Commission who shall each serve one year terms.~~ The Commission may appoint, with the approval of City Council, ex-officio members who shall have the privilege of participation without the right to vote.

~~The members of the Commission in office of the Human Relations Commission on the date this section takes effect shall, unless sooner removed, continue to serve but shall be known as Human Rights commissioners until their respective terms expire and until their successors have been appointed and have qualified. All respective terms shall commence on October 8. Upon the expiration of the terms specified herein, all subsequent appointments shall be for a term of three years each. All vacancies shall be filled, as provided for herein, for the unexpired term thereof.~~

Commissioners shall serve for two-year terms beginning with the first meeting after the beginning of the municipal fiscal year. Four of the first seven members shall be appointed to serve terms of two years, while three shall be appointed to serve terms of one year. Thereafter, terms of office for all commissioners will be staggered with two-year terms. Members may be reappointed to subsequent two-year terms.

153.05 OFFICERS.

~~The membership of the Human Rights Commission shall select a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer.~~

Officers: The officers of the Human Rights Commission shall be a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary. The Chairperson shall serve as the liaison to the City administration.

Appropriation of Funds: City Council may appropriate any funds that it deems necessary to carry out any of the proposals set forth by the Human Rights Commission. The Commission, with the approval of Council, may apply for State and Federal financial aid in grants or other forms of financial assistance through the City Administration to assist in carrying out any approved plans or projects.

Fiscal Responsibilities: The Human Rights Commission shall not have the authority to maintain any independent banking or other financial account. Any such account, if requested, shall be maintained by the City Manager.

153.06 MEETINGS, BYLAWS, AND RULES.

The Human Rights Commission shall meet as often as is deemed necessary by its members, upon call of the chairman. The Commission shall adopt its own bylaws and rules, subject only to the action of Council.

153.07 COMMISSION STATUS AND OBJECTIVES.

The Commission shall encourage and endeavor to bring about mutual understanding and respect among all racial, religious and ethnic groups within the City; and shall strive to eliminate all discrimination in employment and places of public accommodations by virtue of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness, sexual orientation or disability, and shall strive to eliminate all discrimination in the sale, purchase, lease, rental or financing of housing and other real property by virtue of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness, sexual orientation or disability.

In addition, the purpose of the Commission shall be to:

- (a) Work to make Morgantown an inclusive city.
- (b) Collaborate with the National League of Cities, West Virginia University, Monongalia County Commission and other partners as appropriate to encourage leadership in helping attain inclusivity in the City and its larger community.
- (c) Assess needs and identify barriers towards becoming a more inclusive community. Establish goals and objectives for sustaining welcoming

- environments, enhancing global awareness, and promoting optimum opportunities for supporting safe housing and thriving people.
- (d) Support as well as plan, publicize, implement, and evaluate programs, services and activities which promote appreciation for all peoples and the personal worth of every individual.
- (e) Enlist the cooperation of civic, community, corporate, educational, ethnic, health care, labor, racial, religious, social justice or other identifiable groups of the City in programs and services devoted to the advancement of tolerance, communication and understanding, and equal protection of the laws of all groups and people.

153.08 POWERS; FUNCTIONS; SERVICES.

The Commission has the right and duty to communicate with City Council and to present to Council any issues that it has investigated pursuant to this Article.

The Commission is hereby authorized and empowered:

- (a) To cooperate and work with federal, state and local government officers, units, activities and agencies in the promotion and attainment of more harmonious understanding and greater equality of rights between and among all racial religious and ethnic groups in this City.
- (b) To enlist the cooperation of racial, religious and ethnic units, community and civic organizations, industrial and labor organizations and other identifiable groups of the City in programs and campaigns devoted to the advancement of tolerance, understanding and the equal protection of the laws of all groups and people.
- (c) To hold and conduct public hearings or meetings relating to any and all types of discrimination. These hearings shall be of a non-adjudicatory nature and shall not constitute investigations or adjudication of individual complaints regarding unlawful discrimination under the West Virginia Human Rights Act 5-11-1 et. seq.
- (d) To refer any individual or group complaint regarding alleged acts of unlawful discrimination to the West Virginia Human Rights Commission for investigation and adjudication.
- (e) To recommend to Council policies, procedures, practices and legislation in matter and questions affecting human rights. Study problems and needs related to inclusivity in the City and make specific recommendations to the City Manager and to the City Council and other partners as pertinent.
- (f) To prepare a written report on its work, functions and services for each year ending on June 30 and to deliver copies thereof to Council on or before December 1 next thereafter.
- (g) To do all other acts and deeds necessary and proper to carry out and accomplish effectively the objectives, functions and services contemplated by the provisions of this article, including the promulgation of rules and regulations implementing the powers and authority hereby vested in the Commission.

- (h) To create such advisory agencies within the City as in its judgment will aid in effectuating the purpose of this article; to study the problem of discrimination in all or specific fields or instances of discrimination because of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, blindness or handicap; to foster, through community effort or otherwise, goodwill, cooperation and conciliation among the groups and elements of the population of the City and to make the recommendations to the Commission for the development of policies and procedures, and for programs of formal and informal education, which the Commission may recommend to the appropriate City agency. Such advisory agencies shall be composed of representative residents serving without pay. The Commission may itself make the studies and perform the acts authorized by this subsection. It may, by voluntary conferences with parties in interest, endeavor to eliminate discrimination in all stated fields and to foster goodwill and cooperation among all elements of the population of the City.
- (i) To accept contributions from any person to assist in the effectuation of the purposes of this section and to see and enlist the cooperation of private, charitable, religious, labor and civic and benevolent organizations for the purposes of this section.
- (j) To issue such publications and such results of investigation and research as in its judgement will tend to promote goodwill and minimize or eliminate discrimination; however, the identity of the parties involved shall not be disclosed.
- (k) Advise, consult with, and inform the City Manager on any matter pertaining to inclusivity in the City.
- (l) Support and develop program initiatives to promote residents' awareness and knowledge of both opportunities to increase inclusivity and current barriers which limit community inclusiveness and long-term sustainability.
- (m) Learn about best practices for addressing issues.
- (n) Create and implement an inclusive community plan for the City which increases public awareness of issues; promotes education and understanding, provides, enables, or enhances services; articulates planned collaboration; and promotes public participation.
- (o) Review City plans and policies which contain matters relating to inclusivity.
- (p) Use media and the Internet to frame and convey information about issues, public programs, and service opportunities.

153.09 COMPLAINTS; PROCEDURES.

The Commission shall inform any individual claiming to be aggrieved by an alleged unlawful discriminatory practice under West Virginia Human Rights Act 5-11-9 that the Commission does not have the power to accept formal complaints of illegal practices. Any individual claiming to be so aggrieved shall be referred to the West Virginia Human Rights Commission for investigation and adjudication of the complaint.

This Ordinance shall be effective upon date of adoption.

FIRST READING:

MAYOR

ADOPTED:

FILED:

CITY CLERK

RECORDED: