

Montgomery County Government
Office of Human Rights
21 Maryland Ave.
Suite 330
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Meeting Minutes
of the
Human Rights Commission
Of 2012

Staff Liaison: Anis Ahmed
Contact: 240-777-8454
anis.ahmed@montgomerycountymd.gov

**Human Rights Commission
Montgomery County Office of Human Rights
21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, Maryland 20850**

Draft HRC Meeting Minutes: November 26, 2012.

Meeting Place: 21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, Maryland 20850.

Commissioners Attended: Russell Campbell (Chairman), Judge William England (Vice Chair), Barron Oakcrum, Betsy Jett, Doug Ryan, Dr. Jeremiah Floyd, Dr. Sajjad Durrani, Selena Singleton, Stacey Ormsby (via phone); Stephanie Mason, Terry Vann and Tina Patterson;

Commissioners Absent: Dr. Suresh Gupta; Matthew Murguia

Commissioners Excused Absent: Ruth Martin;

Staff attended: Director James Stowe, Loretta Garcia, Compliance Manager and Anis Ahmed, Staff Liaison;

Guest Speakers: Robert Kauffman

Guest: Jackie Simon.

1. Call to order:

- **Meeting:** Chairman Russell Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.
- **Agenda:** Committee approved meeting Agenda with several amendments.
An revised agenda was provided to the Commission for the business of their meeting.
- **Minutes:** Commission approved minutes of October 24, 2012 meeting with minor amendments.

2. Chairman's Report:

Hall of Fame event:

- He stated that the Hall of Fame event was a great success. Eight highly regarded individual of diverse background were inducted with certificates, citations from Governor and medals.
- County Executive Isiah Leggett, Council Member George Leventhal and several dignitaries attended the event and delivered speeches praising the inductees for their human rights services to the communities;
- This HOF event was highlighted by a video presentation and on time starting amid Hurricane Sandy warning;
- This event was well attended especially from citizens from diverse groups and Human Rights commissioners;
- The event concluded on time followed by a reception.
- Chairman thanked HOF committee members, commissioners and Office of Human Rights staff for arranging, organizing and hosting the successful event;

Immigration Forum:

- The Chair reported that the public forum on Immigration was also a successful event;
- County Executive Isiah Leggett, Council Member Valerie Ervin, Hans Rainer, Maryland State Delegate Hon. Ana Sol Gutierrez, Hon. Tom Hucker, several dignitaries and People from a cross section of the community attended the forum;
- He thanked Commissioner Selena Singleton, her sub-committee members for arranging an wonderful public forum on Immigration;
- The event was concluded by questions and answers followed by a reception;
- He also thanked Commissioner Barron Oakcrum for taking a lead as moderator, other commissioners, Director James Stowe and his staff for organizing this event;

3. Guest Speaker: Robert Kauffman, Associate Director, Government Affairs, Maryland-National Capital Building Industry Association:

Director James Stowe introduced Robert Kauffman to the commissioners. Mr. Kauffman is a member of the construction and design industry and a pioneer in the “Visitability” concept and fighting for the disabled community to have access to the residential units and as the same time making such units marketable to all consumers . Director Stowe thanked Mr. Kauffman for his presence and asked him to deliver his presentation.

Mr. Kauffman presented the followings:

- Every home building has two phases to complete before it is handed over to the buyer. These are coordinated by the Developer and Builder.
- A Developer develops land with the requirements of the future owners or builders. Id.
- A Builder builds home according to the buyer or market demand.
- Both Developers and Builders should complied with Federal, State and County laws and regulations while developing and building home. Some Builders are committed to at least build two types of homes for the disabled market , Homes providing Visibility and Livability.
- However, Developers needs to develop land for the builders to build homes for “accessibility” and “visitability” populations. Land development costs increases when they have to develop land for the visitabilty market than regular livable homes.
- According to Maryland State Law, builders that build homes for more than 50 dwelling units should offer 10% of the total units to that are accessible to disability market.
- Usually townhouses are not built for the visitability market. However, most multifamily units are built for visitability markets rather than livable.
- ADA laws and regulations are applied for the multi-unit dwellings, but the laws has nothing to do with single houses;
- Permit fees to the County Government for building homes has significantly increased than before. Now, builders have to pay \$40,000.00 to the County Government as permit fee for each single house they built in Montgomery County.
- Mr. Kauffman requested the commission to support and send recommendation to the County Executive and Council for reduction of permit fees for developing and building dwelling houses in Montgomery County;

Discussion:

Chairman Russell Campbell requested Mr. Kauffman to provide documents and materials to the commission in support of his request.

4. Director's Report: James L. Stowe:

- CERB evaluation by the Commission is overdue. He urged commission to form a 3 member committee to prepare a report.
- Minutes of the Commission's last retreat is also overdue. He urged Commissioners to consider a date for the next retreat.
- Craig Brieske is on board as a contract employee now;
- Five existing commissioners have filed application to continue serving in the Human Rights Commission.
- County Executive Office of Board Commission and Committee will send recommendation to the County council for approval of the renewal applications;
- He again urged commissioners who have not done yet taken photographs to do so by making their own arrangements with the county photographer;

Discussions and Decisions:

- Chairman mentioned that out of 7 proposals at the retreat 3 were considered for the action plan;
- Commissioners Terry Vann, Jeremiah Floyd and Stephanie Mason consented to develop the report for the CERB; They will meet on Monday, December 3, 2012 from 12 noon to 3pm at the Office of Human Rights to complete the report;

5. Other Business: Obituary on Late Oliver Brown:

- Commission is deeply shocked by the news of sudden death of Mr. Oliver Brown, chairman, Inter-Agency Fair Housing Group Committee (IAFHGC);
- Director Stowe described in short about the late Oliver Brown and his contribution and services to the community in various capacities including as a former county employee and chairman of the IAFHGC;
- A motion moved by Commissioner Sajjad Durrani and seconded by Commissioner Barron Oakcrum to send a condolence letter to the mother or fiancée of the late Oliver Brown on behalf of the commission. The Commission approved the motion unanimously;

6. Old Business: Immigration Forum

- Commissioner Singleton thanked everybody to make the event a great success.
- Chairman wanted to know what is the next step about the information received at the forum;
- Commissioner Mason wanted to know on how to get feedback from the attendees;
- Commissioner Vann stated that the forum topic was an educational one and will take times to get feedback from the attendees;

7. Committee Reports:

Meeting has decided to the changes in Commission's representations upon the consent of commissioners:

- Commissioner Betsy Jett will represent the Commission to the County Community Action Board;
- Commissioner Tina Patterson will represent Commission to the County Commission on Disability;

- a) **COHV: No report was made due to the absence of commissioner Matthew Murguia;**
- b) **CAB: Commissioner William England:**
 - He reported about the last Community Action Board meeting where he attended as a representative of commission.
 - The CAB had an important discussion on Hunger in Montgomery County. Commissioner England handed over Copies of the discussion on the said topic to Loretta Garcia for making more copies and disseminations to other Commissioners on a later date.
- c) **IAFHHC: Commissioner Jeremiah Floyd:** He could not submit any report since no meeting was held due to lack of absences of most of the committee members;
- d) **CRB: Loretta Garcia, Compliance Manager:** She reported the following:
 - i) Current caseload: 168,
 - ii) New intake: 24,
 - iii) Case accepted from intake: 3,
 - iv) Mediation: 10,
 - v) Cases with investigators: 88,
 - vi) Management review: 24,
 - vii) Awaiting Director's final review: 2
 - viii) Post Determination: 19,
 - ix) Cases close in Fiscal Year: 38;

8. New Business: Following issues were mentioned to the commission as new business:

- Director Stowe mentioned that new regulations for mediation requirements has been drafted by Mr. Michael Dennis. The draft proposal will be sent to the County Executive's office and to the County Council for approval after being reviewed by the OHR management team;
- Director Stowe mentioned that he had a meeting with Director and other officials of the County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) on how to conduct Rental Survey. He will update the commission at the next meeting after completing follow-up meeting with the DHCA on this issue;
- December 4, 2012 is set for the proclamation declaration by the County Council in commemoration of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The event will take place at the Council's morning session. He urged commissioners to attend the event.

9. Announcements:

- Dr. Martin Luther King Breakfast meeting will be held on January 19, 2013 at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, Rockville, Maryland. Two tables were allotted for the Human Right Commission, Committee on Hate Violence and Office of Human Rights. Director urged commissioner to reserve seats as soon as possible;
- Office of Human Rights will host a Holiday Party in collaboration with Department of Public Library, GIS and other offices of this building. He urged commissioners to attend the celebration and bring a dish to share with others;

10. No Meeting in December, 2012:

Motion:

A motion brought by Chairman Russell Campbell and seconded by Commissioner Sajjad Durrani to not have the Commission's monthly meeting in December 2012 due to the conflicts of government holidays; Motion was passed unanimously;

Decision:

There will be no monthly Commission's meeting in December 2012.

11. Meeting Adjourned: at 9:34pm.

12. Minutes: Prepared by Anis Ahmed, Staff Liaison, OHR.

Next meeting will be held on Monday, January 28, 2013 at 7:00pm