

**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 9, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.**

**THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY. LIVE STREAM AVAILABLE AT:
www.cityblm.org/live**

Prior to 15 minutes before the start of the meeting, 1) those persons wishing to provide public comment or testify at the meeting must register at www.cityblm.org/register, and/or 2) those persons wishing to provide written comment must email their comments to publiccomment@cityblm.org.

Due to current COVID-19 mitigations, the public will not be allowed to physically attend the meeting at City Hall.

The rules for participation and attendance may be subject to change due to changes in law or to executive orders relating to the COVID-19 pandemic occurring after the publication of this agenda. Changes will be posted at www.cityblm.org/register.

I. Call to Order -Roll Call of Attendance:

Commissioners Present: Commissioners, McGinnis, Smith, Jones, Ajayi, Konam

Staff Present: Michael Hurt and Nikita Richards

II. Public Comment- None

III. Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Jones motioned to approve the minutes for November 2020. Seconded by Commissioner Konam. All in favor. Motion Carried.

IV. Agenda Items

a. Nikita Richards was introduced as the new Community Relations Manager & Staff Liaison.

V. Old Business

a. Minority Registration Ordinance language –

Mr. Hurt reported that he spoke with Deputy City Manager and that a date to meet is scheduled for next week.

Commissioners offered suggestions for next steps. Commissioner Ajayi asked that staff liaisons hold the City accountable. Commissioner Ajayi was encouraged, as a Commissioner to contact Deputy City Manager Tyus directly to move next steps along.

Ms. Richards offered her email address (nrichards@cityblm.org) so that commissioners can reach her.

b. Divest/Invest next steps - Discussion of HRC position statement, future public forums, other options:

Commissioner Ajayi expressed his disappointment with the direction in which the conversation went previously. He would like the HRC to lead discussions concerning policing our community and work on developing communication between various stake holders. He states that the first forum was poorly attended, suggested that a second forum is a possibility, and discussed who should be invited.

Commissioner Jones suggested that the HRC develop a plan to obtain community feedback to assess where residents stand on the issue of community policing, divesting and investing and other issues concerning residents. This data would be used to understand better, what the community wants and help us with next steps.

Commissioner McGinnis states that we need more input from the community, yes, but we also need to let the community know that we are here. He would like the HRC to develop an outreach program to address a number of community issues; including housing.

Ms. Richards will provide the commission with suggestions for increasing awareness about the HRC.

Commissioner Ajayi made a motion to plan for a second forum, inviting the mayor of Bloomington, Bloomington Chief of Police, McLean County Sheriff, a representative from the IL State Police, Black Lives Matter, NAACP, Multicultural Leadership Program, Democratic Socialist of America, McLean County Democratic Party and McLean County Republican Party at a bare minimum.

Seconded by Commissioner Konam.

Discussion: Commissioner Jones suggested that we also invite groups that directly impact Black men; such as 100 Black Men and fraternities. There was clarification that the invitation for other groups and individuals is open.

McGinnis: Abstain

Konam: Yea

Jones: Yea

Ajayi: Yea

Smith: Yea

Motion carried.

c. List of minority businesses -

Commissioner Jones reports that there are 56 businesses listed in the directory that was developed in June 2020. There are no construction companies listed.

VI. New Business-

- a. 45th Annual MLK Awards – need to determine winners. Commissioner discussed the process for reviewing nominations and selecting winners.
- b. Juneteenth 2021 – Council member Mboka joined the meeting. Explained his vision for the celebration (parade, concert, sponsors and partnership with the Bloomington - Normal Black History Project) and the importance of celebrating this part of history, while affirming that Black lives matter. Mboka stressed the need to reach out to Willie Halbert and Arlene Hosea.

Commissioner Jones made a motion to move forward with a partnership with the Bloomington Normal Black History Project to plan Juneteenth.

Commissioner Ajayi made a friendly amendment to establish a subcommittee made up of Commissioner Jones and Ajayi, working with Ms. Richards for the planning of Juneteenth.

Commissioner Jones accepted the amendment. Commissioner

Seconded by Commissioner McGinnis. All in favor. Motion Carried.

- c. Discussion planning date for 2021- to address items that the commission should be addressing of the upcoming year. . Commission decided to share their suggestions with Ms. Richards, then prioritize the list in between monthly meetings.

Commissioner Ajayi made the motion. Seconded by Commissioner McGinnis. All in favor. Motion Carried.

- d. Minority voter registration drive – Commissioner Ajayi will submit this as a goal for 2021 to Ms. Richards.

VII. Next Scheduled Meeting Date: January 14, 2021

VIII. Adjournment: 7:29 pm