



APPROVED

**CITY OF YPSILANTI
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 2016
7:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Benjamin Elmgren	Absent
Claudia Pettit	Present
Krista Nordberg	Present
Jennifer Symanns	Present (left 8:25 p.m.)
Sue Melke	Present (left 8:03 p.m.)
Theresa Saunders	Present
John Shuler, Chair	Present

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Symanns moved, seconded by Commissioner Melke to approve the agenda.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the agenda was approved as submitted.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

– October 26, 2015

Commissioner Pettit moved, seconded by Commissioner Melke to approve the minutes.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

None

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

— Election of Commission Chair.

Commissioner Symanns moved, seconded by Commissioner Saunders, to nominate Commissioner Shuler as the HRC Chair.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and Commissioner Shuler was elected chair.

— City of Ypsilanti Boards/Commission Application.

Commissioner Shuler stated during the October meeting this item was tabled after thorough discussion.

Commissioner Melke responded the item was tabled because there was a question about minors being able to sit on City Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Saunders added another question posed is if individuals without citizenship could serve on City Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Melke replied the Commission was informed that individuals were required to be electors in order to be eligible.

Commissioner Schuler responded if board and commission members are required to be electors that would prohibit either minors or non-citizens from serving.

Commissioner Shuler asked if it would be useful for one or two minors to act as non-voting members of certain Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Melke responded she would prefer that minors be allowed a vote on Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Shuler responded the law prohibits minors from acting as voting members of municipal boards and commissions.

Commissioner Saunders stated she supports a student voice on certain Boards and Commissions. Ms. Saunders said if there are two youth advisors one could be selected from Eastern Michigan University and the other from the high schools. Ms. Saunders added if two high school students would serve as advisors one could be selected from Willow Run and the other from Ypsilanti High.

Commissioner Shuler responded Willow Run is not in the City limits.

Commissioner Saunders responded Ypsilanti residents do attend both schools.

Commissioner Shuler stated the Human Relations Commission's authority is restricted to the City.

Commissioner Saunders responded the student advisors would not be voting members of a board or commission.

Commissioner Shuler said the requirement should be based on residency rather than what high school they attend.

Commissioner Pettit stated there are residents who are in the Ann Arbor school district which raises another question.

Commissioner Shuler asked is the point of having a youth advisor on a board or commission to have a voice from the school or is it to have the voice of a youth.

Commissioner Pettit replied the intention is to have a youth voice and it should not matter what high school they attend.

Commissioner Shuler asked that the Commission examine what other City Boards and Commissions would benefit from youth advisors.

Commissioner Melke stated she would prefer the Commission table this item until the February meeting in order to be better prepared to make a decision.

Commissioner Shuler agreed.

Commissioner Symanns added the challenge is that one or two people are being asked to represent the entire youth demographic of the City.

Commissioner Symanns moved, seconded by Commissioner Saunders to table this item until the February meeting.

On a voice, the motion carried, and the item was tabled.

- Discrimination clause, including undocumented residents and non US residents with legal status.

Commissioner Melke stated she would like to examine the policy further before making a decision.

Commissioner Symanns added former Commissioner Martha Valadez rewrote the City's current policy.

Commissioner Melke volunteered to make the additional changes to the policy and submit it to the Commission during the next meeting.

Commissioner Symanns moved, seconded by Commissioner Melke, to table the item until the February meeting.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the item was tabled.

- Indigenous People Day Proclamation.

Commissioner Shuler stated this item was spearheaded by former Commissioner Martha Valadez who has since moved to California. Mr. Shuler stated he has a counter proposal to Ms. Valadez's. Mr. Shuler summarized that the proposal is to hold Indigenous Peoples Day on the second Monday in November. Mr. Shuler said this would coincide with National Native American Month.

Commissioner Saunders responded the initial intention was to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day.

Commissioner Melke added she is in support of replacing Columbus Day and sees replacing the holiday with Indigenous People's Day as a symbolic gesture.

Commissioner Symanns responded she sees the counter proposal as more inclusive and less divisive.

Commissioner Pettit stated both Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County have approved resolutions replacing Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day. Ms. Pettit added those jurisdictions made the decision to replace the holiday based off of actions of Ypsilanti and the Commission might want to consider that.

Commissioner Saunders stated she is not in support of condemning Columbus Day and prefers that this process be positive.

Commissioner Melke stated many communities have replaced Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day.

Commissioner Nordberg stated it was her understanding that the intention of Indigenous People's Day was to replace Columbus Day, however, the City does not observe Columbus Day and sees this as a moot point.

Commissioner Symanns stated she does not want a resolution drafted by the HRC to be hostile.

Commissioner Norberg responded the resolution does not need to be hostile but Indigenous People's Day could be scheduled on the same day as Columbus Day.

Commissioner Shuler stated he would vote against this resolution if it would replace Columbus Day.

Commissioner Pettit stated the Mayor is expecting the resolution drafted by the HRC will have Indigenous People's Day replace Columbus Day.

Commissioner Shuler responded it should not matter what the Mayor expects what matters is that the HRC does not franchise one group while disenfranchising another.

Commissioner Symanns stated she would examine what other jurisdictions have done and report to the HRC during the February meeting.

Commissioner Saunders stated if there are only five indigenous people living in the community it is difficult to have a rationale for a day.

Commissioner Symanns responded this community is rich in Native American history.

Commissioner Shuler added there was a side conversation during the last meeting that discussed identifying burial grounds and memorializing those areas of the City. Mr. Shuler said in his proposed resolution there is discussion about information in the library focused on Native American History in Ypsilanti.

Commissioner Symanns responded that is an argument for having Indigenous Peoples Day in the National Native American Month so the day can coincide with other things happening in the City regarding Native Americans. Ms. Symanns added to her this day is about honoring the heritage of this area.

Commissioner Shuler stated the City could put monuments in place on significant Native American sites throughout the City on Indigenous Peoples Day.

Commissioner Saunders stated the holiday can be titled whatever the Commission wishes it does not necessarily need to be called Indigenous Peoples Day.

— Communication Policy.

Commissioner Saunders moved, seconded by Commissioner Pettit to table this item.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the item was tabled.

— Community/Police relationships.

Commissioner Shuler stated the Task Force is currently amending the complaint process and Policy 16 of the Police Department, which dictates how police complaints are processed. Mr. Shuler said Task Force is also examining the possibility of creating a citizen review board to review police complaints. Mr. Shuler stated the intent is to draft a memo regarding the items mentioned and submit it to the HRC for approval. Mr. Shuler added because two members of the Task Force are no longer on the Commission the HRC will need to appoint another member to the Task Force.

Commissioner Saunders responded she was the alternate to former Commissioner Scott and will take her place until a replacement can be selected.

Commissioner Shuler stated during the January meeting of the Task Force a presentation of a draft report provided by Radical Washtenaw (RAW). Mr. Shuler stated the presentation discussed failure to appear bench warrant arrests however, the data was incomplete.

Commissioner Saunders agreed.

Commissioner Shuler added he spoke with Council Member Robb, another member of the Task Force, he felt that this matter should be examined by the HRC and not the Task Force. Mr. Shuler added that he will contact Radical Washtenaw to complete the report and present it to the Commission.

— Approve 2016 Human Relations Commission Schedule

Commissioner Nordberg moved, seconded by Commissioner Saunders, to approve the 2106 Human Relations Commission Schedule.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the schedule was approved.

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

None

VIII. PROPOSED BUSINESS

- Ypsilanti as a sanctuary city.
- Resolution requesting City Council draft a Proclamation honoring former HRC Commissioner Darlene Scott.

IV. NEXT MEETING DATE

- February 22, 2016

X. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Nordberg moved, seconded by Commissioner Pettit, to adjourn the meeting.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.