



APPROVED

**CITY OF YPSILANTI
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, January 23, 2017
7:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Krista Nordberg	Present
Jennifer Symanns	Absent
Theresa Saunders	Present
John Shuler	Present
Tanasia Morton	Present
Sammy Jones-Darling	Absent
Amber Fellows	Present
D'Real Graham	Present

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Saunders moved, seconded by Commission Morton to approve the agenda.

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

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

– November 28, 2016

Commissioner Morton moved, seconded by Commissioner Nordberg to approve the minutes.

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

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

1. Libby Hunter, Ann Arbor resident, stated she brought an article regarding community control over police surveillance. She said there are communities throughout the country supporting this movement. She said Chief DeGiusti wrote a response to the Bench Warrant report from Radical Washtenaw, and the response was unsatisfactory and misleading. The response to one of the points in the report was "if you want to

reduce bench warrants, increase the bond so people are held until their court date". She said the response was cynical and heinous. She stated the Department of Justice has warned municipalities that practice is unconstitutional.

Commissioner Shuler asked what the date of the Chief's response was. Ms. Hunter responded she was not certain of the exact date. Mr. Shuler asked if the response was recent. Ms. Hunter replied the bench warrant report was made some time in 2016. Commissioner Graham stated the report was made in year ago in spring.

Ms. Hunter stated her third point was regarding the recent SWAT Team shooting. She said the Radical Washtenaw website includes question regarding that shooting. There has been a lack of detail released about the shooting which raises a red flag, as the police will not hold back details long if they are favorable.

Commissioner Shuler asked for clarification about the shooting. Ms. Hunter responded there is very little known about the shooting, but it was a barricade situation in which the Washtenaw Metro SWAT Team was deployed. Commissioner Graham added the shooting occurred on Lowell St. Ms. Hunter added the Michigan State Police are currently investigating the shooting. She said Radical Washtenaw has several question it would like answered about the shooting and the purpose of a SWAT Team. She added the public should not have to wait this long to be provided answers.

Commissioner Shuler stated recently he spoke with Council Member Robb who informed him a former intern with the police department was compiling data to respond to the Bench Warrant report. However, the work the intern provided was poor and the department is attempting to identify the next step to compile the data. Ms. Hunter replied the Chief is paid a decent salary and he could conceivably complete that task. Mr. Shuler responded if the Chief has time to compile the data he could. Commissioner Graham added the Chief would also need to possess the skillset to compile the data.

Commissioner Nordberg asked for a summary of the surveillance article. Ms. Hunter responded there is a nationwide concern about police surveillance and communities want to control that surveillance.

VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

— Committee Membership – Youth Members

Commissioner Shuler said the City Attorney sees no barrier to putting non-voting members on the HRC. Mr. Shuler stated the Attorney did say the HRC could change its bylaws to allow for youth members, except this Commission does not have bylaws. Interim City Clerk Hellenga responded the rules governing this body are included in the City Charter and the Code of Ordinances. He said he will need to follow-up with the Attorney's Office for clarification. Mr. Shuler asked if the HRC could, by resolution, add non-voting youth

membership and forward that to Council for resolution. Mr. Hellenga responded he would ask the Attorney's Office for its opinion.

Commissioner Fellows asked if the Commissions that include youth members is written in their bylaws. Mr. Hellenga responded the only two Commissions that have youth membership are included in the Ordinances that created those Commissions.

Commissioner Fellows stated although Commissioner Jones-Darling is not present tonight, during last meeting he informed the Commission that Grand Rapids currently has youth membership with voting power on its Boards and Commissions. She asked if it is possible, that while moving toward non-voting youth membership, the Commission also review Grand Rapids protocol for youth membership. Mr. Hellenga responded those models can be reviewed, but the Attorney's Office was specific that State Law forbids youth membership from having voting power on Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Shuler asked if the Commission should wait until the Attorney's Office provides its opinion.

Commissioner Saunders stated it is possible that Grand Rapids considers those between the age of eighteen and nineteen youth members. If so they would be qualified electors and able to serve on Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Morton moved, seconded by Commissioner Fellows to table this item until the February 27, 2017 meeting.

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

— Election of Commission Chair and Vice-Chair

Commissioner Morton moved to nominate Commissioner Shuler as Chair of the Human Relations Commission.

Commissioner Shuler accepted the nomination.

Commissioner Morton nominated Commissioner Nordberg as Vice-Chair of the Human Relations Commission.

Commissioner Nordberg accepted the nomination.

With no opposition Commissioner Shuler is elected HRC Chair.

With no opposition Commissioner Nordberg is elected HRC Vice-Chair.

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION/COMMISSION RESPONSE

None

VIII. PROPOSED BUSINESS

Commissioner Saunders asked for an update of the Community-Policing Black Lives Matter Task Force. Mr. Hellenga responded a resolution will be heard by Council tomorrow, January 24th, which if approved will authorize the Task Force to continue its work in developing a Community and Police Commission.

Commissioner Saunders stated a sub-committee created by the Task Force was charged with researching and providing a recommendation to the Task Force if it should develop a Community and Police Commission. She said there was a lengthy debate about the issue and it was decided that a resolution be forwarded to City Council that would provide the Task Force direction.

Commissioner Nordberg asked if the Task Force examined the ten points outlined by the National Black Lives Matter Organization, and asked if a Community and Police Commission is important to this community. Commissioner Saunders responded it is important to this community, and said the sub-committee felt the development of this Commission is to develop stronger community and police relations.

Commissioner Shuler stated the Task Force reviewed the ten points early on in its tenure. Training was thoroughly examined, and a memo was sent to the Chief giving recommendations. The request fell short of a specific policy being created. He said the Police Complaint Form and Police Policy governing that process were amended.

Commissioner Nordberg asked if Council will have the first reading of the non-solicitation of immigration status ordinance at the January 24th meeting. Mr. Hellenga responded in the affirmative. Ms. Nordberg stated the passage of this ordinance could move the City closer to becoming a sanctuary city.

Commissioner Fellows stated the ordinance is modeled after the Detroit ordinance, but the Detroit ordinance is more closely related to a sanctuary city. Commissioner Shuler stated the ordinance was crafted to avoid losing revenue sharing as a result of its passage.

Commissioner Graham asked how the HRC decides upon the projects it completes over the course of a calendar year. Commissioner Shuler stated over the past year the Commission has been busy with the complaint process, but in years past public forums were held that would address various topics, such as; fair housing, Latino Community, and LGBTQ issues. Mr. Graham stated he has a few project ideas that he will introduce to the Commission at a later meeting. Mr. Shuler suggested to add a goal setting discussion to next meeting's agenda. Mr. Graham stated New York has a very robust Human Relations Commission website and the projects it completes are then archived. He said many of the projects could be implemented in Ypsilanti.

Commissioner Fellows asked if the Commission will be completed more forums, or provide any community outreach. She added she works at the Avalon House and was informed the City was blocking the acquisition of property, which would be used as fair housing. She

explained for what she was told the City is blocking this because it does not want further section 8 housing.

Commissioner Graham asked if the City has a housing commission. Commissioner Nordberg responded in the affirmative.

— Goal setting discussion.

VIV. NEXT MEETING DATE

— February 27, 2017

X. ADJOURNMENT

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

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.