



Minutes

City of DeKalb Human Relations Commission March 1, 2022

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) held a special meeting on February 1, 2022 in the Second Floor Training Room at the DeKalb Police Department.

A. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm. The following members of the HRC were present: Joe Gastiger (Chair), Nadine Franklin, Norden Gilbert, Lisa King and Andre Powell.

Other City officials/staff present:

- Mayor Cohen Barnes
- Scott Zak, Management Analyst and Staff Liaison to the HRC

B. Approval of Agenda – Additions/Deletions

Regarding item E-1, Chair Gastiger reported the license plate readers (LPRs) purchased by the City had not yet been delivered and the Police Department policy regarding their use is not yet complete. He said he will continue the practice of a past HRC chair to keep items in Old Business until they are addressed.

Chair Gastiger asked for a motion to approve the agenda. It was motioned by Ms. King and seconded by Mr. Gilbert. The agenda was approved by unanimous voice vote.

C. Approval of Minutes – February 1, 2022 Regular Meeting

Mr. Gilbert noted on pg. 4 of the minutes, the third to last paragraph should read, "March meeting."

Chair Gastiger asked for a motion to approve the corrected minutes. Mr. Gilbert motioned, seconded by Mr. Powell. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. Public Participation –

Resident Mark Charvat encouraged Commissioners to speak up so they could be heard on the video recording of the meeting. He then said he found it problematic the License Plate Reader guidelines were not yet in place.

Chair Gastiger said the LPRs have not yet been delivered and Police Chief David Byrd, at the Commission's last meeting, said the Commission could review the policy when it is completed.



Ms. King asked if the LPRs could be used to issue tickets. Mayor Barnes said they would not be used for that but rather finding stolen cars or those wanted on warrants. He said the City Council is not interested in using the cameras for speeding and added the delay in their installation was because of the same delivery delays being seen across the country.

Chair Gastiger explained the LPRs cannot track speed but rather check a passing vehicle's license plate and description against two databases to see if it has been used in the commission on a crime. He added they can also be used to see which cars left the scene of a crime.

Discussing the locations for the LPRs, Ms. King said she did not want the locations based on profiling. Mayor Barnes said they would be on busy roads and high-crime areas. Mr. Powell said it makes sense to place the devices in high-crime areas. Ms. King said placement in a high-crime area is fine so long as the locations are equitable across the City. Chair Gastiger said it is a balancing act between putting the cameras to good use while not creating a sense of otherness in neighborhoods like Annie Glidden North.

Ms. King said people living in the City should not feel like they are being scrutinized. Chair Gastiger noted all the LPRs do is beep if there is a license plate match; they are not designed to watch people.

Mayor Barnes said he would advocate for more LPRs if they result in a dramatic drop in crime.

E. Old Business

1. Update on Traffic Surveillance Cameras Guidelines

No additional information was presented here since the item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

F. New Business

1. *My Story, Our Time* Upcoming Program

Ms. Franklin said the Diversity Committee of the Stage Coach Players is creating a program, which she will direct, in which minority members of the community will tell their stories followed by a discussion with the audience. She shared Chief Byrd will be participating and she hopes to include a wide swath of people. A date for the program has not yet been set. There will be no admission charge but there will be jars available to make donations to community groups.

Chair Gastiger suggested the program be recorded for possible showings in classes or at the Egyptian Theatre.

2. Community Commemoration for the Victims of COVID and Tribute to First Responders

Chair Gastiger said part of the Commission's job is to create connections in the community and that can be done through commemorations. He said the Kishwaukee Kiwanis Club, of which he is a member, is planning a commemoration to acknowledge what people have gone through during the



COVID-19 pandemic, including 194 deaths in DeKalb County along with hospitalizations and lost jobs. He said the event will possibly happen in May with representatives from religious groups, songs and a showing of gratitude to healthcare workers. He said he would like a resolution from the City naming the day of the event as a day of remembrance.

The Commission agreed it would be a good idea to support the commemoration. Ms. King said organizers should be mindful that there are still people struggling because of the pandemic. Chair Gastiger agreed and said the program should refer those individuals to services.

3. Discussion and vote on Human Relations Commission meeting time

Mayor Barnes said the City wants to be considerate of the Commission members' time, and reminded that they do not have to meet every month if there is no business and can call a special meeting if a pressing issue arises. He invited the members to change the City ordinance regulating the Commission if they wanted to make any changes. Mayor Barnes then departed the meeting.

Ms. King said her concern with the new 4:30 p.m. meeting time is that some people do not finish work until 5 and then have to pick-up children and have dinner. She said she would hate to prevent these people from attending a meeting and was agreeable to a 6 p.m. meeting time. Mr. Zak said the move to the new time may have happened too quickly, and Chair Gastiger said while there was a conversation on the possibility of a new time, there was never a vote.

Chair Gastiger asked for a motion to set the Commission's meetings for the first Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. Ms. King made the motion, seconded by Ms. Franklin. The meeting time was approved by unanimous voice vote.

G. Adjournment

Chair Gastiger asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gilbert made the motion, seconded by Mr. Powell. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was declared adjourned at 6:46 p.m. The next meeting is on April 5, 2022.

Scott Zak, Management Liaison & HRC Liaison

Minutes approved by the Human Relations Commission on April 5, 2022.