



## **Minutes**

### **City of DeKalb Human Relations Commission June 1, 2021**

The Human Relations Committee (HRC) held a regular meeting on June 1, 2021 in the Second Floor Training Room at the DeKalb Police Department.

#### **A. Roll Call**

The following members of the HRC were present: Larry Apperson (Chair), John Walker, Norden Gilbert, Nadine Franklin, Joe Gastiger, and Lisa King (remote).

Other City officials/staff present:

- Cohen Barnes, Mayor
- Bill Nicklas, City Manager
- David Byrd, Chief of Police
- Joshua Boldt, Assistant City Manager and Staff Liaison to the HRC

#### **B. Approval of Agenda – Additions/Deletions**

Larry Apperson asked for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made by Joe Gastiger and Seconded by Norden Gilbert to approve the agenda. The agenda was approved by a 6-0 vote.

#### **C. Approval of Minutes – May 4, 2021 Regular Meeting**

Larry Apperson asked for a motion to approve the HRC minutes recorded on May 4, 2021. A motion to approve was made by Joe Gastiger and Seconded by Lisa King. The minutes were approved by a 6-0 vote.

#### **D. Public Participation – None.**

Mayor Cohen Barnes introduced himself to the commission. Conversation ensued.

#### **E. Old Business**

##### **1. Police-Community Relations**

Larry Apperson asked Chief David Byrd about DeKalb Police Department Taser Policy. City Manager Bill Nicklas talked about Chief Byrd's selection process. Chief Byrd said he has been walking the beat and explained this is an example of his belief in building relationships. Chief Byrd explained Taser use follows a use of force progression and is a tool to limit injury risk. Chief Byrd and the committee talked about the importance of Officer



de-escalation training. John Walker asked who reviews Taser & Use of Force events, Chief Byrd said he and police supervisors are responsible.

Joe Gastiger made the point social services are a growing point of importance in Law Enforcement. John Walker brought up some of the challenges of the Mental Health crisis. Chief Byrd explained how Officers building relationships with the citizen can help and voiced support for social services in Law Enforcement.

John Walker asked about the equipment positioning of the Taser on Officers. Chief Byrd explained the controls in place of putting a Taser on the opposite of a firearm and the need for additional Officer training in the use of the Taser. Conversation ensued.

Chief Byrd and Larry Apperson summarized the conversation and Larry Apperson offered HRC assistance to Chief Byrd for any future project.

## **2. Landlord-Tenant Review (Continued)**

### **a. Tenant Legal Services**

Larry Apperson stated that since we received the NIU Legal Services Clinic flyer which included eviction assistance, there have been no further updates at this time. He did remind those present that the city will display this flyer on its website.

### **b. DeKalb Landlord Follow-up Discussion**

Larry Apperson revised a Chapter 10 Ordinance proposal to accommodate the [Safe Homes Act in the ILCS](#). Larry Apperson explained the language in the proposal is prepared for DARA review and suggested the City Attorney review as well. Will Heinisch, public member, stated he believed DARA would find the language satisfactory. This information was relayed to Bill Nicklas.

Joe Gastiger suggested the tenant welcome information packet needs to be marketed better. Joe Gastiger provided a booklet example or an information reference that could be hung on a fridge. Mayor Cohen Barnes suggested partnering with the Community Foundation to expand the welcome information packet across digital communication platforms. Lisa King stated the HRC must find tenant groups to seek their feedback and preserve a multi-pronged approach in the process.

John Walker and Will Heinisch presented a tenant 14-day demand order for property repairs that a tenant could use with property managers. This would help commit tenant concerns to written record with reference to applicable Municipal Ordinance & Residential Tenants Right to Repair Act.

## **G. New Business - None.**



#### **H. Adjournment**

Larry Apperson asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Norden Gilbert and seconded by John Walker. The motion was approved by a 6-0 vote. The next HRC meeting will be on July 6, 2021.

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**Joshua Boldt, Assist. City Manager & HRC Liaison**  
**Minutes approved by the Human Relations Commission on** 07/06/2021 .