

Duluth Human Rights Commission (HRC)

Regular Meeting - Minutes

Wednesday, April 21, 2020 at 4:30PM

City Hall - WebEx

1. Call to Order and Roll Call by Chairperson Keppers at 4:35PM
 - a. Commissioners present: Mark Hakes, Tyra Jaramillo, Bettina Kepperes, Marsha Lue, and Sandra van den Bosse
 - b. Commissioners absent: Carl Huber (unexcused), Ri Preap (unexcused), and Corinthian Rutherford (unexcused)
 - c. Others present: Human Rights Officer (HRO) Carl Crawford and Human Rights Assistant (HRA) Laura Laaksonen
2. Consent of Minutes - March 10, 2021
 - a. Motioned/Vice Chair Hakes; Second/Commissioner van de Bosse; minutes approved.
3. Consent of April 21 (today's) agenda
 - a. Chairperson Keppers requested addition of review of joint statement from Mayor Emily Larson, Police Chief Mike Tusken and HRO Carl Crawford regarding the Chauvin trial outcome
 - b. Commissioner van den Bosse has not seen statement and Chairperson Keppers will send link to statement
 - c. Guest speaker Joel Kilgour will not be presenting tonight
 - d. No further additions/deletions to agenda - it was approved
4. Announcements
 - a. Welcome and Intro to new commissioners
 - i. Corinthian Rutherford - not present
 - ii. Marsha Lue - Currently works at the University of Wisconsin Superior and previously at Lake Superior Community College with the TRIO programs focusing on first generation college students/low income and marginalized students. Currently working as graduate school advisor and loading up her calendar on diversity/inclusion, social justice, race equity, and race lighting presentation
 - iii. Tyra Jaramillio - works for First Witness as a forensic interviewer and before that worked at Lifehouse as a youth advocate living in Duluth for past five years
 - b. Departures
 - i. Vice Chair Hakes has been appointed to the new Duluth Nonbinary, Queer, Trans, Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Intersex & Asexual Commission (NQT2SLGBIA) - Congratulations!
 1. Term on HRC ends March 2022. They will serve as long as allowed with knowledge they can not serve on two commissions
 - ii. Commissioner Ashley Neenan has resigned due to other professional commitments. Chairperson Keppers thanked her for serving three appointments on the HRC. Her position on the Commission will be filled.
 - c. Commission hosting Community Listening Session to follow the meeting (April 14, 2021)
 - i. The impact of Derek Chauvin trial on community

- ii. Increase in hate crimes against Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) community members
- 5. Public Comments
 - a. Written public comments - none
 - b. Virtual meeting comments - none
- 6. Guest Speaker: Joel Kilgour - postponed
- 7. Executive Team
 - a. Update on statement declaring racism as a public health emergency - Vice Chair Hakes
 - i. African Heritage, Indigenous Commissions and NQT2SLGBIA on board but challenge in finding a time to coordinate all interested parties. HRC Commissioners email Vice Chair Hakes if interested in working on this effort
 - b. HRC support for Mayor Larson, HRO Crawford and Police Chief Tusken's statements regarding the Chauvin trial results.
 - i. Commissioner van den Bosse acknowledges working alongside in support of the statements but seems HRC would have made a statement yesterday in line with the results of trial
 - ii. Commissioner Lue likes the idea of a statement from the HRC and adding our voice to the three statements from Mayor, HRO and Police Chief
 - iii. Chairperson Keppers asked if anyone was opposed to the HRC making a statement?
 - iv. Vice Chair Hakes believes in abolishing the police and feels the Police Chief is speaking in terms of reform verses abolishing the police department
 - v. Commissioner Jaramillo referenced the HRC recent listening session where people want more than another statement without action
 - vi. Chairperson Keppers suggested HRC create our own statement that speaks to the balance of abolishing the police force and reform. And reaffirm the HRC mission as a Commission created to hold accountable all entities to human rights
 - vii. Creation of the statement with action items on how the HRC will work towards accountability will be lead by Vice Chair Hakes with Commissioners Lue, van den Bosse and Keppers offering review and input
- 8. Committee Reports
 - a. Education Committee (Huber) - no report
 - b. Findings Committee (Huber, **Keppers** and van den Bosse)
 - i. Chairperson Keppers - no formal complaints/committee did not meet
 - c. Housing Justice Committee (Hakes, Huber, and **Preap**)
 - i. Commissioner Preap is working on a letter to St. Louis County regarding hygiene and laundry issues for homeless
 - ii. Vice Chair Hakes reported that the committee will be meeting with Jason Hale on housing development in the City of Duluth on April 27
 - d. Family Preservation Committee (**Keppers**)
 - i. Chairperson Keppers working on statement regarding the racial disparities in child protective services
- 9. Review of Action Items
 - a. Community Listening Session on April 14, 2021 - 80 community members attended

- i. HRO Crawford expressed his support and appreciation for HRC flawless press conference regarding the elevated hatred toward Asian Pacific Islander Desi American groups and George Floyd murder and invitation to the community to join HRC for a listening session
 - ii. Commissioner van den Bosse felt it was really nice and we could do more in offering similar sessions in more approachable settings such as AICHO, DiMiano, Steve O'Neal Apartments or warming shelters. These would be in-person once COVID-19 protocols allow to be actively in the community
 - iii. Vice Chair Hakes supported Commissioner van den Bosse's suggestion and said he only received four email addresses from the listening session
 - iv. Chair Keppers reported our social media presence has grown on FaceBook with over 600 followers. She asked is the HRC would like to hoist another listening in the near future
 - v. Commissioner Jaramillo supported having additional sessions especially if we are reaching out to different groups in the community
 - vi. HRO Crawford noted challenges with technology and the possibility of offering a lunch hour session
 - vii. Chairperson Keppers asked if this is a need now or if we plan for when things have opened up?
 - viii. Commission van den Bosse noted that in the BIPOC room there was a need for more time as more people seemed to want to share
 - ix. Commissioner Lue noted that it would help to have more people to hoist and offer more rooms with smaller groups of people
 - x. HRO Crawford shared there needed to be more time so people could share their stories and process the trauma they experience
 - xi. Vice Chair Hakes suggested in offering BIPOC break out rooms to partner with the African Heritage Commission and the Indigous Commission to offer diverse options for listening and engaging others doing the work
 - xii. Chairperson Keppers will email the Commission on ways to be more effective and envisioning these session for the future with ways to proceed with brainstorming options
- b. On-boarding of new commissioners
- i. Chairperson Keppers met with Commissioner Lue
 - ii. Commissioner Huber met with Commissioner Jaramillo
- c. April/May Action Plan
- i. Vice Chair Hakes will be drafting a statement regarding the Chauvin Trial outcomes
 - ii. Chairperson Keppers introduced moving from a subcommittee structure to a more flexible Commission structure that would focus on current specific issues and emphasizing the use of the Commissioners strengths in utilizing skill sets. Roles might focus on communications, social media and research.
 - iii. Commissioner van den Bosse mentioned the Finding Committee is established in the Ordinance and is needed as a standing committee. But open to how the Commission does the work in an effective manner and be creative in our approach

- iv. Vice Chair Hakes emphasized the notion of working smart and effective
- v. HRO Crawford said besides the Findings Committee that must be a standing committee, the Commission is free to be flexible with specific needs that have a start and end to its work.
- vi. Commissioner Jaramillo and Lue expressed not seeing the Commission committees work could not comment other than agree with the notion of being flexible to address needs and worker smarter not harder
- vii. An ad hoc committee to look at division of labor was formed with Chairperson Keppers and Commissioners Lue, Jaramillo and Hakes agreeing to serve
- viii. Chairperson Keppers is working on follow up from the meeting with Sheriff Litman in outreach to Police Chief, Probation Office and Prosecutors Office in how we work together on addressing the racial disparities in our community
- ix. Commissioner van den Bosse brought up elections of officers as this is stated to take place in the by-laws in March. HRA Laaksonen will email the by-laws to the commissioners. Commissioners should email her if they want to self-nominate for Chair, Vice Chair or Secretary
- x. Vice Chair Hakes mentioned that other Commissions have a designated staff person to take minutes and post agendas as to ensure adherence to the open meeting rules
- xi. Chairperson Keppers noted she was elected in August as former Chairperson Kisob resigned and that is when the present executive team stepped into place

10. Human Rights Officer Report - Carl Crawford

- a. The verdict in the George Floyd murder trial was an event stamped in history that many will know the time and place they were when hearing the jury's final decision. In quoting James Baldwin: "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced" - HRO Crawford acknowledged as an African American Heritage male this is the work he is asked to do. And it is the beginning of the healing not the end
- b. Need to get the word out to renters to get paperwork to One Roof - essential in maintaining to have a place to live
- c. Vaccines for COVID-19 are available and need to get word out
- d. Human Rights Office has moved to the third floor for the summer while renovations are being done
- e. HRO Crawford will moderate a session with Representatives Rena Moran and Ruth Richardson on the House Select Committee on Racial Justice Report April 29 sponsored by the League of Women Voters
- f. DanSan Creative is offering music and poetry at City Hall and the Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial on April 22
- g. Chairperson Keppers thanked the Commission for doing the work and HRO Crawford for his efforts supporting the Commission on human rights issues

11. Adjournment

- a. Motioned/Vice Chair Hakes; Second/Commission Jaramillo - meeting adjourned at 5:35PM

Respectfully submitted by
Carl Huber, Secretary