# DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

# AGENDA

**SEPTEMBER 21, 2016 - 6:00 P.M.**

**CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**
**15 LOOCKERMAN PLAZA**
**DOVER, DELAWARE**

PUBLIC COMMENTS ARE WELCOMED ON ANY ITEM AND WILL BE PERMITTED AT APPROPRIATE TIMES. WHEN POSSIBLE, PLEASE NOTIFY THE CITY CLERK (736-7008 OR E-MAIL AT CITYCLERK@DOVER.DE.US) SHOULD YOU WISH TO BE RECOGNIZED.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS**

1. **DHRC COMMITTEE UPDATES**
   - A. **GOVERNMENT POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND PRACTICES COMMITTEE (MCGIFFIN)**
     - **(1) DHRC DIVERSITY RESEARCH PROJECT**
   - B. **EDUCATION COMMITTEE (BOGLE)**

2. **OLD BUSINESS**
   - A. **DHRC VACANCIES (FIRST AND FOURTH DISTRICTS)**

3. **ADJOURNMENT BY 7:00 P.M.**

**/JS**
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THE AGENDA ITEMS AS LISTED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED IN SEQUENCE. PURSUANT TO 29 DEL. C. §10004(E)(2), THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OR THE DELETION OF ITEMS, INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS, WHICH ARISE AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING.

# THE DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
# DIVERSITY RESEARCH PROJECT

## I. Introduction

Commissioner Gene Ruane (2014-2015), Chair of the Government Policy, Programs and Practices Committee, suggested to the Commission that an important first step in the development of the reconstituted Dover Human Relations Commission was a study to determine some fundamental facts about the City's approach to diversity issues. As a model for this project, he recommended the book, *Reinventing Diversity* by Howard J. Ross.

Upon Commissioner Ruane's departure from DHRC (and from Dover), the task fell to the successor Chair, Jim McGiffin, who drafted an interview instrument for use with senior staff and a second instrument for an on-line survey available to all employees with email addresses. The on-line survey was also made available in hard copy to those who preferred that format.

Commissioners McGiffin and Ted Henderson conducted the interviews with nine members of the senior staff on December 21, 2015 and January 11, 2016. The general staff survey was available on-line and in the City Clerk's office June 14 - July 1, 2016.

## II. The Response

These are the questions asked in the staff interviews. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are questions included in the on-line survey. With each question is a summary of the responses.

**Question 1** Are diversity and cultural competency articulated as values in any mission/vision/value statement developed by the City?*

Some interviewees and 60% of survey respondents correctly indicated that the values of diversity and cultural competency are found in some of the City's official documents (the Budget, the purchasing policy).

**Question 2** Is the City's value regarding diversity and cultural competency communicated to departments, staff, employees?*

Some interviewees recognized that diversity and cultural competency values are communicated internally through the hiring/promotion process and through the actions of City professional leadership. There was one observation that these values are not communicated to staff from Council and another observation that the City does not generally communicate to staff about events that have diversity and cultural competency implications.

The Survey results indicate that 70% of respondents believed the City communicated these values internally. This question also inspired some responses criticizing any attention to issues of diversity and cultural competency. The comment that, "the best person should get the job" surfaced a few times in the survey.

**Question 3** Does the City promote diversity, cultural competency and inclusion in the community? Why and how? Or why not?*

Several interviewees mentioned the variety of festivals and cultural events that take place in Dover as examples of the City promoting diversity in the community. The Library programming was mentioned by some interviewees as well, as was the cadet program and the attention fostered upon the downtown area. The City Manager was recognized as someone who promotes diversity in the community.

The survey found that 78% of respondents thought the City promoted diversity and cultural competency, and individual responses recognized the Library, the festival and cultural events, partnering with minority groups, community meetings, and social media as examples of this promotion. Other survey respondents suggested Asian-themed events. Still others questioned the appropriateness of promoting diversity and cultural competency at all.

**Question 4** Does the City promote diversity, cultural competency and inclusion in the workplace? Why and how? Or why not?*

Interviewees allowed that some of the City's managers promote diversity in the workplace, and some of those managers provide an outlet for staff with concerns. Other interviewees recognized the staff involved in clean-up day, the Youth Advisory Council, and the City Manager's town meetings as examples of promoting diversity.

Most survey respondents (78%) indicated that the City promotes diversity in the work place. Several made mention of the City's record of non-discrimination in hiring as an example of diversity promotion.

**Question 5** Is there any history, event, symbol, figure that affects diversity and cultural competency in Dover?*

Several interviewees could think of no particular event that effected diversity in Dover. Others mention the Webster case. There was a report of negative feedback from some community members when the Library scheduled an event at the Schwartz Center for the Arts, suggesting that the history of that facility included some issues for people of color. One interviewee noted that police activity was a positive event.

The survey likewise indicated only 57% of the respondents thought there was any significant event that affected diversity. Individual responses mentioned the various festivals. Two survey respondents used the answer to this question to criticize attention to history and to diversity.

**Question 6** Does the City have a diversity recruiting plan, goals, record?

Several interviewees indicated that they did not know the answer to this question, and a few indicated that it was "probably" the case that the City had a diversity plan, goal or record.

This was not a survey question.

**Question 7** Does the City inquire about or measure employee satisfaction?

Some interviewees were not aware of such an effort and some were sure there was no such effort. Other interviewees suggested that some managers inquire about satisfaction with employees. The Human Relations Department has an open door policy. The Assistant City Manager meets with everyone to improve communication.

This was not a survey question.

**Question 8** How does the City communicate with diverse populations?

According to interviewees, the City communicates with diverse populations through these media:

*Parks and Recreation Department listserv
*program flyers in schools
*Facebook and Twitter accounts
*Town Hall meetings
*Through the Procurement process
*Library newsletter
*mailings in utility bills
*TV in the customer service waiting area

This was not a survey question.

**Question 9** Is citizen/customer satisfaction measured? Is it tracked with diversity as a factor?

According to interviewees, insurance claims are recorded and work orders are recorded, which provides some measure of customer satisfaction. One interviewee thought that the City once conducted a paper survey, and another believed there was a complaint collection process.

The Library does a survey of customers every 2 years.

This was not a survey question.

**Question 10** Is there any request/demand/need from diverse groups for particular services?*

Interviewees identified these entities in responses to this question: Habitat for Humanity, Independent Resources (utility billing issues), and the Downtown Development Partnership forum. Interviewees also identified these issues: complaints about police, mentoring youth, meeting space for nonprofits, handicap parking spaces, and "ban the box."

Most of the survey respondents indicated that they were unaware of any such demand (61% to 39%), and added these comments: Employment opportunities, increase community policing, improve street lights, job assistance, budgeting assistance, housing assistance.

**Question 11** Are City services available in any language other than English?

According to interviewees, the answer to this question is "no," although there is 1 Spanish speaking employee, the Library has an ESL collection and some items are available with subtitles.

This was not a survey question.

**Question 12** Does the City have diversity policies applicable to dealings with vendors?

One interviewee identified a 3% preference for minority vendors and explained outreach efforts to minority vendors. Several other interviewees were unaware of these policies.

This was not a survey question.

**Question 13** What does the City need to do more to promote diversity and cultural competency within the organization and in the community at large?*

Interviewees had several suggestions:

* stop sending the message that people with political connections get preference;
* get deeper into all communities;
* provide training for all staff;
* make salaries more competitive;
* develop media to promote diversity;
* continue these efforts - cadet program, positive police activity, mentoring, festivals.

Survey respondents had these ideas:

* work with Sankofa, Boys & Girls Clubs by providing mentors;
* treat everyone equally;
* find venues that teach the value of diversity;
* support diversity and cultural events in schools;
* provide training in diversity frequently;
* be more proactive with groups and meetings;

* re-institute the Police Athletic League.

There were several responses that questioned the value of attention on the diversity issue.

Questions 14 - 20 were answered by the Human Resources Director, Kim Hawkins

**Question 14** Does the City track demographics of job applicants?

Yes, and this information is reported monthly.

**Question 15** Does the City publish clear criteria for jobs prior to interviews?

Yes.

**Question 16** Are interviewers trained about issues related to unconscious bias?

No. Ms. Hawkins is aware of the availability of such training.

**Question 17** Is hiring done by hiring panels? Are the panels diverse?

There is some effort to make the panels diverse, but we could do more.

**Question 18** Are hiring patterns tracked? Retention patterns? Attrition patterns?

Hiring patterns are not tracked. HR tracks turnover, but not by demographics. Some exit interviewing takes place.

**Question 19** Are employee behavior expectations communicated to staff? Enforced?

Yes. The IT Department issues a document and an employee handbook exists.

**Question 20** Does the City use Employee Resource Groups?

88% of the workforce is unionized. 12% is management.

## III. Observations and conclusions