SPECIAL DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

The Special Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) meeting was held on September 21, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. with Chairman Henderson presiding. Members present were Mr. Gaddis, Mrs. Herbert, and Ms. Mullen. Mr. Fleming, Mr. Offredo, and Ms. Paige were absent.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Offredo moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Gaddis and unanimously carried.

DHRC Committee Updates

Government Policy, Programs, and Practices Committee (Gaddis)
No report was provided.

Community Engagement Committee (Mullen)
Ms. Mullen advised members that she had met with Pastor Mark Walters, St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, and had received a phone call from Pastor Christopher Hall, The Church The Body Of Christ, on Townsend Boulevard. She stated that she also went to a Police Athletic League (PAL) event hosted at Towne Point Elementary School and met with the leader of that organization, who was looking to do more than just policing and really get into the communities. Ms. Mullen indicated that they had a conversation regarding getting to know the cultures of the community and what communities make up Dover.

Ms. Mullen indicated that she thought it was time to get some hard dates and move forward with a community day. She noted that several churches were represented within the core of the DHRC, and there were other churches in the community that wanted to take part. Ms. Mullen stated that Pastors Walters and Hall want to do something. She noted that Pastor Hall has a social work background and is very community driven. Ms. Mullen suggested inviting all of the communities in the City to a community day, like a "Tearing Down the Walls Day", having the churches present, and addressing different issues or concerns that the DHRC is unaware of and that people may not be comfortable expressing. She noted that this would be an opportunity for members to hear some of the issues, and from there they could perhaps start coming up with resolutions.

Mr. Henderson stated that this was an aggressive agenda that could be discussed. He stated that he agreed with Ms. Mullen and that members could support her.

Ms. Mullen suggested holding the event on The Green once the date is set. She indicated that the different churches could be invited and the event could be advertised in the Dover Post. Mr. Henderson asked when the event would be held, noting that summer was nearly over, and suggested holding it at Delaware State University or the Delaware Technical and Community College auditorium. He indicated the need to be careful of quorum restrictions, explaining that it would probably be Ms. Mullen and himself who would participate. In response to Mr. Henderson, Mrs. Jody Stein, Administrative Assistant, City Clerk's Office, indicated that she thought members may be discussing an event as opposed to a meeting. *(City Clerk's Office Note: Subsequent to the meeting, it was determined that this event, as described, would not be permitted under Chapter 58 - Human Relations, Article II - Human Relations Commission, Section 58-33(c of the Dover Code,*

which states that all meetings shall be held at City Hall and in accordance with the Laws of Delaware regarding the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and City of Dover procedures.)

Ms. Mullen indicated that she would rather hold an event outside, stating that she thought members would get more support outside.

Mrs. Herbert asked if this would require money, if food would be provided, and if this would be done through the churches. Responding, Ms. Mullen stated that she was not thinking in terms of food but in terms of having a board and some post cards, noting that people who do not want to be vocal could write their community concern on a post card and turn it in or post it. She suggested that the pastors may want to have a national prayer.

Ms. Mullen asked who to contact to reserve The Green. Mr. Henderson stated that some type of permit would probably be needed, permission could probably be obtained at City Hall, and the Police Department may authorize it. Mrs. Stein offered to obtain information, noting that the Parks and Recreation Department may have to be contacted. Mrs. Mullen stated that once this was done, not much else would be needed to move forward. She noted that the event would have to be announced and the public made aware of it, stating that this could be done through the Dover Post, and she asked if this would be free. Responding, Mr. Henderson stated that this would not be free. Mrs. Herbert indicated that an announcement for a gathering could be free, and noted that if the Dover Post wanted to do an article about it, that would be free.

Mr. Henderson stated that, if done correctly, the event would require coordination and input from various members, noting that this could not be done next week. He stated that this might be something that is brought before Council, who may have some issues and want to be there. Mr. Henderson expressed his belief that Councilman Sudler would be particularly interested in participating. He expressed the need to know who the players are, the subject matter, and if it is a ministerial or civil event.

Ms. Mullen advised that she would like to be proactive as opposed to being reactive. She noted that there was always rioting somewhere, in different states, and thanked God that the City had not experienced this. Ms. Mullen stated that this event would not be a riot but something positive and members would welcome all issues and concerns, both positive and negative, and see what Dover as a city and City Council could do to put things in place.

Mrs. Herbert suggested having a unity walk where everyone could walk together for a period of time.

Mr. Gaddis asked whom members would want to have involved, noting that churches would obviously be involved. He suggested developing a handout, which he could print and could be dropped off at a church. Mr. Gaddis asked what other organizations the DHRC would touch base with, stating that City Council would be a good idea, and perhaps police departments and schools. Noting that bad weather was approaching, he suggested trying to have the event in a school gymnasium, such as Dover High School. He reiterated the need to determine who else the Commission would like to involve in the event, besides churches.

Responding to Mr. Henderson, Ms. Mullen stated that she could brainstorm what the event would be called and suggested something like "Breaking Down the Walls", because there are so many different ethnic groups and nationalities and other cultures are sometimes not understood. She indicated that something she may not find offensive may be offensive to another culture, and she may not be aware of this. Ms. Mullen noted that sometimes it just takes a little bit of educating to let someone know about the culture of a particular ethnic group. She stated the need to respect one another.

Mrs. Herbert advised that it would be a good idea to have a variety of different people, like Muslims, etc., who would be willing to speak for approximately five (5) minutes about their culture.

Mr. Henderson stated that he loved the idea and suggested having a brainstorming session to flesh it out a little more. He suggested that colleges or libraries could serve as a back-up, rainy day location. Mr. Henderson advised that it would not really be that difficult to put the event on if members did it right. He stated that he and Ms. Paige are with the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (IMA). Mr. Henderson suggested getting Ms. Paige involved as administration is her strength. He noted that he would also be willing to work with Ms. Mullen.

Ms. Stein suggested that this item be placed on the next meeting agenda for discussion, stating that if members planned to hold the event they would need Council's approval.

Mr. Gaddis suggested that all members come up with ideas and noted the need for a name. He stated that he was unsure about "Breaking Down the Walls" but that there was a need for something that gets across the idea that it is going to be multicultural. Mr. Gaddis indicated that members need to come up with people, organizations, and cultures that they want to have represented, determine a date, and work on the format. He suggested communicating this to the three (3) absent members and that an email go out saying that Ms. Mullen had presented the idea of a gathering of cultures to get to know each other. Mr. Gaddis indicated that a title was needed to communicate the concept to a broad base of people. He noted that churches were being considered and suggested that this be broadened to religious organizations, synagogues, mosques, etc. Mr. Gaddis asked if there were other groups that members felt needed to be included. He suggested that members could brainstorm this issue at the next meeting.

Mr. Henderson stated that he agreed with Mr. Gaddis. He indicated that there may be a need to narrow the scope or plan for a series of workshops, stating that when that many people are involved, it will not all be done in one (1) session. Mr. Henderson advised that there may be a wide spectrum of community issues and suggested that members may be able to create a format where this type of thing can be done on a regular basis.

Mr. Henderson expressed the desire to give the concept a chance to grow and nurture it. He stated that, as a Commission, members want to make sure they put out a good, clear, coherent product, so that the community knows what the DHRC is talking about. Mr. Henderson noted that former Commissioner James McGiffin had previously done a survey of diversity issues that started out with an embryonic concept. He suggested brainstorming and getting other Commissioners and people involved.

Education Committee (Fleming)
Mr. Henderson explained that Mr. Fleming was unable to attend but had asked that members be provided a handout regarding a Parent Student Resource Fair being put on by the Community Engagement Forum, Restoring Central Dover, National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor (NCALL) on September 30, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Wesley College Center **(Attachment #1)**. He noted that Mr. Fleming had indicated that representatives from the State and the Capital School District would attend the event and there would be a keynote speaker, as well as a panel of speakers, including Mr. Kevin Tinsley, who would be speaking on the rights of disabled students. Mr. Henderson noted that DHRC members were welcome to attend and were invited to post signs about the event in their communities.

Communications Committee (Paige)
Mr. Henderson stated that Ms. Paige was unable to attend but was continuing to work on a brochure for the DHRC. He indicated that he thought Ms. Paige would appreciate input. Mr. Henderson noted that he had advised Ms. Paige that he wanted to make some slight changes to the pamphlet.

During the Regular City Council meeting of April 10, 2017, Council considered the Development of a Concise Statement - Mission and Functions of DHRC and approved the DHRC's recommendation to accept the concise statement as written. Mr. Gaddis stated that he wondered if Ms. Paige would be willing to put the shortened mission statement that the DHRC came up with several months ago in the brochure. Responding, Mr. Henderson indicated that Ms. Paige was amenable to any input members have and was looking for them to become actively involved. He noted that Ms. Paige had emailed him the pamphlet and stated the need for members to look at the pamphlet and get it done.

State Human Relations Commission Liaison Report (Herbert)
Mrs. Herbert advised members that she and Mr. Henderson had attended the State Human Relations Commission (SHRC) executive committee meeting held on August 10, 2017 and expressed to the SHRC the fact that the DHRC wanted to be able to work together with them. She noted that Mr. Calvin Christopher, Chair, SHRC, stated that this would be placed on the September agenda for the whole SHRC; however, when she and Mr. Henderson arrived at the September meeting, this item was not on the agenda.

Mrs. Herbert noted that she and Mr. Henderson were able to make their presentation of Long-Term Objective C.2 of the City of Dover Human Relations Commission Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018, which states, "Develop an understanding with the State Human Relations Commission that will delineate the roles and procedures of the two Commissions in the solution of alleged discrimination complaints which fall within the jurisdiction of the State Human Relations Commission, and identify and maintain specific ways the two Commissions will work together." She indicated that Mr. Christopher stated that he would put this on next month's SHRC agenda. Mrs. Herbert explained that the SHRC requested that she provide them Objective C.2 and Ms. Kelly Brown, their assistant, would distribute it to all the SHRC Commissioners.

Mrs. Herbert noted that Mr. Christopher had stated that he wanted to have a chance to talk with the people in Sussex and Kent Counties, as opposed to the people that are up in Wilmington and Newark, and to have one (1) of the people that represents those counties be a liaison to the DHRC

to work with them to answer questions and figure out ways they should interact together. She stated her assumption that this would be handled at the next meeting on the second Thursday of the month at 5:30 p.m. in the conference room on the second floor of the Cannon Building on Silver Lake Boulevard. Mrs. Herbert advised that she planned to attend. She noted that the SHRC was very glad that there was an exact and clear statement of what the DHRC wanted and how they wanted to do it, and they were going to send out precisely what Mrs. Herbert had stated about Objective C.2.

Mr. Henderson noted that he also planned to attend the next SHRC meeting, unless someone else would like to go.

Future Meeting Dates

During the Special DHRC meeting of August 24, 2017, members tabled the motion to recommend that the DHRC meet on the fourth Thursday of the month pending further research regarding Chapter 58 of the Dover Code and potential other dates.

Mr. Gaddis moved to lift the matter from the table, seconded by Mr. Henderson and unanimously carried.

Mrs. Jody Stein, Administrative Assistant, City Clerk's Office, noted that, if it would work out well with members, holding meetings on the third Thursday of the month, as opposed to the fourth Thursday, would be preferable for staff.

Mr. Henderson asked if members could agree to meet on the third Thursday of the month.

Mrs. Herbert moved to recommend that the DHRC meet on the third Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m., seconded by Ms. Mullen and unanimously carried.

Ms. Mullen moved for adjournment, seconded by Mrs. Herbert and unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Theodore A. Henderson
Chair

TAH/JS/dd
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Attachment
Attachment #1 - Handout - Parent Student Resource Fair - Community Engagement Forum, Restoring Central Dover, NCALL

THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM, RESTORING CENTRAL DOVER, NCALL WELCOMES YOU TO JOIN US FOR OUR

PARENT STUDENT RESOURCE FAIR

SEPT. 30TH 10:00AM - 1:00PM

WESLEY COLLEGE CENTER
120 N STATE ST, DOVER, DE 19901
PARKING IS OFF OF GOVERNORS AVE

INFORMATION TABLES, PANEL DISCUSSIONS, VENDORS, ADVOCACY INFORMATION

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM INFORMATION

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER: DR. MICHAEL CASSON

ALL PARENTS AND STUDENTS ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!!!