DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

The Dover Human Relations Commission (DHRC) meeting was held on February 10, 2015 at 5:26 p.m. with Vice-Chairman McGiffin presiding in the absence of Chairman Wilson. Members present were Mr. Roach, Mr. Ruane, Mrs. Sadusky, Ms. Smith (arrived at 5:30 p.m.), and Ms. Stewart. Mr. Henderson and Ms. Hicks were absent.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

By unanimous consent, the agenda was approved as presented.

Presentation - DHRC Diversity Definition, Role of the Commission, and Role of Individual Commissioners

Mr. McGiffin reminded members that during the DHRC meeting of October 28, 2014, Chairman Wilson requested that the Government Policy, Programs, and Practices Committee develop a definition of diversity and clarify the role of the Commission and individual commissioners.

Mr. McGiffin reviewed his memo to the DHRC, dated December 17, 2014, regarding the Definition of Diversity, expressing his hope that it would be helpful to all members of the Commission. He explained that there are a variety of definitions of diversity, noting that the definition adopted in the DHRC Strategic Plan was quite broad and provided flexibility.

In response to concerns previously expressed by Mr. Henderson, Mr. McGiffin stated that he developed a general statement regarding the role of the Commission utilizing language from the Commission's enabling legislation. He stated that the Commission should become as knowledgeable as possible about issues and potential issues in Dover and be prepared to act by advising Council, the Mayor, and the City Manager on solutions. Mr. McGiffin explained that "act" could mean a lot of different things, including conducting hearings, holding public meetings, etc.

Review of 2014 DHRC Annual Report to City Council

Members reviewed the 2014 DHRC Annual Report to City Council.

Responding to Mrs. Sadusky, Mr. McGiffin stated that the report had not yet been submitted to City Council and had only been submitted to members of the DHRC for their consideration.

In response to Mrs. Sadusky, Mr. McGiffin explained that the report was a basic explanation of the Commission and what had been accomplished. He did not believe that additional information would be required, particularly since all of the members were new.

Mrs. Sadusky moved to recommend approval of the 2014 DHRC Annual Report to City Council, seconded by Ms. Stewart and unanimously carried.

DHRC Committee Updates/Meeting Dates/Agenda for 2015

Government Policy, Programs, and Practices Committee

Mr. Ruane explained that, in order to meet the Committee's goal regarding the assessment of the current state and climate of diversity and inclusion within the City government, the Committee would be working with a team of senior leadership persons within City government. He stated that the Committee was now awaiting confirmation from Mr. Scott Koenig, City Manager, regarding the

selection of the leadership group. Mr. Ruane stated that the review of City programs would be based on Chapter 12 of "Reinventing Diversity, Transforming Organizational Community to Strengthen People, Purpose, and Performance," by Howard J. Ross, which included a series of questions. Mr. Ruane encouraged members to obtain a copy of this book and to consider adding or reframing questions to make them more relevant to the City of Dover. He indicated that the City had stated that it is a "City that values diversity" and recommended that the DHRC try to help the City to come to an agreement as to what this means when considering the values of diversity. Mr. Ruane stated that he had recently read a *New York Times* article, written by a human resources manager, that indicated that diversity is more than a procedure relating to demographics and numbers but involves making sure that a diverse employee base is represented when making decisions within the organization. This dynamic process results in better policy, practices, and procedures and is a way of doing business that reflects an entity's culture, identity, and feeling about its organization. Mr. Ruane noted that this approach was reflected in some of the questions in Mr. Ross's book that he referenced previously.

Mr. Scott Koenig, City Manager, stated that six (6) employees had volunteered to serve on the Internal Diversity Committee, including himself; Ms. Margery Cyr, Library Director; Mr. Kirby Hudson, Assistant City Manager, Ms. Kay Sass, Public Affairs Coordinator; Mrs. Donna Mitchell, Controller/Treasurer; Lt. Jason Pires, Dover Police Department.

Mr. Ruane questioned if Human Resources staff should be included. Responding, Mr. Koenig explained that HR personnel were heavily involved in recruiting but could be added if this was desired. Mr. Ruane expressed the desire to schedule a meeting of the Internal Diversity Committee.

Community Engagement Committee

Mr. Roach stated that Ms. Hicks had asked him to send her regards and apologies for being unable to attend tonight's meeting. He advised members that he had been hearing from the community about a principal at Dover High School whose contract was not renewed. He also stated that he was approached by a gentleman at the Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Prayer Breakfast held earlier in the year in regard to the new Delaware Office of Civil Rights and Public Trust. Mr. Roach stated that he was confused since the function of this Office seemed similar to his understanding of what the DHRC does in regard to diversity. He expressed his wish to receive more information in regard to what the DHRC's involvement will be with this Office.

Ms. Denise Devine, Assistant City Clerk, stated that a presentation regarding the Office of Civil Rights and Public Trust, which falls under the Delaware Department of Justice, was scheduled for the DHRC meeting to be held on March 10, 2015.

Mr. McGiffin stated his belief that the DHRC will not have a lot of interaction with this Office. He explained that the Attorney General had suggested that he would devote professional resources to deal with issues related to civil rights that will impact various elements of State government involved in actions related to discrimination in housing, education, disability and access, etc. Mr. McGiffin advised members that other organizations chartered by the State and Federal governments are charged with hands-on responsibility for those things. He indicated that this should be part of the DHRC's knowledge base but would not have much of an effect on its charge, unless an issue arises that falls within the DHRC's jurisdiction.

Mr. McGiffin asked if the Community Engagement Committee had a particular agenda for matters they would be working on in the upcoming year. Responding, Mr. Roach stated that Mr. Henderson was very involved with the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (IMA), noting that many community issues go through churches. He stated the Committee's desire to build communication through community leaders and that the Committee wanted to reach out to develop a community database to establish ties to the community. He expressed the desire to "get our faces out there" and explain to the community the functions and processes of the DHRC.

Responding to Ms. Smith regarding the relationship of the controversy at Dover High School to the DHRC, Mr. Roach stated that many people spoke with him about this issue, stating that they felt it unjust that the principal's contract was terminated by the Capital School District Board since she had received gains every year. Since the principal was an employee of an organization within the City, Mr. Roach stated a desire to gain understanding and was unsure if the DHRC should become involved since it occurred within the City.

Responding, Mr. McGiffin stated that the DHRC has no direct jurisdiction over this matter. He felt that this was a matter for the Capital School District Board and the DHRC had nothing to do with the relationship between the Board and one (1) of its employees. He noted that the state and federal governments have jurisdiction over employment discrimination. Mr. McGiffin believed that members should be knowledgeable about the issue to be able to advise the City on how to respond if there were a reaction to the incident that affects people in the City beyond the incident itself, such as a demonstration. He noted this would include advising City law enforcement in the City should a demonstration take place within City boundaries. Mr. McGiffin reiterated that the DHRC is not in a position to mediate or negotiate with respect to this employment situation.

Mr. Ruane stated that the DHRC Strategic Plan includes objectives that relate to community conflict. He questioned whether the City's required emergency plan includes policies with respect to responding to community conflict and if these types of policies are officially adopted by the Police Department. He stated that the DHRC, at some point, is supposed to become knowledgeable enough about community conflict to be able to advise the Police Department on best practices in this regard. Mr. Ruane reminded members that this is a responsibility of the DHRC as a whole and is included as a long-range, strategic objective for the Commission. He stated that a University of Delaware organization offers mediation training, and should the Education Committee think this was a priority, they could investigate the availability of that training so that if there were such a conflict, the DHRC would better prepared. Mr. Ruane felt that members needed training in techniques on how to listen to people who put members on the spot regarding mediation, conflict management, etc. He suggested that the Education Committee develop a prioritized list of the types of training needed by members.

Ms. Traci McDowell, City Clerk, stated that the City was currently in the process of budgeting for FY 16 and asked if members had an estimate of the amount to be requested for training.

Mr. Roach moved to request a training budget of $5,000 for FY16 for the DHRC, seconded by Mr. Ruane and unanimously carried.

Mr. Ruane stated that the Government Policy, Programs, and Practices Committee needs a list of community organizations to be involved when a focus group is formed as part of the assessment and the community is asked how the City government is promoting diversity. Responding, Mr. McGiffin suggested that the IMA be included, as well as any organization that could help educate members on how people in the community view the City on these issues.

Mr. Ruane expressed his belief that Chairman Wilson was hoping that the Community Engagement Committee would identify groups that should be invited to the DHRC meeting scheduled for March 10, 2015 when Ms. Allison Reardon, Director of the Office of Civil Rights and Public Trust, would attend and answer questions. Mr. Ruane felt this was an opportunity to engage the Committee.

Mr. McGiffin requested members to provide suggestions to the Clerk's Office by February 17, 2015 regarding who should be invited to the March 10, 2015 DHRC meeting.

Education Committee

Mrs. Sadusky stated that the Education Committee had not talked since the last meeting. She offered to contact the University of Delaware to find out what types of mediation and conflict management training is available.

Ms. McDowell cautioned that training funds would not be available until after July 1, 2015.

Communications Committee

Ms. Smith stated that the Communications Committee had nothing to report.

Mr. Roach reiterated the request for members to assist the Community Engagement Committee in developing a list of invitees for the March 10, 2015 DHRC meeting.

Mr. Ruane advised members that a meeting was convened by the Psi Iota Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity regarding the Dover police. He provided members with related newspaper articles from *The Wilmington News-Journal* dated February 6, 2015, entitled "Delaware Police Discuss Building Trust, Excessive Force," and the *Delaware State News*, dated February 9, 2015, entitled, "Police: 'We have to Trust the Public and They have to Trust Us'" ***(Attachment #1)***. Mr. Roach stated that Omega Psi Phi is a black fraternity in the City. Mr. Ruane suggested that the fraternity be invited to the March DHRC meeting. Responding, Mr. Roach stated that this group was on the list, along with Delta Sigma Theta, Phi Beta Sigma, and Alpha Phi Alpha fraternities.

In response to Mr. McGiffin, Mr. Roach indicated that Alpha Phi Alpha sponsors an annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Prayer Breakfast. He stated that the DHRC had discussed trying to reserve a table at this event to try to promote the DHRC and training that the DHRC hoped to have. He indicated that he and Mr. Wilson had attended the event earlier in the year and Mr. McGiffin stated that he had also attended.

Mr. Roach stated that Alpha Phi Alpha had also had a presentation at Delaware State University in recognition of Dr. King.

Scheduling of 2015 Meeting Dates

Mr. Ruane moved to schedule the 2015 DHRC meetings for Tuesday, March 10, 2015; Wednesday, May 27, 2015; and Tuesday, August 25, 2015 and to defer consideration of the November 2015 date until the next meeting, seconded by Mr. Roach and unanimously carried.

Commission Members' Announcements

Mrs. Sadusky questioned Mr. Ruane regarding the specifics of his request pertaining to Chapter 12 of "Reinventing Diversity, Transforming Organizational Community to Strengthen People, Purpose, and Performance," by Howard J. Ross. Responding, Mr. Ruane stated that members would be formulating questions based on Chapter 12. He noted that many questions were included, such as "Is diversity a stated value in your organization?" He asked that members provide additional questions or modifications to the suggested questions to make them relevant for the City, particularly with regard to inclusion. Mr. Ruane reminded members that the DHRC had established a goal to promote diversity and social inclusion and combat social exclusion. He stated the desire to find out to what extent the City was being responsive to issues that reflect that some people in the community may have been excluded from City services, such as housing, library, and recreation programs.

Responding to Ms. Smith, Mr. Ruane advised members that Chapter 12 of the book he had referenced was provided in the October 28, 2014 DHRC meeting packet as an attachment to a memorandum from the Government Policy, Programs, and Practices Committee dated October 16, 2014. He advised members that, when meeting with the Government Policy, Programs, and Practices Committee, Mayor Christiansen had explained the importance of understanding the history of the City when considering diversity. Mr. Ruane reminded members that the City had been sued by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which resulted in a change to the whole government structure.

Mr. Ruane noted that the filing deadline for City Council would be on February 13, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.

Ms. Stewart moved for adjournment, seconded by Mrs. Sadusky and unanimously carried.

By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

James G. McGiffin, Jr.
Vice-Chairman

JGM/TM/JS/dd
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Attachment
Attachment #1 - Wilmington News Journal News article dated February 6, 2015 and Delaware State News article dated February 9, 2015

Delaware police discuss building trust, excessive force

Jon Offredo, The News Journal *10:02 p.m. EST February 6, 2015*

(Photo: The News Journal)

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Community policing, transparency, building trust and breaking the stop snitching mentality – for both the people on the street and in the patrol cars – were all points of discussion at a panel featuring various Delaware police officials.

During Friday night's forum at the Whatcoat United Methodist Church in Dover, a 10-strong panel of officers and community members answered questions from at least 50 members of the public about excessive force complaints, relations with the African American community and how police officers can better police their own.

Wilmington police Capt. Sherrie Tull told the audience that at the start of her 25-year career with the city force she had first-hand experience with excessive force by another police officer.

A handcuffed person in the back of her patrol car was assaulted by another officer, she said. Tull said she couldn't just stand there watching an innocent guy who could not fight back. So Tull said she testified, and he was dismissed.

"I wore that as a scarlet letter for years," she said. "I was ostracized for the good that I did, but I was ostracized."

She said she knew she did the right thing, and that today it still takes a lot of courage to come and testify against a fellow officer.

"If that's what it takes, then that's what it takes," she added.

Deputy Chief of Dover police, Major Marvin Mailey, is the former head of the department's Internal Affairs division. Diversity training and respect are key, he said.

"If we respect one another along with trusting one another, that I believe is the path to getting back to what needs to in a community

where we actually can interact with each other and have pleasant encounters, not like you see on YouTube," he said.

Last year a Dover police officer accused of excessive force was cleared of any wrongdoing by a grand jury. The ACLU is suing the city and police department over the incident.

Members of the public also said they wanted to see more officers on the street via community policing. Many of the police officials acknowledged that the model of community policing is tough to enact. There are many constraints caused by budgets and call volume. Dover city officials recently voted to add 10 new officers to its ranks.

Charles Fletcher, said when he grew up in Baltimore he knew the local police officer's names and they knew his. When he moved to Delaware that changed.

"There is not a single police officer whose name I know... there were at times the police officers lived in our community...," he said. "I work with young kids and I asked them, 'Do you know any police officers' names?' They shake their heads and say no."

"That's something we need to change," Fletcher said.

Friday night's forum was hosted by the 2nd District of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and the Psi Iota Chapter.

Contact Jon Offredo at (302) 678-4271, on Twitter @JonOffredo or joffredo@delawareonline.com.

http://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/local/2015/02/06/delaware-police-discuss-building-trust-excessive-force/23017381/

Police: 'We have to trust the public and they have to trust us'

By Arshon Howard
Delaware State News

Updated February 9, 2015

DOVER — Communication and trust were two words that resonated throughout Whatcoat United Methodist Church in

Dover during an open forum between law enforcement officers and residents Friday night.

The event was held by the Psi Iota Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, the Dover Police Department, other law enforcement entities and social action groups.

Its purpose was to create better communication between law enforcement officers and the citizens they protect and serve.

The panel included community leaders, students, and law enforcement professionals who answered questions from multiple perspectives.

The forum opened up with what are the barriers to have a good police and community relationship?

New Castle County Captain Quinton Watson said the three key elements were communications, trust and transparency.

"That's the bedrock for community and police relations," Capt. Watson said. "If you have that going on with your police department then you're on a much solid ground if you don't have it.

"There has to be constant communication between the citizens and the police. We have to trust the public and they have to trust us."

One of the solutions raised by an attendee was to have more police officers in the community interacting with residents and knowing everyone on a first-name basis.

Dover's Deputy Chief Marvin Mailey said the police department hopes to accomplish that goal moving forward.

"We can educate our officers through cultural diversity training," he said. "We can also accomplish that by getting out in the communities and learning about the people living there. We need their stories by interacting with them to slowly build that respect with one another.

"If you take away our uniforms were just like everyone us, and I think by just talking to each other will put us on the path to build trust and stronger relationships with the community."

Kirk Brooks, a Wesley College graduate student from Baltimore, discussed the lack of communication between the youth and police officers.

"Where I'm from most of their first experiences with an officer was an officer probably dragging one of their parents out their homes," Mr. Brooks said.

"That's their last impression of them, so over time they were never able to have a good relationship with the police ... they never got a chance to break down that barrier or change their culture.

"They end up living in fear, but not with the person, but with the badge. It causes a lot of rift growing up and they continue to think the same way."

The Rev. Rita Mishoe Paige of Star Hill A.M.E. Church said there needs to be more discussions and forums to educate the youth.

"We, as community leaders, need to have educational forums — especially with the youth — to talk about how to conduct one's self in certain situations as to what to say and what not to say," Rev. Paige said.

"I don't think enough of that is going on. We have a responsibility to educate them on how to handle themselves."

The Dover Police Department is attempting to improve and foster its community relations by re-establishing its Community Policing Unit and the Police Athletic League involving kids in sports programs, Deputy Chief Mailey said.

Also starting this spring is a Dover Police cadet program. The community policing and outreach push played a part in city police asking for 10 more officers on the force, Deputy Chief Mailey said.

Xavier Hurt, a freshmen at Delaware State University who is from Brooklyn, NY, has plans of becoming a police officer in the future.

He hopes to change the culture between the youth and the police.

"I hope to try to build that communication and break down that bridge," he said. "We have to start somewhere and break down that fear and get the community back to having that relationship with officers where we know we can trust them and they're there to protect us."

Staff writer Arshon Howard can be reached at 741-8230 or ahoward@newszap.com

http://delaware.newszap.com/centraldelaware/138177-70/police-we-have-to-trust-the-public-and-they-have-to-trust-us