SPECIAL
DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
A G E N D A

MAY 13, 2014 - 5:30 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

1. **Presentation - DHRC and City of Dover Police Department Interaction** ***(Police Chief Bernat)***

2. **Scheduling of DHRC Workshop**

3. **Discussion - City Council and DHRC District Orientation Meetings**

4. **Discussion - Member ID Cards**

5. **Update by Chairman Wilson - City Manager Department Head Meeting of April 29, 2014**

6. **Discussion of Future Quarterly Meeting Dates**
   (July 22, 2014; October 28, 2014; and January 27, 2015)

7. **Commission Members' Announcements**

8. **Adjournment**

/dd

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THE AGENDA ITEMS AS LISTED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED IN SEQUENCE. THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OR THE DELETION OF ITEMS, INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS.

U.S. Department of Justice
Community Relations Service

Guidelines for Effective Human Relations Commissions

CRS Seal

Revised September 1998
(Updated March 2003)

What is Human Relations?

The mission of human relations is to promote ways in which people in communities learn to get along and to safeguard equal opportunity for all. Human relations activities help communities become more harmonious, respectful, and cohesive. Human relations uses the tools of fact finding, staff training, information sharing, community education, mediation, cultural literacy, hate crime response and conflict management.

Foreword

Communities in America are made up of a people from varied backgrounds. Our neighbors and coworkers are from many different races, cultures, faiths, experiences and traditions. We have different interests, fears and ways of doing things. Some are newcomers, immigrants and refugees. Others are from families, several generations in the United States. We have different preferences in music and food. We have different arrangements in our living situations, and in our domestic and social relationships. Our differences sometimes enrich us and at other times are a source of conflict.

As a nation, unique in being formed by people from many different countries, we have experimented and fought to resolve our differences and make our diversity work. We have a history that houses many examples of difficult challenges regarding differences of race, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, language and other important aspects of our diversity. These have often been complicated and highly charged struggles.

For people of different backgrounds and interests to get along, it is useful for local government to set up places and programs that have the responsibility to help people develop better understanding of each other and to solve

differences that might arise. Human Relations Commissions are the most common organization created to help manage relationships between people. Having an organization with the responsibility to examine intergroup relations and promote work that brings people together improves a community's prospects for harmony.

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INTRODUCTION

In an effort to help communities resolve disputes and conflict based on racial discrimination and denial of equal rights, the Community Relations Service encourages the establishment of human relations commissions.

An effective commission plays a vital role in promoting community understanding and open communication. As an instrument of private and local government, a commission is helpful in resolving conflict, settling complaints of discrimination, and promoting cooperation within the community.

This brochure provides guidelines for local officials and civic leaders in establishing a local commission and shaping policies and programs to improve its effectiveness.

Citizens with an interest in improving community relations can work toward

establishing a human relations commission.

ESTABLISHING A HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Illustrating the need for a commission is a crucial first step. The need can be shown through studies of discrimination complaints, the impact of demographic changes, and incidences of hate crime, public controversies, and disturbances. These factors are available from community organizations, governmental agencies, and local colleges and universities. Studies such as surveys and polls are good ways to demonstrate the need for a commission. Another important approach is to talk with key individuals in key organizations, public and private agencies, and schools to collect opinions and views regarding the need for a human relations commission.

Establish the Commission as a Component of the Local Government

The active support of governmental officials is essential for the establishment of a commission. Local elected officials will need a clear explanation of the benefits of a commission, and how a commission will help address specific human relations needs.

Establishing a commission by local ordinance will give it a firm legal status as an official unit of government. A commission can also be established by executive order or administrative action.

Secure Specific Responsibilities and Powers

To clearly define the commission's responsibilities and authority, an ordinance should address the following:

- It should prohibit discrimination in specific areas (i.e., employment, housing) and identify the groups that will be protected.
- It should establish a policy of equal opportunity in the civic, economic, political, and social aspects of the community.
- It should charge the commission to study and recommend to the local government programs and policies that enhance communication and understanding among all residents of the community.
- It should charge the commission to develop and maintain programs that build positive relations among communities and enhance problem-solving skills among residents throughout the community.

- It should promote policies and practices by all units of local government that support inclusiveness and civility among residents.
- It should outline the specific authorities of the commission, including areas of enforcement, subpoena power, hiring, and acceptance of public and private grants and contributions.
- It should define how each commissioner will be appointed, detail their authority and length of service, and outline the commission's jurisdiction and relationship with other governmental units and advisory bodies.

Secure an Adequate Budget Through Local Government Appropriation and/or From an Assured Source of Private Financial Support

An adequate budget can make the difference in the success of a commission's program. The size of each commission's budget varies, depending on the extent of human relations needs and support from government officials. Cities, counties, and states must provide adequate funding for a commission to undertake its responsibilities. Additional resources may sometimes be warranted to support specific responses to new problems. Many commissions have found it useful to be designated to receive funding from other sources.

A commission is an indispensable resource in all communities. Smaller jurisdictions may encounter a greater challenge in securing funds, and it may be necessary to arrange volunteer service from civic leaders and community representatives. Their work may be coordinated by a single official, namely a Director of Human Relations.

Representatives from businesses, churches, and community organizations join together with members of advocacy, civic, and legal groups to form an official human relations commission.

ORGANIZING A HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Organization of the Commission

Each commissioner should be committed to the philosophy of inclusion, equal opportunity, and fair treatment. Membership of the commission should include representation from the entire community, and have the respect, confidence, and trust of its citizens. Members should also be familiar with and sensitive to historical, social, economic, and cultural dynamics of local communities.

Commissioners with ties to local government, civic organizations, and

educational and religious institutions can help give the Commission visibility and public support. The careful selection of its members signals to the public that the commission is competent, fair, and inclusive. Members should serve staggered, limited terms so that good continuity and provision for new leadership on the commission. Most commissioners serve three to four year terms.

The size of each commission varies. It must be large enough to conduct work in committees and task forces, yet small enough where it can operate efficiently. Most commissions have an average of seven to fifteen members.

An organized committee structure is useful and should be based on the magnitude of work and available staff support. The establishment of administrative committees that deals with financial and personnel matters allow program committees to focus on particular areas such as education, hate crime, criminal justice, employment, and housing.

The number, composition, and size of committees are determined by available resources and staff. Good staff support assists in carrying out the committee's programs and projects. Commissions in smaller jurisdictions may need to focus on fewer committees and tasks because of limited staff.

Build Partnerships and Involve Communities

A commission can increase its impact by working closely with other human relations organizations and agencies. The possibility of additional resources, new initiatives, and cooperation is enhanced by bringing together organizations in joint human relations efforts. A commission should work to help communities understand and value cooperative relations among diverse groups and neighborhoods.

Commission Staffing

A competent, paid staff should direct the day-to-day planning and the operations of the commission. The size of the staff should be based on the challenges and work demands of the community. Salaries should be comparable to those in other governmental agencies and sufficient enough to recruit and retain qualified personnel.

In smaller jurisdictions, a single position in local government may be established. As the Director for Human Relations, this person should possess strong leadership qualities to motivate volunteers with assisting the commission. Basic staff qualifications should include:

- Education: A degree in areas related to social work and/or intergroup

relations is preferable. Degrees in social science, education, law, journalism or theology are acceptable.

- Experience: Prior experience in intergroup relations, community service, and/or community relations.

- Skills: Strong oral and written communication skills, and ability to analyze social issues and develop community programs.

- Other Qualities: Objectivity, maturity, honesty, good-natured, leadership, and commitment.

Adopt Clearly Defined Goals

Clearly defined goals are vital for an effective commission. Every effort should be made to help the community understand that its objectives are in the interest of the entire community.

The objectives of a commission should be:

- To promote and assist in developing an environment of fairness and respect among citizens by ensuring that responses to acts of exclusion, bias, and discrimination are meaningful and consistent.

- To develop ways to measure and monitor community relations, race relations, and civil rights issues, particularly those that are sources of intergroup conflict.

- To involve all segments of the community in understanding and appreciating the benefits of positive intergroup relations.

- To offer a range of programs and services that help communities prevent and resolve issues of human relations, race relations, and civil rights.

- To develop ways of anticipating, preparing for, and relieving community tensions arising from intergroup conflict.

THE WORK OF A HUMAN RELATION COMMISSION

Make the Commission the Recognized Authority on Human Relations Needs

When the commission is recognized as the expert source of information, it can become a valuable resource to the media, government, and members of the

community. There are a variety of resources a commission can access, including law enforcement agencies which compile data on incidences of conflict and hate crime. Many colleges and universities conduct research in local communities. Newspaper and other media are also useful sources for information. A commission can also do its own data gathering through research, hearings and interviews. Data and information should be carefully collected and analyzed. Keep in mind that its purpose is to help bring understanding and focus to a particular issue.

Establish a Working Relationship with Local News Media

Reliable data is one of the most important tools available to a human relations commission. Accurate information improves understanding and provides a foundation to resolve the issues and conflicts. Newspapers, radio, and television are important media outlets to disseminate important information to diverse audiences.

Information can be provided to the media through conferences, forums, workshops, and briefing papers. Data can be shared for the purposes of publication or as background and context. Reporting can then include perspectives that will more clearly define the issue or problem, which can result on a consensus for a plan of action.

Involve Community Members and Groups in Commission Programs

Public trust and confidence in a commission are fundamental to its effectiveness. By building relationships with diverse groups, organizations, and neighborhoods, the commission can promote intergroup cooperation. In circumstances where this relationship already exists, there is more timely and efficient response to issues and exchange of information.

The level of organization in a particular community helps determine how much effort is necessary to reach certain groups. In well established communities, long standing civic organizations make contact easier. In nascent communities, the lack of community organization may require a more deliberate effort. An assessment of how the community is organized is an important step to understanding the dynamics of a particular community.

Work for Meaningful Intergroup Relations

Communication and understanding are the heart of an effective commission. The commission can provide a bridge among various groups by offering a neutral environment in which to interact.

Communication should be open and candid. It requires skill, innovation, and

patience. Without effective communication, meaningful advances in community relations cannot take place. When successful, communication improves understanding and cooperation among diverse groups.

Mediation, Conciliation, Conflict Management

When there is controversy and intergroup conflict, human relations issues receive the greatest public attention. Conflict is a natural occurrence. Intergroup relations are affected according to how the conflict is managed and resolved. Unresolved conflict can escalate and lead to serious community disruption. A commission can play an important role by providing services in mediation, conciliation, and conflict management.

Helping disputants cease hostile actions is a prerequisite to problem solving. Successful conflict management cannot take place until violence has ended. Human relations seeks to move from conflict to resolution. Actions to diffuse tension, identify the basis of the conflict, establish ground rules among disputants, and engage them in the process of mediation and conciliation are important steps in conflict management.

The entire process requires a great deal of time, effort, and patience. When there is community conflict, a commission is an important resource because it can build partnerships with other agencies and organizations to form an organized system of conflict response and management.

Working Relationships and Partnerships

A commission should establish a strong liaison with a wide range of community organizations--- chambers of commerce, churches, civic organizations, civil rights organizations, and other community-based organizations. It is important that the commission inform and update various organizations on the commission's objectives and programs, and provide training and other support to encourage their involvement in human relations, human rights, and race relations issues.

A commission can call on government agencies and departments with human relations interests. Local schools, police departments, district attorneys, libraries, parks and recreation, probation departments, and community development agencies are often strong partners in human relations work. Federal agencies such as the Community Relations Service, U. S. Department of Justice; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; and U.S. Commission on Civil Rights are important human relations allies. At the state level, there are often human relations commissions available to work with local commissions.

A commission can help the media realize the full impact of their reporting. When reporting is accurate and objective, understanding is improved and prospects for conflict resolution are enhanced. Establishing working relationships with the media, particularly those that serve special neighborhoods and groups, is a important human relations tool.

PROMISING PRACTICES FOR HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSIONS

Government

- Encourage government agencies to review policies and practices to ensure that services are available to all communities. Develop in-service training, bilingual materials, and collaboration with community organizations to build strong relationships between government and citizens.

- Review local ordinances affecting race relations issues, including hate crime, and make recommendations for strengthening efforts.

Criminal Justice

Relationships between law enforcement and community members have a significant influence on community relations. Poor relations increase the potential for mistrust, conflict, and violence. Effective community oriented policing builds public confidence, reducing the potential for conflict and tensions. A commission can assist in building strong relationships and understanding between neighborhoods and law enforcement.

- Urge police agencies to consider developing written agreements with local community organizations. These agreements should outline specifics of the relationship, such as how they will help each other and work together, especially during times of community tension.

- Assist police departments in developing training programs which address community relations and other issues, including those involving race, color, national origin, and other protected groups.

- Encourage law enforcement agencies to develop ties with local schools, businesses, and community organizations. This can be accomplished by regular communication with parents, students, media, and other community organizations, and include the formation of partnerships to address issues such as hate crime.

- Encourage law enforcement officials to create informational workshops, forums, and panels on race and hate crime prevention with local schools and other institutions.

- Encourage the development of relationships between youth and police by organizing community-wide police-youth task forces.

Conflict Management

A commission has the ability to play a key role in conflict management by creating a coordinated system for conflict management. This system should include city officials, law enforcement, counselors, clergy, community organizers, and mediators.

- Identify and gather the skills and resources required to respond efficiently to the various phases of conflict management. Establish working relationships and systematic procedures among these individuals, organizations, and groups in order to respond efficiently to conflict situations.

- Identify ways to anticipate community tensions, based on analyses of areas and issues vulnerable to conflict.

- Develop and provide materials and training in conflict management and mediation.

- Assist in developing plans for responding to and managing community conflicts and disruptions. Encourage contingency planning by schools, government agencies, and businesses. Commissions can also assist in planning for the overall response to serious civil unrest.

Hate Crime

An effective response by human relations agencies to hate crimes is crucial because such crimes can heighten anxiety and tension throughout the entire community.

- Review the local response to hate crime, including adequacy of hate crimes ordinances, assistance to victims, police investigation and reporting, and prosecutions.

- Encourage reporting of hate crime by educating and training law enforcement and schools and the general public.

- Organize a network of community organizations, law enforcement, and

other agencies to monitor and plan a coordinated response to hate crime.

- Establish a board or commission to review and analyze hate crime activity, create public service announcements, and recommend measures to counter hate activity.

Education

- Encourage local schools to organize human relations programs. Promote class discussions on human relations, race relations, and civil rights to help students understand issues of diversity and tolerance.

- Provide training on conflict resolution and multicultural awareness to support school personnel and students in addressing tension and conflict.

- Urge parents, students, and faculty to form committees to plan for improved human relations on campus.

- Help schools develop conflict management policies and plans. Schools that are aware of potential conflicts and develop plans to manage them are more likely to avoid serious conflict on their campuses.

- Help schools create a climate of tolerance and appreciation for the diversity of their student bodies. Support activities and plans that build relationships and understanding among different student populations.

- Sponsor projects, such as art and essay contests, that encourage students to give attention to human relations, race relations, and civil rights issues.

Business

- Make presentations to local business organizations on human relations issues. Support businesses that offer human relations programs, diversity training, and dispute resolution activities. Form an advisory committee which acts as a liaison between the business community and the commission.

- Assist and encourage business investment and involvement in human relations programs in the media, schools and local neighborhoods.

Economic Development

- Get involved with community development programs and encourage study of their impact on different communities, especially whether these plans ensure fair access and participation.

- Bring together local bankers, realtors, appraisers, insurers, and others involved in the home mortgage market area to reduce barriers to home ownership.

Employment

- Provide training resources to help businesses adopt work place policies that address workforce and customer diversity.

- Create a committee to assist businesses practice fair employment and to resolve discrimination complaints.

Communication and Information

- Publish newsletters, brochures, booklets, and reports to keep everyone informed on commission activities, emerging human relations issues, race relations, and civil rights challenges.

- Create a directory of human relations and conflict management agencies, resources, manuals, calendars, and intergroup dialogues.

- Publicize the work of the commission by using public service advertisements on television, radio, and newspapers. Share important human relations materials with churches and community organizations for use in their newsletters.

- Sponsor public forums for residents to air their concerns and ideas regarding community relations and the work of the commission. This keeps open the lines of communication among the citizens and the commission.

- Develop strong working relationships with media, particularly media which reach minority groups and neighborhoods.

- Arrange a human relations telephone hotline which can respond to community relations concerns and handle rumor control in times of community tension and crisis.

- Develop an Internet website. The Internet is a good way to disseminate information. Update the site with special features and be sure to answer electronic inquiries.

Media

- Provide information and guidance which encourage the media to report

on news involving all of the groups and neighborhoods in the area.

- Help the media report on issues involving less visible communities. Reporting on diverse groups helps build understanding and fuller participation in civic affairs.

- Involve the media in programs and projects that encourage good community relations, tolerance, and understanding.

- Bring together a cross section of the media to explore how they can work together to understand the perspectives and concerns of all groups and communities.

Research and Data Collection

- Encourage demographic studies by local colleges and universities to increase awareness of the impact of population changes on community relations.

- Collect, analyze, and report data on community relations indicators, such as hate crimes.

Human Relations Report Card

Help develop an understanding of the state of human relations by use of indicators to assess human relations progress. Such measures could include housing, education, employment, hate crime, demographics, social services, and recreation. Share the report card with officials and the general public.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE

The Community Relations Service (CRS), a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, is a specialized Federal conciliation service available to State and local officials to help resolve and prevent racial and ethnic conflict, violence and civil disorder. When governors, mayors, police chiefs, and school superintendents need help to defuse racial or ethnic crises, they turn to CRS. CRS helps local officials nad residents tailor locally defined resolutions when conflict and violence threaten community stability and well-being. Created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, CRS is the only Federal Agency dedicated to preventing and resolving racial and ethnic tensions, incidents, and civil disorders. It assists State and local units of government, private and public organizations, and community groups in restoring community racial stability and harmony.

CRS OFFICES

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(May 2002)

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Community Relations Service U.S. Department of Justice

Customer Service Standards

Our goal is to provide sensitive and effective conflict prevention and resolution services. CRS will meet the following standards:

- We will clearly explain the process that CRS uses to address racial and ethnic conflicts and our role in that process.

- We will provide opportunities for all parties involved to contribute to and work toward a solution to the racial or ethnic conflict.

- If you are a participant in a CRS training session or conference, you will receive timely and useful information and materials that will assist you in preventing or minimizing racial and ethnic tensions.

- We will be prepared to respond to major racial or ethnic crisis situations within 24 hours from the time when your community notifies CRS or CRS becomes aware of the crisis.

- In non-crisis situations we will contact you to discuss our services within three days of when your community notifies CRS or when CRS becomes aware of the situation.

(August 2001)

Good Morning, May 29, 2014

I commend all of you for serving in the city departments and serving our diverse population of the city.

The purpose of my visit is twofold:

(1) To establish a relationship with the DHRC and all city departments.
(2) To seek input from all city departments for the DHRC Strategic Plan 2014-2017
(3) To have all District Commissioners and At-large Commissioner review input that concerns their District or the entire city
(4) To review DHRC Strategic Plan 2014-2017 with Council members for input

All input information should be developed as a positive means for the DHRC to use in strengthening and promoting city services. Ex: Workshop- Due Process of City Inspection(s)

All city departments' input should be sent to the City Manager's Office by 6/4/14 and forward to City Clerk's Office by 6/5/14.

The City Clerk's Office is the DHRC contact point for incoming and outgoing information.

Cecil C. Wilson, Chair

Dover Human Relations Commission