DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 25, 2013

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL, DOVER

Present: Vice Chair, Dawn Allen-Pyne, Justina H. Brewington, Ellen O. Wasfi and Faye Della White, Dr. Linda Hackett and Chairman, Roy Sudler, Jr.

Absent: Dr. Phyllis Edamatsu

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call:** Chairman, Roy Sudler, Jr. called the Dover Human Relations Commission Meeting to order on this day, Wednesday, September 25, 2013 at 7:03 p.m.

2. **Moment of Silence:** was observed.

3. **Adoption of Minutes for Special Meeting of June 13, 2013 and Regular Meeting of August 28, 2013**

   a. **Special Meeting of June 13, 2013**

   Chairman, Roy Sudler called for a motion to accept the minutes of the special meeting held on June 13, 2013

   Vice Chair Dawn Allen-Pyne motion to accept the minutes of the special meeting held on June 13, 2013 with the proper corrections.

   Commissioner Dr. Hackett second

   Motion carried.

   b. **Regular Meeting of August 28, 2013**

   Chairman, Roy Sudler called for a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting held on August 28, 2013

   Vice Chair Dawn Allen-Pyne motion to accept the minutes of the special meeting held on August 28, 2013 with the proper corrections.

   Commissioner Brewington second

   Motion carried.

4. **Comments/Presentations from Members of the Community:**
   James Wilson a resident and business owner on 239 W. Lockerman Street in Dover Delaware approached the podium and made comments regarding being a victim of police brutality in the City of Dover, Delaware. Mr. Wilson stated that he attended a protest demonstration that was held recently in Dover at the Police Department on Bank Lane. The protest was for his cousin who was a victim of police brutality in the City of Dover, Delaware. He stated that his cousin was accused of loitering on Queen Street, in an area where his family members reside and was tazed in the face after running, by a Dover Police Officer. His cousin was then flown from Bay Health/Kent General Hospital to Christiana Hospital after suffering four fractures to his face, blood clots and bleeding on the brain. The intent of the demonstration was to question the Mayor and the Dover Police Chief as to why there are so many assaults in the community on black women, children and men for arrest verses having the judicial system vindicating or finding one guilty of whatever charge one is being accused.

Mr. Wilson stated that he was assaulted when police officers ran into his place of business and after requesting a search warrant, surrendering by lying down on the floor, he was hit in the head twice with a blunt object.
Mr. Wilson stated that at the meeting he attended Police Chief Hosfeld admitted that the surveillance video does show someone assaulting him. Mr. Wilson also stated that the Police Chief said that it was not anyone from the Dover Police Department.

Mr. Wilson submitted pictures to the Commission of his injuries and a copy of the intake form he filed with the City Clerk's Office on September 23, 2013.

Mr. Wilson shared several stories of other African American residence in the City of Dover who also were treated brutally by the police after being arrested. Mr. Wilson stated that he did not know of DHRC and that it was an article in the Delaware State Newspaper regarding Derrick Smallwood, Reggie Hammond and the initiation of Dover Human Relations Commission that brought him into the DHRC Meeting tonight to offer support and to help combat the problem of police brutality in the African American community and to make a difference.

Commissioner White stated she recalls some of the incidents Mr. Wilson spoke of and asks what kind of protection we can provide**.**

Commissioner Brewington stated that we should not have to walk the streets of America afraid**.**

Ms. Angelini from the community stated that there are times in our life where we have to be fearless to right injustice.

Chairman Sudler thanked Mr. Wilson for coming out and expressing his concerns.

Commissioner Brewington shared with Mr. Wilson that DHRC meet every forth Wednesday at 7:00pm.

Commissioner White thanked Mr. Wilson also for coming out and stated that the DHRC meetings need to be televised on Comcast and announced in the newspapers to help inform the community of our presence.

Commissioner Hackett stated that she was inspired by Mr. Wilson coming out to take a stand and wanting to help bring forth change and peace for everyone in the community.

Commissioner Wasfi thanked Mr. Wilson and commented on the point that he made regarding the reason behind the formation of DHRC. She stated that the essence that she sees here is to bring forth public attention to what is going on in the community. She also stated that she would like to see the news media present at one of our meetings along with several members of the community presenting highly documented instances of how mistreatment has been done in patterns over the years. Commissioner Wasfi reiterated that a collective voice is needed to present the problems the community is facing.

Chairman Sudler asked Mr. Wilson if he filled out a complaint form with the Dover Police Department after attending the meeting on police brutality concerns.

Mr. Wilson stated that he did fill out a complaint form on April 10, 2013 with Lt. Richardson, Dover Police, Internal Affairs Division supplying of two witnesses. Mr. Wilson stated that he received a phone call days later from Lt. Richardson stating that the Dover Police Department did nothing wrong and his complaint will be turned over to the Office of Probation and Parole for further investigation. Mr. Wilson stated that he was not satisfied with the response he received from Lt. Richardson and forwarded a copy of his complaint to the Governor and Mayor being that the two witnesses that he supplied were not interviewed and an Internal Affairs Officer was present when he was hit in the head.

Chairman Sudler asked Mr. Wilson if he received a written response to the complaint he filed.

Mr. Wilson stated that at this point he did not receive any written response and was not comfortable with the fact that Lt. Richardson, Internal Affair Division is also a part of the Dover Police Department and his relationship with his colleagues may override his judgment to see that they done something wrong. Mr. Wilson stated that the reason why he feels this way is because the two witnesses he supplied Lt. Richardson were not interviewed and an Internal Affairs Officer was present when the brutality happened to him.

Commissioner Brewington asked Mr. Wilson if the pictures he presented were attached to his intake form.

Chairman Sudler stated that we did receive Mr. Wilson's intake form and was instructed by the City Clerk's Office today that this matter is out of our jurisdiction and being turned over to Internal Affairs.

Mr. Wilson asked what the DHRC does

Commissioner Wasfi responded that we have been trying to define that answer over the past two years. She also stated that DHRC provides a venue where the community can come to express their concerns with or without an intake form.

Mr. Wilson stated that people can express their concerns to their wife, husband or minister. We are in need of an organization has power and can assist him with his concerns.

Commissioner Sudler expressed that DHRC would like to function in its mandate.

Commissioner Brewington asked Mr. Wilson if he has taken his concern to the State of Delaware Commission on Human Relations.

Commissioner Sudler thanked Mr. Wilson again and asked if there was anyone else from the community who wanted to present tonight

Debra Angelini, 200 W. Lockerman, Dover, Delaware approached the podium and stated that she attended a DHRC meeting in July 2013 regarding DART bus services and ask if we received any follow-up on the documentation she submitted.

Chairman Sudler stated that we could not get involved because this issue is on a state level.

Debra Angelini stated that she did follow up and got signatures of the public and made contact with other officials. She stated that she did contact and receive a response from Senator Bushwilder and DART who set up a meeting at the Public Library which Dart outlined their services. Ms. Angelini stated that the meeting did not clear up her concerns or resolve them but they are in review. She stated that she mentioned they need to change Darts fixed routes. Ms. Angelini stated that she spoken to other passengers and listened to their concerns and needs to find the right information and people to address those concerns.

Chairman Sudler thanked Ms. Angelini for presenting and for all of her hard work.

Commissioner Wasfi also thanked Ms. Angelini for her phenomenal work she has done contacting Dart and other public officials and suggested that she continue to follow up with those who she contacted and get others with the same concerns to do the same.

Chairman Sudler asked Ms. Angelini to submit her packet to DHRC when completed so she can have it on public record.

Ms. Angelini stated that she will forward a packet and follow up each town on the proposal Dart presented her.

Commissioner White stated that she is glad that Ms. Angelini contacted Senator Bushwilder as suggested and advised that it will take some time for a response but know that the Senator will respond.

Commissioner Sudler thanked Ms. Angelini again and asked if there was anyone else from the community who wanted to present tonight

Mr. La Mar Gunn approached the podium with a complaint regarding his experience with members of City Council during the Regular Council Meeting of September 9, 2013, with regard to consideration of the Public Hearing - Appeal of Order to Vacate - 20 North New Street, 29 South New Street, and 37 South New Street, owned by the House of Pride. Mr. Gunn stated that he filed a complaint with the City Clerk's Office.

Mr. Gunn stated that his duty now is to help those in need until Dover is playing from a leveled playing field where everyone has an opportunity. He and others plan to bring training and employment opportunities into the community as well as economic development to the 4th district.

Chairman Sudler thanked Mr. Gunn for coming out.

Commission Wasfi suggested that Mr. Gunn contact the State Human Relations Commission as well.

Commission White

Mr. Gunn stated that he was told that this is a City of Dover issue.

5. **Chair's Report: Chairman Sudler postponed reviewing the remainder of the agenda until next meeting due to time constraints**

6. **Committee Report:**

    a. **School Programs:**

    b. **Community Programs:**

    c. **Assessment:**

    d. **Intake Forms:**

7. **New Business:**
    a. **Letter to Councilman James Hutchison – Dialogue on Ideas and Opinions Concerning DHRC's Future Procedural Flowchart and Decree**
    b. **Discussion – Special Workshops, Finance Department Review of the City of Dover Purchasing Policy**

8. **Scheduling of Future Meetings**: October 23, 2013 @ 7pm at Dover City Hall

9. **Announcements:**

10. **Adjournment :**

Vice Chair Dawn Allen-Pyne motioned to adjourn

Commissioner White second

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Belinda Talton