DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

MINUTES OF APRIL 24, 2013

CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL, DOVER

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

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call:** Chairman, Roy Sudler, Jr. called the Dover Human Relations Commission Meeting to order on this day, Wednesday, April 24, 2013 at 7:16 p.m.

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

3. **Commissioner Wasfi** motioned to have Approval of Minutes automatically placed on agenda as item number three on the agenda.

   Vice Chairman Dawn Allen-Pyne second

   Motioned Carried.

4. **Comments/Presentations from Members of the Community:** There were no comments made at this time.

5. **Chair's Report:**

   Chairman Sudler asked the Commissioners to review the Chair's Report. Chairman Sudler advised that the Flow Chart that was presented at the meeting he attended will be presented to the Commissioners at the next meeting. **Chairman Sudler** reported that on April 13, 2013 at approximately 8:30 p.m. to 3:00 pm he participated in the Delaware Department of Justice Crime Free Multi-Housing Program Training which reviewed:

   - City of Dover's Property Inspection Tips
   - Best Practices For Landlords
   - Best Eviction Process For Landlords
   - Fair Housing and Tenant Screening Techniques

   On April 16, 2013 at approximately 5:46pm, a resident of Dover inquired about the process for filing an intake form with the Dover Human Relations Commission. Chairman Sudler explained to the person to the process and gave them an intake form.

   On April 17, 2013 at approximately 11:17am, Chairman Sudler was contacted by a resident of Dover who recently inquired about the Intake process for DHRC on April 16, 2013. The resident is working on a statement of events to file as an intake form with DHRC.

   DHRC-(PO) Case #01.2013-04-17

   [01=Number of Cases 2013=Year-04=Month-17Day]

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On April 22, 2013 at approximately 8:30pm, Chairman Sudler spoke with Chief James E. Hosfelt of the Dover Police Department and Ann Marie Townsend, City Developer and both individuals agreed to participate in a special forum titled ***Landlord's and Tenant's Obligation to Adhere to New City Ordinance*** #2013-04 Sec 22-331 (Purpose, Applicability, Definition and Compliance).

On March 25, 2013 at approximately 7:47pm, Chairman Sudler presented the following items for review of content of the Speech Flowchart for Annual Presentation.:

- ORIGIN OF THE DHRC

In the year 2001, a Resident of Dover, Delaware named Reginald L. Hannah age 39, died while in custody of the Dover Police during a routine traffic stop. Reginald L. Hannah's controversial death accompanied by death threats and shots fired towards Dover Police Officers, in result, sparked racial tension and intergroup conflict between most Caucasian and African American Communities.

In an effort to relieve the racial tension in Dover, Delaware; Director of the State Human Relations Commission in **2001, Juana Fuentes-Bowles, NAACP, IMA,** Councilman **James Hutchison** who was at that time was **Mayor James Hutchison, Councilman Wallace R. Dixon**, at that time Elder Wallace R. Dixon and myself **Roy Sudler, Jr.** all participated on the **"Dover Community Harmony Panel"** which helped to create the **Dover Human Relations Commission.**

The **issues, strategies, objectives and clergy** involvement is provided for review in your annual report packet.

2. Enabling Legislative Powers and Duties

Of the Dover Human Relations Commission is Pursuant to Chapter 2 – Administrative, Article I, Division 6, Section 2 – 21 and Article II Section 58 – 31 Titled Human Relations Commission's Purpose;

(1) Fairness and Respect among all citizens of Dover

(2) Monitoring and developing ways to measure community relations particularly

those that are a source of intergroup conflict

(3) Involve all segments of the community in understanding and appreciating the

benefits of positive intergroup relations

(4) Offer a range of programs and services that will help its residents and

neighborhoods prevent and resolve issues of human relations; and

(5) Develop ways of anticipating, preparing for, and relieving community tensions

arising from intergroup conflict.

- The Commission Members are [Look at Slide]

We will now review item #3

3. The Commission's Meeting and Procedural Flowchart

States that once the Commission has received an Intake Form from a Resident of Dover, it is then submitted to the City Clerk's Office for a case number and placed on the Commission's Business Meeting Agenda under New Business, ten [10] days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

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Pursuant to the Flowchart, the Commission is responsible and charged with investigating the facts, merit and jurisdiction of the complaint in a hearing session.

The Commission only hears both parties testimony and does not make a decision during the night of the hearing.

The Commission's Recommendation for Action and Jurisdiction is assessed at the Decision-Making Meeting which is held at a later date determined by the Commission after considering all of the facts and circumstance related to the complaint.

We will now review item #4

4. 2012 INTAKE FORMS REPORTED

The first report was filed in January 2012, which involved an array of

1. 3/5 Index Cards that were disseminated on the streets of Down - Town Dover and Delaware State University's Campus which displayed an image of a person of color hanging by a rope tied to his or her neck from a tree with a racial slur statement saying,

"Cleaning Up the Streets One Nigger at a Time"

- The second report was also filed in January 2012, which involved an

2. Alleged Excessive Force Complaint between a Dover Police Officer and a Dover Resident. The witness to the alleged assault feared for his or her safety and chose not to report the incident to Industrial Affairs for the Dover Police Department.

The third report was filed in September 2012, which involved an

3. Alleged Hanging Report that according to Henry Fordham, took place at Silver-Lake Recreational Park located in Dover, Delaware on September 21, 2012.

On September 28, 2012, The Dover Human Relations Commission scheduled a Special Roundtable Meeting for October 5, 2012, to hear the testimony of Mr. Henry Fordham.

[Please see Roundtable Agenda pg. 30, City Solicitor's Opinion pg.34 and 4th District Councilmen Andersons Opinion on pg. 35 in Annual Report]

- ✓ We will now review item # 5.

ITEM 5

Complaint against DHRC

On November 5, 2012, the City Clerk's Office and City Manager received an official complaint from Mr. Eshed Alston a resident of Dover, who claims that the Commission is not investigating or informing the Black Community of the factual existence of lynching activity in the City of Dover.

[Please review pg. 33 of Annual Report

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Item 6

DHRC - CONCERNS:

The Dover Human Relations Commission is very concerned about the amount of intake forms that indicate racial tension in the City of Dover being deferred out to other agencies for investigation**. Pursuant to Chapter 2 – Administrative, Article I, Division 6, Section 2 – 21 and Article II Section 58 – 31 Titled Human Relations Commission's Purpose;** the Commission has been granted the **Powers and Duties** to investigate claims of unfair treatment and develop ways to monitor intergroup conflict among all segments of the City of Dover.

The ambiguity of our purpose and constant deferrals of intake complaint forms followed by constant ostracism from constituents of Dover regarding the Commission's lack of investigating official intake complaint forms have unfortunately, contributed significantly to the resignation of current and previous commission members, especially after hearing the nature and urgency of resident's concerns and not being able to investigate the merit of their complaint.

In an effort to avoid further resignations of current and future Commission Members, it is my recommendation, as Chairman of the Dover Human Relations Commission, that the **Mayor and City Council of Dover, Delaware, conduct a Special Meeting with the Dover Human Relations Commission, City Clerk's Office and City Solicitor in quest of interpreting Chapter 2 – Administrative, Article I, Division 6, Section 2 – 21 of the Dover Code and Article II. Human Relations Commission, Sec. 58-31.** Purpose: to mitigate or eradicate current and future Commission Member's concerns and feelings of not fulfilling their duties as Commissioners who advocate Human and Civil Rights for all segments of Dover, Delaware.

We will now review item # 7.

Item 7 Certificates of Training

Were received in the areas of

1) Title 25 State of Delaware's Landlord / Tenant Codes

This training covered key issues involving:

Fair Housing Initiatives

Landlord & Tenant's Remedies for Breach of Rules and Covenants; and

Zero-Tolerance Rules & Regulations for Subsidy Housing [HUD]

[Please refer to pg. 16 of your annual report packet]

The second training identified

2) How to Investigate and Prosecute Hate Crimes

The training covered an array of topics such as the need for Non-Governmental Organizations to be more proactive and aware of the statutes and laws involving hate crimes.

- ✓ This training was the foundation of the Dover Human Relations Commission's Special Meeting conducted on August 9, 2012

[Please review attachment for training outline on pg. 7 of your Annual Report Packet]

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Item 8

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SPECIAL FORUM ON COMMUNITY AND STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN REPORTING AND RESOLVING HATE CRIMES IN COMMUNITIES AND HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS:

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- Was a partnership initiative with the State Human Relations Commission, Delaware Department of Justice, Delaware State University Police Department, Delaware State University's Counseling Division, 31st District House of Representative Darryl Scott and the Dover Human Relations Commission in accordance with **Article II. Section 58 – 21 (1) Fairness \ Respect and (4) Prevent and Monitor Human Relations in Dover, Delaware.**

The forum focused on raising the awareness and involvement in resolving and reporting racial and sexual orientation hate crimes in Dover and throughout the State of Delaware.

In addition, to review ethical remedies for dealing with emotional, spiritual, and social challenges for victims of bias-motivated violence.

Some of the highlighted information discussed was **Title 42 U.S.C. Code 3631 as a Hate Crime covered under the State of Delaware's Title 11 Code 1304 Section (a) (2),** selection of victim due to **race and sexual orientation.**

Chief Prosecutor of Kent County, Delaware {Ken Haltom Esq.} from the Department of Justice stated, "He knows that hate crimes occur more often than what is being reported and he feels and understands the frustration that a person can experience, but he believes that forums such as this one would help to promote healthy dialogue and change in the State of Delaware.

In fact, Chief Haltom shared with the Commission that out of **15 years of practicing law**, this forum was the first of its kind according to his experience, which he feels is a big change for him, one which he embrace and is eager to be a big part of.

[Please Review Special Forum Minutes Located on pg. 18 – 29 Annual Report]

- In conclusion of the Dover Human Relations Commission's 2012 Annual Report Presentation,

Item number 9 titled:

PROPOSED RESOLUTION AND FUNDING

**********was approved by the Commission on June 27, 2012,

The Commission's approval of the final resolution draft, titled:

Cessation of Illegal Gang Formation in Dover, Delaware, was due to the amount of complaints and concerns from Dover Residents and Business Owners complaining about the enormous amount of gang activity and graffiti growth in the City of Dover and throughout Kent County.

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This **Resolution was written as a plan of action** to provide the City of Dover with additional monetary resources and youth enrichment programs that will help eliminate illegal gang activity in the City of Dover.

According to the City's Controller Mrs. Donna Mitchell, the City's Human Relations Commission is the first Commission to seek or inquire about a grant on behalf of the City during her tenure with the City of Dover.

The Principle of the Grant is provided by OJJDP, which promotes Defending Childhood Resource Centers and Improving the Nation's Response to Children Exposed to Violence.

[Please turn to page 13 – 15 of the annual report and follow me as I read the resolution.]

DHRC – 2012 PROPOSED RESOLUTION & FUNDING

FOR CESSATION OF ILLEGAL GANG FORMATION IN DOVER, DELAWARE

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Whereas; The City of Dover, the State Capital, strives to be a model for all cities in Delaware and the United States.

Whereas; The Mayor and City Council have granted Powers and Duties to the Dover Human Relations Commission, **Pursuant to Article II. Sec. 58-31.**

Whereas; Article II Sec. 58-31 titles (2), (4) and (5) charges the DHRC with developing ways to measure and monitor community relations and offer a range of programs and services that will help Dover residents identify and resolve issues of human relations; anticipating, preparing for, and relieving community tensions arising from intergroup conflict**.(Code 1981, § 2-16; Ord. of 2-11-2002)**

Whereas; The Dover Human Relations Commission through open discussion with members of the community and the knowledge of local events has found that gun possession and illegal gang activity is at an all-time high.

Whereas; Illegal gangs are a group of individuals consisting of three or more persons whose demoralizing influence, common interest, attitude and graffiti signs significantly contribute to the commission of disruptive behavior and criminal enterprises in the City of Dover.

Whereas; the number of illegal gang organizations in Dover and Kent County has increased over the last few years, cultivating an environment of psychic imprisonment, mistrust and fear among citizens of Dover.

Whereas; Illegal gang culture and activities have played a significant role in student dropout rates, drug activity and random acts of violence, often leaving innocent bystanders paralyzed and traumatized for life.

Whereas; Illegal gang graffiti promoting hate, fear and danger has defaced public and private sector facilities, impeding home and business owner's rights to market or enjoy their property, without unwelcomed and unauthorized graffiti signs.

Therefore, Be it Resolved; That the Residents of Dover, Delaware, the Mayor, City Council, Dover Police Department, Delaware Department of Justice and the Dover Human Relations Commission have observed with dismay the escalation of gang growth and development in our communities and will merge resources and efforts to intensify the pursuit of eliminating illegal gang formation, activities, and communication, including the display of graffiti signs in Dover, Delaware.

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Be it Further Resolved; that we will accomplish this goal and establish a **New Community and Family Involvement Paradigm** for Cessation of Illegal Gang Formation by

1. Cleaning up our streets together, showing resistance to illegal

   gang formation and unwelcomed graffiti signs through unity and clear purpose;

2. Increasing individual's awareness and accountability for reporting known illegal gang activity and \ or formation in your community.

3. Strengthening parent and family involvement in the childrearing and educational process

4. Implementing and supporting additional intervention and summer programs; and

5. Providing additional funding to the Dover Police Department through grant and other resources to establish additional police stations in areas with high volumes of crime to protect Dover residents from being a target of bias-motivated violence in the City of Dover.

As the year 2013 continues, the Dover Human Relations Commission looks forward to addressing unfair treatment claims in an effort to promote and monitor amicable relations between all races in the City of Dover.

On behalf of the Dover Human Relations Commission, we thank

The **Mayor and Dover City Council Members** for appointing each and every one of us, to serve the Dover Community in such an imperative and essential way.

o That will conclude the **Dover Human Relations Commission's 2012 Annual Report**

Thank You. Are there any Questions???????????

That concluded the Chair's report.

Dr. Hackett commented that the report was very well done**.**

Chairman Sudler stated that the new Commissioners should express their concerns. He also mentioned the problem with the turnover of Commissioners.

Dr. Hackett and Commissioner White mentioned that they attended the Mayors Reception and spoke to the Mayor regarding more support.

Commissioner Wasfi mentioned that we should have a follow through with what was mentioned in the Annual Report.

6. Committee Report:

a. **School Programs**
Commissioner Wasfi – nothing to report at this time.

b. Community Programs:
Commissioner Dawn Allen-Pyne – nothing to report at this time.

c. Assessment:
Commissioner Edamatsu – not present to report.

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d. Intake Forms:

Chairman Sudler asked if anyone was interested in fulfilling the Intake Form Chair position.
Commissioner Brewington and Vice Chair Allen-Pyne agreed to oversee this position.
Commissioner White said she will help as needed.
Chairman Sudler appointed Commissioner Brewington and Vice Chair Allen-Pyne fill this position.

Dr. Hackett stated that the problem she sees is where people go in with an intake and the Commissioners are not aware of it. She believes that we should be made aware and advised if it was out sourced.
Commissioner Wasfi suggested that we need to inquire about obtaining a mailbox for the Commission in order to receive incoming intake forms.

7. Unfinished Business:

a. **Formation of an Ad Hoc Committee for Grant Proposal – Chairman Sudler** differed this until our next meeting.
b. **Formation of an Ad Hoc Committee for Resolution Proposal – Chairman Sudler** differed this until our next meeting.

8. New Business:

a. **Commissioners Wasfi meeting with a Native American Chief –** Commissioner Wasfi reported that November is Native American Heritage Month and she is working on creating a Resolution. She also reported that the League of Women Voters had a program of Document of Discovery telling of the problems they face in society. Chief Dennis Coker will work with the Commission on a Resolution**.** Commissioner Wasfi stated once we review the Document of Discovery, we will see their struggles as a minority and as part of the community.

b. **Chairman Sudler asked if we can review the last part of his packet labeled "Landlord Tenants Ordinance".** Chairman Sudler stated that the Commissioners need to educate the community on how they will be affected by this new ordinance.
Chairman Sudler mentioned that we should have a Special Forum.
Commissioner Wasfi said this ordinance was in the paper change and followed by Council.
Chairman Sudler ask for a motion to accept a Special Forum to go over Landlord Tenant Ordinance
Commissioner White motioned
Commissioner Wasfi second
It was agreed up that on Wednesday, June 5, 2013 at 7pm this Special Forum will take place.
Chairman Sudler advised that Dover Chief of Police and Ann Marie Townsend said they will attend such a forum to go over the new ordinances. This will be advertised in the newspaper and Commissioner White will get the information for the press release from the Dover Post.

c. **DHRC Community Meetings**: Dr. Hackett was appointed by Chairman Sudler to oversee this task.
Chairman Sudler reported that Bible Way has agreed to allow the Commission to meet in their basement for Community Meetings.
Commissioner White said Village II will also make their facility available.
Dr. Hackett said Calvary will let us use their facility.

d. **Dr. Hackett** stated that she will shoot for Sunday, June 23rd for the Commissions first visitation.

9. Scheduling of the Next Regular Meeting: May 22, 2013 @ 7pm at Dover City Hall

10. Announcements:

a. **Commissioner Wasfi** announced that the YMCA will be sponsoring a Race Relations Forum this Saturday in Newark. She advised that she will email the announcement to the Commissioners. Commissioner Wasfi also announced that April 26, 2013 is International Seed Day.

b. **Chairman Sudler** announced that the Department of Justice plans on having a document shredding event on Saturday, May 4, 2013 from 9am to 1pm in DelDOT' S Administration Building parking lot.

11. Adjournment : Commissioner Sudler asked for motion to adjourn the meeting

Commissioner Wasfi made motion for the meeting to be adjourned

Vice Chair, Dawn Allen-Pyne second.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Belinda Talton

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