

Minutes
MAY 11, 2022

Commissioners Present:

Kathryn Cobb-Holmes
Lisa Blount
Karima (Karen) Archie
Richard Wagner
Zelda Yoder
Valerie Phelps-Robinson

Commissioner(s) Absent:

Stacey Taylor

Council Liaison:

Westley Butler

Staff

Kimberly Talbot

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Commissioner Cobb-Holmes. The minutes were reviewed. There is a correction under Good & Welfare. It should read Berks Democratic Women. Commissioner Wagner moved with correction. Commissioner Archie second. Minutes were approved with the correction.

Executive Director's Report

The E.D. received a request from Salvation Army and Opportunity House to provide Landlord/Tenant classes to participants.

A part time person was hired through Gage Personnel in April. She worked for 10 days and then stopped showing up. Rental/utility assistance applications come in on a consistent basis.

The leadership class will be ending soon.

The E.D. requested assistance from a few Commissioners to conduct a SWOT analysis of the agency.

Commissioner Cobb-Holmes accepted the Fair Housing proclamation from city council on April 25th.

There was 1 EEOC transfer. There was 1 fair housing case filed and 1 inquiry.

The E.D. suggested the following potential topics for Commissioner training: The history and importance of the Commission, powers/role/duties of a Commissioner (expectations, attendance, outreach etc.), the ordinance-what is/not covered, the importance of proper procedure and elections.

The E.D.'s report was moved for approval. Commissioner Wagner moved/Commissioner Yoder second. The E.D.'s report was approved.

Old Business:

Commissioner Yoder inquired about Weeniefest. Berks Coalition has not announced any upcoming events.

Commissioner Wagner would like information about the planning of Weeniefest.

Commissioner Cobb-Holmes inquired about Career/Shadow day involving Reading High students.

The E.D. will send an email of the events scheduled for Juneteenth as well as events scheduled by the NAACP.

Commissioners decided that the monthly commission meetings will occur in person starting September.

New Business

Commissioner Yoder, Cobb-Holmes, Archie & Wagner agreed to assist with the SWOT analysis.

Commissioner Wagner requested information for Reading Pride. He is requesting information on the number of founded cases involving members of the LGBTQ community.

Councilman Butler requested information on the breakdown of funds the Commission received from ARPA. He also wanted to discuss the other needs of the Commission regarding staffing.

Good & Welfare

Commissioner Wagner: On May 22nd from 3-8 p.m. there is a silent auction/wine/beer/food at the Stirling on Centre Ave. Tickets are \$65.

Commissioner Yoder: On May 19th from 5-8 p.m. the Reading Public Library is having a celebrity bartender event at Saucony (Franklin St. station). Purchase a beverage and all the tips will go to the library.

Commissioner Archie: On May 19th, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Deluxe Restaurant Kadida Kenner will be the featured speaker. She is the Executive Director for New Pennsylvania Project.

Commissioner Blount: On May 14th, the Juneteenth committee is having a spaghetti dinner at Berks lodge. Tickets are \$10.

Commissioner Cobb-Holmes: The BCIU is having a summer program from June 27th thru July 28th.

Both nurses at the BCIU have resigned. The agency is looking for RN's. They are also looking for early head start supervisor. Mus have a background in social services and some education.

The E.D. encouraged Commissioners to spread the word about potential openings at City Hall. We have a number of open positions.

Training

There will be an EEOC training for Commissioners on May 17th & 18th from 2-5 p.m. The training will be virtual.

The FEPA conference is scheduled for July 19 – 21st. Once the agenda is distributed, I will forward to Commissioners.

The next virtual meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 8th at 6 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.