

City of Reading Human Relations Commission

April 8, 2020

MINUTES

Commissioners Present:

Karima (Karen) Archie
Lisa Blount
Kathryn Cobb-Holmes, Chair
Barbara Coffin
Valerie Phelps-Robinson
Stacey Taylor
Richard Wagner
Zelda Yoder

Absent:

N/A

Staff

Kimberly Talbot

Guest

The meeting was held via Zoom and after some technical difficulties the meeting was called to order at 6:27p.m. Attendance was called by E.D. Kimberly Talbot. All Commissioners were present. The minutes were reviewed. Commissioner Coffin moved that the minutes from March 11, 2020 be accepted. Commissioner Wagner seconded. Motion carried. The minutes were approved.

Executive Director's Report

Nilda is teleworking and the E.D. is in the office. We are both considered essential personnel. Nilda was given city issued laptop & is currently using my work cellphone. All calls to the office have been forwarded to that cell number. We have been able to maintain all of our programs so far.

The Managing Director invited me to start attending Director's meetings and has included me in all Director Emails. My first meeting was March 24th. There were 3 EEOC transfers.

Due to the shutdown, the meeting with members of the Berks County Advisory Commission has been delayed. Once we re-open it will be rescheduled. Several of our outreach events scheduled in March were cancelled.

The E.D. also reported that RAWA was not shutting resident's water off during the pandemic.

Old Business:

Commissioner Yoder provided information on mail in voting/requesting of ballots. The last day to request a ballot is May 26 at 5 p.m. June 2nd is the election. The website to get more information is votespa.com

New Business

The E.D. was questioned about the types of calls the office has been receiving. The group discussed the types of calls such as landlord/tenant complaints, utility & rental assistance. The bar association is also referring a lot of people. Commissioner Yoder suggested that it may be due to the fact that lawyers are considered non-essential right now. Commissioner Coffin suggested contacting Lou Shucker & Herb Karasin to see if they could assist with some of the more technical/legal questions or if they have a group of volunteers who might help.

Commissioner Wagner requested information on events that may or may not be cancelled. He would still like the Pride flag to fly in July.

Training and Conferences:

None scheduled at this time.

Next meeting scheduled for May 13, 2020

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.