

Citizens' Unity Commission Monthly Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 12, 2019 ~ 6:00 pm-8:00pm
Northampton Community Center, 1435-A Todd's Lane, Hampton, VA.

Attendance: Alice Capehart, Milton McDonald, Joiecel Riviera, Loretta Ray, Chris Grady, Mei Stukes, Mary Wallace, Jennifer Evans, Darius Swift, Willie C. Anderson, Tamika Lett, Michael Harper, Katrina Bailey, Burley Gardner (Community Liaison), Steven D. Bond (Assistant City Manager)

Absent: Kristi Jackson, Justin Carolina, Devinn Smart, Deena Franklin (Community Liaison), Trevor Hutson, Ellen Shackelford (Community Liaison), Barbara Washer, Shuntay Tarver

Staff: Latiesha Handie (Executive Director) Imara Gabe Diaz (Program Coordinator)

Call to Order – Jennifer Evans, Chairperson 6:00 pm

Roll Call – Imara Gabe Diaz, Program Coordinator

Action Items

Item 1: Roll Call

Imara Gabe Diaz, CUC Program Coordinator, noted eight absences while taking roll.

The following commissioners and Liaisons were absent with notification:

Commissioners Shuntay Tarver and Barbara Washer and Liaison member Ellen Shackelford.

The following persons were absent without notification:

Commissioners Kristi Jackson, Justin Carolina, Devinn Smart, Trevor Hutson, and Liaison member Deena Franklin.

Item 2: Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes 11-14-19

Commissioner Katrina Bailey made a motion to approve with corrections, motion seconded by Commissioner Tamika Lett, approved by a vote of commissioners.

Old Business

Item 1: CUC Commissioner meeting absenteeism

Latiesha Handie, Executive Director, explained that the CUC by-laws in relevant part communicate that according to:

Section 3: Responsibilities and Duties of Commissioners are to:

Attend and actively participate in regular meetings, attend half (50%) of the commission events, as well as the Annual Retreat;

Notify the Citizens' Unity Commission Office prior to any meeting that they will not be able to attend.

Section 2: Vacancies

Vacancies shall occur when a commissioner resigns, a commissioner misses three (3) regular meetings of the Commission without notification, or in the opinion of a majority of the commissioners, a member is no longer capable of fulfilling his/her obligations as a commissioner.

1. The Executive Director shall notify, in writing, a commissioner who misses two (2) consecutive meetings without notification that missing another meeting without notification will terminate his/her appointment.
2. The Commission shall declare a member no longer capable of fulfilling his/her obligations as a Commissioner by majority vote with a quorum present after the member has been notified of possible action by the Commission.

The following commissioners will receive notification due to excessive absenteeism:

- Justin Carolina
- Devinn Smart
- Rebecca Kristi Jackson;
- Trevor Hutson

Deena Franklin, Community Liaison for the Neighborhood Office, has not attended a meeting in the last two years. CUC staff will notify the Neighborhood Office and request a new liaison.

New Business

Item 1: Citizen's Police Advisory Group Liaison for CUC

Latiesha Handie explained that the Citizens' Police Advisory Group needs a CUC representative to act as a Liaison on their board.

This committee acts in an advisory capacity to the Chief of Police and will consult with the Chief of Police on matters brought to the committee by the Chief of Police or his designee(s) concerning crime prevention strategies or Hampton Police Division policies.

Commissioner Darius Swift explained his involvement with the Citizen Police Academy and asked if we preferred individuals with some knowledge or experience in such policing programs. Steven D. Bond, Assistant City Manager, stated that it was not a required criterion for persons to be considered. He explained that when President Barack Obama had a council on 21st century policing, it was recommended to have a citizen-based advisory council to review police policy and provide feedback. Based on that suggestion, the police decide whether to move forward with the recommendation.

Mr. Bond gave an example of some subjects the committee has addressed, such as video/body camera policies.

Meetings are held bi-monthly on the First Thursday in February, April, June, August, October, and December at 6:00 p.m., HPD Townsend Community Room.

Commissioners Katrina Bailey, Darius Swift, and Joiecel Riviera expressed interested in acting as the CUC Liaison for CPAG.

Latiesha Handie explained that she would make a recommendation after her CUC update meeting with Mr. Bond.

The individual selected would be notified in the upcoming meeting.

Mr. Bond stated CPAG is also seeking two youth representatives between the ages of 18-24. He requested that we share this opportunity amongst our realms of influence.

Item 2: Committee Work- Breakouts

Latiesha Handie stated the following groups did not have to meet because upcoming due to active event plans as chronicled below:

- **LGBTQ Awareness - Find Your Voice-** Intimate Partner Violence Discussion on Dec 21, 2019 at Element Hotel, 1 pm – 3 pm.

During this meeting, Commissioners signed an RSVP sheet to confirm planned attendance to the LGBTQ Conversation.

- **Youth Advisory Group** – The next meeting held December 16, 2019, will be on Parliamentary procedure and Elections in partnership with 4-H Cooperative Extension.

During this meeting Commissioners, Darius Swift and Mei Stukes confirmed their participation for the upcoming meeting

- **Hampton Diversity College-** Commissioners Joiecel Riviera and Jennifer Evans to look at the forthcoming Diversity College dates and decide which dates they could commit to attending.
- **Circles of Diversity-** Commissioners Milton McDonald, Willie C. Anderson, and Mary K. Wallace received the facilitator material and discussion manuals for their review. Circles of Diversity will not launch until 2021.

Item 3: Committee Reports outs!

- **Movie Talks-** Sub-committee members tasked to identify targeted guests to increase participation in the upcoming conversations. Each commissioner will be responsible for inviting groups or people to each dialogue. The upcoming movies and accountable parties are as followed:

February 24th – Imitation of Life

Commissioners Chris Grady and Michael Harper will take the lead to invite participants from Aberdeen and Ball Ink.

March 16th – Inside Out

Sub-committee members discussed if March 16th's movie could be changed to a more mature film, as they were unsure if they would have an identifiable audience with interest.

Latiesha Handie explained themes of the film expressively reflected the diversity of thought for any age group and recommended to preserve the continuity of our marketing efforts to air the selected film. She stated any additional movie selections could be considered in next year's planning.

Sub-committee members did not identify a group or persons to invite for the March movie but agreed to do so in January.

April 20th – Troop 491

Commissioners Mei Stukes and Loretta Ray will take the lead to invite participants from city groups, Boys & Girls Club(s), sororities, and troops.

- **One City One Books** – Sub-committee members tasked to identify books to consider for the February Book Discussion.

Committee members selected three books for consideration.

- To be a Slave by Julius Lester
- The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Color Blindness by Michelle Alexander

- Kindred by Octavia Butler

Committee members will reach out to Rita Scrivener to schedule a planning meeting for the next steps.

- **Hot Button Topics-** Sub-committee members tasked to assist with clarifying topic descriptions.

Marketplace Talks: is a conversation series over a meal that allows citizens to discuss current events that are impacting our local, national, and international communities. Topics include issues that may create temporary discomfort for long term understanding as it relates to privilege, violence, and mental health in our society. Participants will learn why these topics are relevant and find out how they can connect to available resources to promote the flourishing and sustainability of our community to continue the conversation.

This program introduces participants to the following concepts:

Privilege:

Explores the concept of privilege in local and broader communities as it relates to the advantages and disadvantages in society.

Mental Health:

Concentrates on the various aspects of societal responses to mental wellness and the effects of those responses in various communities.

Violence:

Examines the impacts of intended harm in minority and broader communities and its societal effects.

- **Unity through Art- Sub-Committee** members tasked to determine two activities to launch in 2020. CUC staff spoke with staff at Charles H. Taylor to discuss a potential partnership for venue space.

Committee members discussed a Native American drumming event and the History of Tap Dancing.

Target Audience: General public (youth focus)

Locations: Charles H. Taylor, Kecoughtan, Hampton High School

Dates: Native American Dancing & Drumming – March, History & Education of Tap Dancing – April

Format- interactive demonstration, discussion along with refreshments

Unity Awards – Sub-committee members decided to have a conference call meeting before the January meeting.

1. Items to be discussed and examined:
2. Revising the nomination form
3. Guidelines for nomination and the evaluation process
4. Suggestions for preparing a nomination packet;
5. Consider relaxing and livening up the program (Mrs. Handie), adding a multimedia piece.

Go-Backs:

Announcements: CUC has been invited to a Meet & Greet with the Neighborhood and Clean City Commissions to introduce potential partnerships. Burley Gardner, Community Liaison, stated that he would be sending a flyer for commissioners to attend an event on January 15, 2020.

Adjourned 7:31 pm

Next Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, January 9, 2020, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm