

Minutes

Human Relations Commission

October 10, 2023

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, 6:00 p.m., held both In-Person & Virtually: Tempe Public Library 2nd Floor Conference Room, 3500 South Rural Road, Tempe, AZ 85282 & Microsoft Teams at the following link: [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#) or by telephone: (480) 498-8745, United States, Phoenix (Toll), Conference ID: 762 995 762#

(MEMBERS) Present:

Hugo Tapia, Chair
Jose Rojas
Tom Brown
Pamela Chan
Rabbanni FurQaan
Kate Vawter

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Candyce Lindsay
Melissa Farling
William Ortega
Peggie Simmons, Vice Chair

City Staff Present:

Elena Hale, Cultural Programs & Public Education Coordinator
Jamie Rodriguez, Executive Assistant to CMO

Guests

BLM Metro Phoenix

Call to Order

Chair Tapia called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

None

Agenda Item 2 – Unity Grant – Ron Denne & Dr. Cliff Moon

TABLED

Agenda Item 3 – Youth Divergence /Pre-Court Program – BLM Phoenix Metro

Black Lives Matter Metro Phoenix presented a presentation titled “Alternative to Police Presentation” to the Human Relations Commission meeting. This presentation was to inform the work that is currently being done by BLM to address the school to prison pipeline. The presentation delivered provided an outline of the creation of alternatives of justice-based youth diversion programs in the City of Tempe. This program offers an alternative route when youth commit minor offenses. Rather than going through the normal judicial process of court, this program would offer the juvenile to go through the Youth Divergent Program.

The proposed community-based initiative focuses on youth 18 – 25 years of age, and allows minor offenses to be addressed by having youth participate in, and complete, a restorative justice program. This opportunity would reduce the rates of criminalization in Tempe. The program decreases the

probability of future conviction by 48%. As stated in the presentation, “nationally, youth diversion programs are on average 10% more effective in reducing future contact with the criminal legal system”. Currently and MOU is being drafted and hopefully to be presented in 2024, funding will be needed for this program but is cheaper than the normal judicial system process. Grants are encouraged to help funding this program. Tempe would be the pilot and the goal would to then be offered through the county. The youth are heavily involved in the design of the program by providing feedback through focus groups, etc. The goal of this program is to lessen the rates by which Youth of Color are incarcerated for minor offenses and decrease the probability of future convictions.

Commissioners asked, “how is data being gathered?” Data has been gathered by researching divergent programs within Arizona. Commissioners also asked how would they decide which cases to take on? BLM provided the top 10 common charges within Tempe, and they plan to focus on the top 2 common charges.

Agenda Item 4 – Announcements

- Regional HRC Meeting
 - o Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 6:00 PM, SW Center for HIV/AIDS
 - o Register to speak/comment by November 13, 2023
- MLK Breakfast Speakers
 - o 1st: Dr. Kenja Hassan
 - o 2nd: Dr. Karen Hardin
 - o 3rd: Dr. Mona Scott Figueroa
 - o Nomination form will be sent out this week (MLK)
- October 21st GAIN

Agenda Item 5 – Proposed Future Agenda Items

- COT Housing Resources
- Crown Act

Agenda Item 6 – Discussion of Upcoming Meeting Date – November 14, 2023

Motion made by Kate Vawter to adjourn the meeting.

Second by Jose Rojas, Rabbanni FurQaan, Tom Brown, Hugo Tapia, Pamela Chan

Meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Prepared by: Jamie Rodriguez

Reviewed by: Velicia McMillan Humes