

**MINUTES  
BY GREENVILLE HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL  
AUGUST 27, 2020**

The Greenville Human Relations Council (GHRC) met Thursday, August 27, 2020 at 6:00 PM via Zoom. Members absent denoted by x.

Samar Badwan-x	Olive Barrett-*	Montez Bishop-*	Jim Cox-*
Rod Debs-*	Todd Fraley-*	Roopa Gandhi-x	Shane Knight-*
Francisco Limon-x	Antonio Milton-*	Lomax Mizzelle-*	Franchine Peña-*
Mark Rasdorf-x	LaQuon Rogers-x	Heena Shah-*	Deborah Shepard-*

Rose Glover, Council Member-x    Cassandra Daniels, Staff Liaison-\*

**Franchine Pena, Vice-Chair** called the meeting to order and welcomed the members to the Thursday, August 27, 2020 meeting.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS - None**

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD - None**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made by Olive Barrett, seconded by Montez Bishop, to approve the January and February 2020 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Staff* informed the Council that agenda items A – D are initiatives of the Council that are scheduled to take place later in the year. Due to COVID-19, and restrictions in place for indoor/outdoor events, it may be challenging for the Council to successfully sponsor the following events. Therefore, a decision has to be made about these events.

*Rod Debs*, made a motion to cancel agenda items A – D for 2020. Motion died due to lack of a second.

*Montez Bishop* suggested the Council should think outside the box and consider a bag lunch that can be delivered to the senior citizens in lieu of the annual Christmas celebration. *Todd Fraley* agreed and suggested that we think outside the box for the Inclusive Community Breakfast, as well. *Shane Knight* asked if it was possible that we have individuals attend the breakfast based on their last name. Example – letters A – K attend the breakfast from 8 – 10; and letter L – Z attend the breakfast from 10:30 – 12:30. This could be a possible way to control the number of people attending at a particular time.

*Staff* stated that the breakfast is held at the Hilton. Wearing a face mask is not the challenging piece for these events. The social distancing requirement is the most difficult part. Social distancing would require more space, and the more needed space would be more costly for the City.

**Heena Shah** asked about indoor/outdoor requirements for events. Staff stated indoor is 25; and outdoor is 10. However, **Vice-Chair Pena** and **Lomax Mizzelle** made the correction and stated 10 individuals for indoor events and 25 individuals for an outdoor event. **Olive Barrett** stated she agrees that Inclusive Community Breakfast should be cancelled; it would take all day to have people attend at different times based on requirements for indoor or an outdoor event; that would be time consuming.

**Heena Shah** stated she agrees agenda items A-C should be cancelled; and the Council should find a way to host the Senior Citizens luncheon; and that serious consideration is given to the recommendation made by **Montez Bishop** to deliver a bag lunch to our senior citizens.

**Todd Fraley** stated that a statement could be made regarding the Inclusive Community Initiative; and **Heena Shah** suggested that a resolution is created and placed on the City's website and social media accounts.

A motion was made by **Olive Barrett**, seconded by **Rod Debs** to cancel agenda items A – B (9/11 and Fair Housing Seminar); that the Council write a statement or resolution celebrating the City's Inclusive Community Breakfast (agenda item C); and that the Council continue to find a way to (agenda item D) host the City's Senior Citizens Christmas luncheon in December 2020. Motion passed 9:1, with Shane Knight voting in opposition.

### ***Racial Equity Critical Conversations***

Staff provided information regarding the "Critical Conversation" held on Thursday, July 16<sup>th</sup>. This initiative was launched following the brutal murder of George Floyd in Minnesota earlier this summer. With the query: What does racial equity look like to you? the participants identified the following four (4) themes: 1. Business & Economic Access; 2. Criminal Justice: (Pre-trial resources; courtroom equity; [and, possibly bail elimination]; 3. Law Enforcement; and, 4. Education Equity. It's important the Council continue hosting future critical conversations as a form of receiving public input and as a platform for addressing racial equity issues.

A motion was made by **Jim Cox**, seconded by **Todd Fraley**, that the Council continue hosting "critical conversations" on racial equity. Motion passed unanimously.

### **GAME P.L.A.Y**

For the last two (2) years, this initiative has drawn a large numbers of youth, volunteers and law enforcement officers to the event. Due to COVID-19 and requirements established by the Governor, CDC and the City, the co-creators, staff and their partners are looking to find an alternative while keeping everyone safe. Staff provided the following information for the 2020 GAME P.L.A.Y event:

- No costs associated with the event for the City,
- Event is scheduled for the Winterville Boys and Girls Club
- Two spaces reserved, each can hold 25 people w/more than 6 feet social distancing in place,
- Less law enforcement officers and volunteer is needed,

- Number of students invited to participate is 25 per room,
- No definitive date has been set,
- All precautions are in place,
- Covenant has partnered w/the City, and
- Covenant will provide box lunches for students/law enforcement/volunteers.

**Heena Shah** stated as a parent, my vote is NO and that we wait until 2021. I believe the City will be taking on a liability. **Montez Bishop** stated if parents are fine with their child/children participating, a permission slip should be provided from the parents. In addition, it will only take one person that is asymptomatic. We have to think about grandparents and anyone with underlying health issues. **Todd Fraley**, stated he agrees with Heena. What are the liabilities for the City? Because cases continue to increase, and because things are the way they are, don't feel comfortable with moving forward. **Olive Barrett** stated based on previous turnout for this event in the past, cutting it down to (ten) 10 or 25 people will not work. Rod Debs stated he's excited about the small groups; however, would prefer to postpone for 2020.

A motion was made by **Olive Barrett**, second by **Jim Cox**, that the GAME P.L.A.Y is postponed until 2021. Motion passed 9:1, with Lomax Mizzelle voting in opposition. **Shane Knight** requested the item be placed on the September agenda to see if a more reasonable solution could be offered for this event in 2020.

### **BLACK LIVES MATTER MURAL**

**Vice-Chairperson Franchine Pena**, informed the Council that the mural for the BLACK LIVES MATTER painting was on go until Pitt County Arts Council @ Emerge went before City Council. City Council has requested additional information for the mural. Pitt County Arts Council has requested the Human Relations Council to present the project to the Civic Arts Committee for their approval. The Council has to make some decisions regarding their request: (1) is this the Human Relations Council project, and (2) are there other ways for the Human Relations Council to support. Also, the Civic Arts Committee has not met due to COVID-19.

**Deborah Shephard** asked is the concern that this project won't get approved without the Human Relations Council backing? **Staff** stated that NC Civil or Pitt County Arts Council @ Emerge should be the organization to present and get approval from the Civic Arts Committee. **Heena Shah** stated, in the past the Council has not been involved; so why now? Is it because the Council promote, support, and believe in inclusion.

**Vice-Chairperson Franchine Pena** stated they asked for a partnership because they know the type of work the Council does in the community. Therefore, they would like for the Council to support, present to Civic Arts Committee and then to City Council. **Lomax Mizzelle** stated she agrees with supporting the Civic Arts Council regarding the Black Lives Matter mural. However, I think the meaning behind the organization of Black Lives Matter is getting lost in translation, so I don't think the Human Relations Council should take this on as a project. Believe the Council should consider taking on a more supportive role regarding this mural, which in some areas has become more symbolic of doing "a little something to appease", but not much else to invoke change. **Vice-Chairperson Franchine Pena** informed the Council that Pitt County Arts Council at Emerge has

not received approval from the Civic Arts Committee. Will this Council take this on as a project or take on in a supportive role? **Olive Barrett**, I believe the Human Relations Council should support the project, after Pitt County Arts Council has received approval from the Civic Arts Council.

**Todd Fraley** stated Council members received two (2) documents regarding this project; and this Council has to decide if we should support; and if so, how? It's my understanding that Pitt County Arts Council @ Emerge has approved 48 pieces of art work in the past with no issues. What's the problems and/or concerns with a Black Lives Matter mural? **Jim Cox** asked if there was a plan or a presentation that we can see/hear. **Shane Knight** stated his concern is that the Council does not know what we are supporting; therefore, we could be biting off more than we can chew. **Deborah Shepherd** stated there isn't a plan or presentation. Also, when you see a Black Lives Matter mural, individual artists design their own letter. If you were to see a sketch, you will only see the letters and not the design.

After much consideration, a motion was made by Rod Debs, seconded by Montez Bishop, that the Human Relations Council write a letter of conceptual support for the project contingent upon the project's approval by the Civic Arts Committee; and, that a representative attend the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

**Comments – No comments**

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made by **Todd Fraley**, seconded by **Jim Cox**, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cassandra Daniels*

Cassandra Daniels  
Human Relations Officer