

**ADOPTED MINUTES OF THE
GREENVILLE HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL
April 28, 2022**

The Greenville Human Relations Council (GHRC) met Thursday, April 28, 2022 at 6:00 PM. The meeting was held in COMPSTAT Conference Room. Members absent denoted by x.

Samar Badwan-*	Olive Barrett-*	Susann Camus-*
Rod Debs-*	Todd Fraley-*	Tyleik Harris-*
Logan Harrison-*	Liz Liles-*	Francisco Limon-x
Antonio Milton-x	Lomax Mizzelle-x	Franchine Peña-*
LaQuon Rogers-x	Procopio Serrano-x	Tyrone Walston-x

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

ROLL CALL: *Ms. Cassandra Daniels, staff liaison*, called the roll and quorum was ascertained.

Ms. Samar Badwan, Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed the following new members: Ms. Susann Camus and Mr. Tyleik Harris to the Thursday, April 28th meeting. She also made the following announcements: (1) early voting has started, and (2) Mr. Todd Fraley has been promoted as interim dean at ECU.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by *Ms. Liz Liles*, and seconded by *Ms. Olive Barrett*, to approve the March 24, 2022 minutes with any necessary corrections. Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Fair Housing Month Summary – April 2022

Ms. Liz Liles stated two seminars were planned by the Fair Housing Committee in observance of Fair Housing Month. The first seminar was designed for tenants, giving them an opportunity to connect directly with legal aid and speak openly about their situation as a tenant. However, due to the lack of interest, it was decided the seminar be postponed and that the Committee revisit plans to provide another occasion for tenants to learn about their rights and responsibilities as renters. It's important they are given a platform to voice their concerns about their living environment. There is substantial fear that if someone come forward to express their concerns that it may open the doors for a wrongful and/or illegal eviction. Therefore, out of fear for themselves and their families, they can't be visible or heard.

Also, the Salvation Army has a statewide initiative called "Project Catch", designed to equip families experiencing homelessness with resources and services to nurture the healthy growth and development of families; especially children up to age twelve (12); and they provide training to agencies and assist with events catered towards the community. Do you think the Council can consider a partnership with Project Catch to host a community event (back to school bash) and collaborate with other agencies as a platform to educate the community on housing needs.

In addition, the seminar was held at the Hilton and approximately 65 people attended. Presenters were: Attorney Kristen Wills, Associate with Brownlee Whitlow & Praet, PLLC, Mrs. Kathy Woodard, Harbor Group Management, and Supervising Attorney, Daniel Worrall with Legal Aid of North Carolina. Mayor P. J. Connelly also attended and welcome attendees and read the Fair Housing Proclamation. Emcees for the event were, ***Vice-Chair, Franchine Philpot Pena*** and ***GAPMA's President, Leigh Ann Odom***.

Mr. Logan Harrison asked about a fair housing ordinance for the City. ***Ms. Cassandra Daniels*** reminded the Council of the discussion from the March 2022 meeting regarding fair housing vs tenant/landlord issues in Greenville. The City **does not** have a fair housing or tenant/landlord ordinance. However, residents are governed by Chapter 42 of the North Carolina General Statutes. In addition, the City, is not substantially equivalent through HUD and is not an enforcement agency and does not investigate any complaints that are considered by the complainant as discriminatory in nature. ***Rev. Rod Debs*** asked how the Council can address the housing needs with elected officials. ***Vice-Chair, Franchine Philpot Pena***, reminded the Council of an earlier discussion regarding a racial equity task force on housing. Due to the pandemic, the Council has not been able to sponsor a dialogue; and, that would be a reasonable place to get started.

Mr. Logan Harrison and ***Ms. Susann Camus*** has volunteered to draft a guide or booklet outlining landlord/tenant roles and responsibilities. The guide could serve as an educational tool for residents and landlords.

B. Inclusive Community Initiative – Proclamation

Staff Liaison Ms. Cassandra Daniels, reminded the Council of the following inclusive community events:

- 9/11 Event is Sunday, September 11, 2022. This event is normally held at the Courthouse.
- Inclusive Community Breakfast is Thursday, September 22, 2022 at the Hilton.

Mr. Logan Harris, Chair of the Committee will provide an update to the Council at the May meeting.

C. Racial Equity Task Forces Report

Vice-Chair Franchine Pena provided brief history and an update on the task forces report. She stated the brutal murder of George Floyd in May of 2020, a subcommittee of the Greenville Human Relations Council - Connecting People: Planting Seeds to Dismantle Racism hosted a July 16, 2020 Critical Conversation held in the St. Paul's Episcopal Church's Parish Hall. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, an invited guest list of 12 leaders gathered for an open forum facilitated by Dr. Jennifer Copeland, Executive Director of the North Carolina Council of Churches and an ordained minister in The United Methodist Church. The Critical Conversation sparked lively and productive insight. With the question: ***“What does racial equity look like to you?”***, four (4) Task Forces were created - each with a mission to work towards racial equity in 1) Education; 2) Business & Economic Opportunities 3) Law Enforcement; and 4) Criminal Justice. The Racial Equity Task Forces Report has been presented to the Mayor and City Manager. Concerns regarding the Business and Economic Opportunities Racial Equity Task Force focused on approval and support from Pitt Community College; and the focus point for the Law

Enforcement Racial Equity Task Force was about the recommendation addressing School Resource Officers (SRO's). Now that we understand there is one agreement signed by the Principal of each school; the language referencing School Resource Officer can be eliminated from the report. In addition, the Memorandum of Understanding was developed by Pitt Community College representatives and the Leadership Team is in the process of recommending a few changes.

Staff Liaison Cassandra Daniels, stated the Council would have to take action on the suggested change to remove the recommendation as it relates to the School Resource Officers from the Law Enforcement and Education Racial Equity Task Forces Reports.

Mr. Todd Fraley stated the need for school resource officers is a nationwide conversation and asked if there was any discussion regarding such a need. Vice-Chair Franchine Pena stated there wasn't. Chairperson Samar Badwan stated where she teaches, there are programs where a SRO is necessary. There are in-school suspensions, students with behavior problems, etc., **Ms. Liz Liles** and **Ms. Olive Barrett** shared personal stories about their experiences with school resource officers and the need to keep them in Pitt County Schools. **Mr. Bradley Chapman**, a high school student and son of Ms. Olive Barrett stated he feel there is a need for resource officers, because he has seen so much doing the span of his ninth (9th) grade year. He has seen someone get tased and get their head slammed on a desk, and seen students almost get stabbed. Personally, I have been bullied for no reason. So there is a need for school resource officers to remain in the school system; because there are times when they can help eliminate or reduce situations that can get out of hand.

After much discussion, a motion was made by **Rev. Rob Debs**, seconded by **Mr. Logan Harrison**, to remove the following recommendation from the Law Enforcement and Education Racial Equity Task Forces Reports:

A 'contrast and comparison' of the individual School Resource Officer (SRO) Program Agreements to ensure

- 1) Consistency and compliance with applicable state laws;
- 2) Clear and objective definition(s) of student discipline and behavior;
- 3) Clear and consistent guidelines regarding schools student behavior plans; and
- 4) The removal of all 'subjective language'.

Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Statewide Meeting of North Carolina Human Relations Commissions/Councils – Tuesday, September 27, 2022

Staff Liaison, Cassandra Daniels, informed the Council of an opportunity to host the September statewide meeting. Due to the pandemic, they were meeting virtually. The meeting in September will take place Tuesday, September 27, 2022. An agenda has not been discussed and there will be a future meeting with Mr. Gene Troy, Executive Director of North Carolina Human Relations Council.

A motion was made by *Ms. Olive Barrett*, seconded by *Ms. Liz Liles*, that the Greenville Human Relations Council host the North Carolina statewide Human Relations Commissions/Council meeting on Tuesday, September 27th. Motion passed unanimously.

B. New Members Orientation

Staff Liaison Cassandra Daniels stated orientation for new members have not occurred due to the pandemic. Prior to the COVID-19, new member's orientation was held 30 minutes prior to the Council's regular meeting. If convenient, the Council can provide orientation as usual.

C. Human Relations Council Annual Planning Retreat

Staff Liaison Cassandra Daniels stated it has been many years since the Council has held their planning retreat. The ideal was suggested by Mr. Todd Fraley at the April meeting. Hosting a planning retreat is an item that will require action by the Council.

A motion was made by *Mr. Logan Harrison*, seconded by *Ms. Susann Camus*, that the Council make plans to host the annual planning retreat in the next fiscal year. Motion passed unanimously.

D. Open Meeting Agenda

Rev. Rod Debs informed the Council of some major projects that has been implemented by Chief Mark Holtzman and the Greenville Police Department staff:

- There are mental health workers at the station 24/7.
- Greenville is the sixth city in the state to implement the star program from Denver. Police officers no longer go on mental health calls.

Ms. Liz Liles informed the Council that January is Human Trafficking month. Individuals living in difficult situations can become desperate and that makes them vulnerable. Some situations that force people into human trafficking is unemployment, poverty, broken families, etc. Hopefully, this is an item of interest and the Council would partner with North Carolina Human Trafficking Organization to bring awareness to our community.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, a motion was made by *Ms. Olive Barrett*, seconded by *Mr. Logan Harrison*, to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Cassandra Daniels

Cassandra Daniels
Human Relations Officer