



CITY OF  
*Bloomington*  
ILLINOIS

**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY August 12, 2021 at 4:30 P.M.**

The Human Relations Commission convened in regular session in person at 4:30 p.m., Thursday, August 12, 2021. The meeting was called to order by Chair Rhonda Smith.

**I. Call to Order -Roll Call of Attendance: 4:30pm**

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Smith, Jones, Ajayi and Carey

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Konam, and McGinnis

Staff Present: Nikita Richards

**II. Public Comment- None**

**III. Voting While Not In Person:**

Commissioner Jones made a motion to have those who are attending the meeting via phone to be able to vote. Seconded by Commissioner Jones.

All in favor.

Motion Carried and minutes approved.

**IV. Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Jones motioned to approve the minutes for July 8, 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Ajayi.

All in favor.

Motion Carried and minutes approved.

**V. Agenda Items**

**a. Jule Foundation -Youth**

Youth, Selise Rolon and Garrick Dickerson attended and represented on behalf of their peers. Each spoke of the positive impact the program has had on their lives and how the \$3,000 donation from the Human Relations Commission will benefit the youth. Both expressed having a better understanding and more positive opinion of local government.

**b. Deputy City Manager Tyus Discussion and Q &A**

DCM Tyus answered the previously submitted questions below:



Are you able to provide insight on why the requests from the HRC to add statements of solidarity to the HRC's website have not been approved?

After nearly 2.5 years as Deputy City Manager for Bloomington, what areas do you believe you have been most effective in serving as a difference maker to effect positive change?

Posting the City Manager's monthly report on the COB was discontinued in early 2019. Is that information stored in another location on the website or included another report?

The strategic plan for the COB spans from 2010 – 2025. What's your or the Administrative staff's barometer for the City's current state compared to the vision in the plan?

Are the roles in most department more diverse and inclusive compared to 2 years ago? If yes, what caused the shift and what steps are in play to ensure that continues to exist? What is being done to increase D&I in the departments where data shows it is needed?

Is there information or feedback from the community that would be of interest to you or the City?

Commissioner Ajayi asked DCM Tyus about his knowledge of the police chief candidate from Springfield, IL and the negative reports in the news concerning this candidate. DCM Tyus stated that he was aware of some news reports.

Commissioner Ajayi asked DCM Tyus if he was aware of this particular candidate's alleged role in community racial tension? DCM Tyus stated that he was not aware of this.

DCM Tyus invited commission members to attend the police chief finalist meet and greet on Monday, August 16<sup>th</sup> at 4pm at the Government Center; 4<sup>th</sup> floor. He also informed the commission that there were 24 candidates and now the City has two finalists.

Commissioner Jones asked DCM Tyus about our current meeting location and if there could be consideration for having the Human Relations Commission meetings in a more accommodating and professional location. DCM Tyus stated that he will certainly look into how to resolve the meeting location issue.



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**c. Contract Compliance Update**

Ms. Richards informed the commission that this is now under Legal review.

**d. 2022 MLK Awards Ceremony Update**

2022 MLK Awards Luncheon Planning Subcommittee met on July 26th and decided to host a in person hybrid event that will be recorded live for virtual attendees. During this meeting, it was also decided to host the luncheon on April 2, 2022 to commemorate Dr. King's death and celebrate his life.

Subcommittee members consist of Commissioners Tony Jones and Gary McGinnis of Bloomington and Commissioners Terry Brown and Janessa Williams from Normal. Nikita Richards and Jason Querciagrossa serve as staff liaisons.

RFPs (Request For Proposals) have been sent to the DoubleTree Hotel & Conference Center and the Marriot Hotel & Conference Center -pending responses.

Ms. Richards contacted Illinois State University for the Brown Ballroom and unfortunately it is unavailable. Corporate sponsorship meetings have been held and are scheduled in the future to support this effort.

Dr. Bernice King's professional calendar is clear. Her management team will follow up to confirm that her personal calendar is as well. Her speakers fee is \$25, 000.

**e. Bloomington – Normal NAACP Freedom Fund Sponsorship**

Commissioner Jones made a motion to sponsor a \$100 ad in support of the BN NAACP Freedom Banquet. Commissioner Carey seconded.

All in favor.  
Motion Carried.

**VI. Old Business**

**a. Debrief regarding BPD Q&A / Discussion regarding public forum planning**

Commissioner Ajayi tabled discussion regarding a second public forum until the installation of the new City of Bloomington's Police Chief.



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**VII. New Business**

**a. Commission vacancy/ recruitment**

Ms. Richards reminded commissioners of the current HRC vacancy, encouraged members to recruit candidates and provided members with the commission application link.

**I. Next Scheduled Meeting Date:** September 9, 2021

**II. Adjournment:** 5:49 pm



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