

City of Tampa
Human Rights Board
Meeting Minutes
July 10, 2019

The City of Tampa Human Rights Board held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 10, 2019, at 9:00 a.m., Lemon Street Municipal Office Building, 4900 W. Lemon Street – 1st Floor Conference Room C, Tampa, Florida 33609.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Anthony Carswell	Parker Homans	Clinton Paris	Ashley Roberts
Tomika Cole	Sylvia Hubbard	Janet MacNealy	

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Perry

CITY OF TAMPA REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE

Betina Baron	Patricia Newton	Mindi Rainey
Shakayla Birch	Rachel Peterkin	Anum Shakir (Cooley Law School Extern)
Kevin Irvani	Elba Plaza	Marley Wilkes (Office of the Mayor)

Call to Order and Roll Call

The Chairman, Anthony Carswell, called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

GUEST

Honorable Mayor Jane Castor

A. Carswell opened the meeting with introductions of the Board and Staff. The Mayor introduced herself and thanked the Board members for everything they do. In addition, the Mayor thanked Anthony Carswell, John Perry and Clinton Paris for their devoted commitment of more than eight years of service.

The Mayor addressed the importance of the Mission Statement and the significance of reading it before every Board meeting to be reminded that we are here to protect everyone's equal rights and equal opportunity in all areas. The Mayor stated that Tampa is a city founded and built on diversity by immigrants and that has been embraced throughout Tampa's history. This is a very important issue to her and she has always been an advocate for fair treatment.

The Mayor also reported that last year the City scored 105 on the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index, a nationwide assessment of how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are for LGBTQ residents. According to the Mayor, Tampa is on track to score 100 again, and she wants to make sure we score 100 on every category of the rating.

The Mayor is aware she has a vacancy on the Tampa Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, which is a very important position. To ensure that Tampa has representation from every aspect in our community, she solicited input from the Board about that position or any other Board position. As a newly elected Mayor, she asked how she could help support the Board's mission.

A. Carswell then opened up the discussion to the Board and Staff to make comments. He answered the Mayor's question by suggesting that she becomes the Board's mouthpiece, using her microphone to let folks know that the Board is viable and a huge resource available to the community, ready and waiting to hear their story.

T. Cole pointed out that with approximately 400,000 people living in the City of Tampa, the statistics presented reflect that discrimination cases are severely under reported. She stated that there could be several reasons for this. The main reason is that people are not aware of the Human Rights Board. She suggested having tee shirts made up that say Human Rights Board or if the City has an advertisement fund maybe they could do a bus wrap on Hartline. She would like for Tampa to be known as the City of inclusiveness, bringing diversity to the table where decisions are being made.

M. Rainey agreed with spreading the word and making people aware with additional efforts for outreach and education. P. Newton suggested creating a position for an outreach and education specialist, in order to really enhance education and eliminate discrimination; education is the key. According to P. Newton, the statistics revealed that as outreach/education increased, bringing awareness about the agency, the number of discrimination cases increased.

The Mayor suggested creating a 15 minute video presentation that could be a tutorial used as part of a training, a tool to educate huge groups of people throughout the community. S. Hubbard suggested that the video could be sent to the Housing Authority, which they could make it a part of the tenant's application process, so that they know what resources are available to them.

P. Homans mentioned the Human Rights Board currently has a vacancy, P. Newton confirmed the Board currently has two vacancies in the Retail Merchandising Management and Other categories. P. Newton recommended that when considering appointments, be sure to maintain the Board's diversity to reflect the community's population. Currently there is no one on the Board representing the Islamic Society, Hispanic or Asian communities.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None at this time.

Approval of Minutes

With the Mayor's departure A. Carswell called for the approval of the minutes. The minutes for June 12, 2019 were reviewed and approved.

REGULAR REPORTS

A. Carswell opened discussion about the City of Tampa Housing Authority Board (THA) of Commissioners having a vacancy. It was recommended that one of the Human Rights Board members could fill the vacant position; however, he was concerned with a perceived conflict of interest, a concern from a policy perspective.

After a brief discussion, R. Peterkin stated that it should be considered if that person will be able to fulfill their responsibility to both Boards completely, perhaps because they would have that sort of due process issue where they are both making a decision being part of the action. She suggested perhaps there could be a past Board member who might be interested in working on THA Board. That person would have the background and experience from the Human Rights Board to apply as they served on the THA Board.

A. Carswell suggested the Board should pursue having someone visible that's an advocate for the work they do to be present with THA. He's not sure if something formal needs to be done but asked if all the Board members could think of how they could be involved, it's only going to help all entities involved. He also asked if there

could be a recommendation by the next Board meeting if something formal is to be done or maybe do some outreach to past Board members that may be interested.

P. Newton added that after HUD audited THA about one year ago, it was recommended that they distribute the TOHR's housing discrimination brochures. THA picked up about 400 brochures to distribute to new tenants; however, P. Newton stated that she would follow up to find out the name of the housing program and if THA needed additional brochures.

Listed below are several recommendations P. Newton made to the Board via email prior to this Board meeting. At this time, she explained the recommendations she suggested.

- Respectful Workplace Workshop (Eliminating Sexual Harassment and Retaliation).
 - This workshop is being conducted by Human Resources and not TOHR. She's has gone through the training and thinks it would be more effective if TOHR did the training. It would bring visibility to the office and Board awareness to City employees. TOHR is a resource to City employees.
 - This workshop is simply training supervisors and employees how to be respectful in the workplace, which ultimately leads to eliminating sexual harassment when you have a respectful workplace.
- LGBT Rights in the Workplace – (Committee for a Transgender Employee Transitioning)
 - Forming a special committee for transgender employees who are transitioning is vital. To operate strategically, the City should be prepared and have a trained committee to work with that employee. This ensures that the employee understands what they are supposed to do as far as educating their employer and the employer needs to know how to handle that situation, along with informing coworkers of their responsibility. It makes for a smoother transition when you have a committee in place at your City for transgender female or male.
- Explicit Bias Workshop
 - She recommended K. Iravani could do an Explicit Bias Workshop, because we all have biases and sometimes is not even aware. She would like to see the TOHR offer this type of workshop to City employees and for businesses in the community as well. It also helps to eliminate discrimination in employment.

T. Snelling suggested a conversation needs to take place with Human Resources before taking the recommendation to the Mayor, as this is part of their orientation session.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, August 14, 2019, at 9:00 a.m., Lemon Street Municipal Office Building, 4900 W. Lemon Street – 1st Floor, Conference Room C, Tampa, FL 33609.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chairman, A. Carswell, adjourned the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted