

Chairperson Jennifer Washington called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

The following members were present: Dora Grant, Ted Huston, Jennifer Washington, Dan Leavell, Charlene Adams, Beverly Newell-Hancock, Dominic Wells.

Absent: Dannie Edmon and Joe Hayberger.

STAFF PRESENT: Naomi Twine - Commission Liaison, Leslie Mesenburg – Acting Clerk , Talon Flohr – Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator, McKenzie Spriggs – Bicentennial Coordinator and Jerry Garrett - Consultant.

CURRENT BUSINESS

Upon motion of Ted Huston and second of Dominic Wells, the members voted to approve the Minutes of the August 25 meeting and dispense with the formal reading. The Chairperson declared the motion passed.

CURRENT BUSINESS

Talon Flohr, Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator, presented information about the Sandusky Neighborhood Initiative. The Sandusky Neighborhood Initiative is a partnership with the Kent State CUDC to use public input to improve six selected Sandusky neighborhoods. He encouraged anyone who lives in the selected neighborhoods, or in close proximity, to attend and share their view. The intent of the meetings is to gather feedback from the community to help improve the various neighborhoods. He shared that there was one meeting this past Sunday and there are two meetings tonight with additional future meetings. Ted Huston asked if the meeting for 1st – 5th street is at a church. Talon Flohr shared the meeting will be held at 1016 3rd Street, owned by Mark Norman, which is also referred to as the “House on Third.” Beverly Newell-Hancock asked how many individuals were at the South Side meeting to which Talon Flohr responded that 15 – 22 were in attendance. Talon Flohr also shared that they intend to have follow-up meetings at schools and invite back members of the Kent State CUDC. They are hoping to have these the last part of November or the first part of December. Charlene Adams suggested that they avoid scheduling community meetings on Sundays as some churches do not conclude services until 1:30 or 2:00 p.m.

Talon Flohr was also asked how the Housing Development & Beautification Program was going to which Talon shared that the program is on pace to get the funds out there. He noted to contact him if they are anyone they knew could benefit from the program. When asked about the turnaround time for the program, Talon shared that while it only helps promote the program, he believes that it is two weeks for applications to be reviewed. McKenzie Spriggs added that she has talked with a few individuals who have participated in the program and when asked about time they were very pleased with the staff. However, she believes the turnaround time for reimbursement may be an issue.

OLD BUSINESS

Dan Leavell informed the group that he has reviewed and agreed with the letter drafted by Jerry Garrett regarding incarceration of mentally ill persons. This letter will be sent to City, County and State officials letting these officials know about the lack of facilities and training for dealing with these persons by law enforcement officers. Members of the committee reviewed the letter. Dan Leavell suggested that the names and titles of the committee members be added. Dominic Wells added that he felt the letter needed a more detailed ask regarding the Position Statement 56: Mental Health Treatment in Correctional Facilities. Ted Huston suggested adding a reference to or a link to the Position Statement 56: Mental Health Treatment in Correctional Facilities. Dan Leavell asked what needed to occur next to get the letter out. Commission Liaison Naomi Twine said she would follow up with the City Manager on how to proceed.

Jennifer Washington informed the committee that in regards to the public forums, Dr. Karen Patterson-Stewart will not be taking on any new clients in 2017. Jennifer Washington also shared that the speaker at the recent NAACP Freedom Banquet, Dr. Terrell Lamont Strayhorn, was outstanding. She provided his resume and shared that she did speak with him about what the committee wanted to do for a public forum and asked if he had any interest. Jennifer Washington shared that Dr. Strayhorn would be able to find someone to assist to meet the committee's needs. Jennifer Washing asked committee members the topics they wanted the forum to touch on so a plan could be developed and presented to the city commission. Dominic Wells suggested unconscious bias/prejudices. Dan Leavell agreed with the suggestion and shared that he took a test related to the topic and was surprised that he had personal biases. Charlene Adams also agreed with the topic suggestion. She shared that it's important that people recognizes unconscious biases, but more important what we do with it. Beverly Newell-Hancock also voiced her agreement with the topic. Ted Huston shared that he feels there are an array of things that could be looked at. He felt that Dr. Strayhorn was very accomplished and would have the knowledge to address what the committee was looking for. He also shared that he know five commissioners were present during Dr. Strayhorn's presentation. He went on to say that he was approached by three community members and was told about the great presentation he missed. Jerry Garrett shared that he did send a suggested framework to everyone. The public forum group is for community groups. CEUs would be available for a 4 – 5 hour session. The citizens group would be shorter in length. Both could be the same presenter. Ted Huston included that a recommendation for the public forum must come from the committee in accordance with the bylaws. Dan Leavell wanted to confirm his understanding of the process that it is the program committee's responsibility to find a speaker and to present their recommendations to the body who vote. The committee can discuss via email and phone since it is a volunteer committee. Jerry Garrett wanted to include that the Human Relations Committee is not just about race and recommends the committee look at gender, gender orientation, age, financial status, etc... While he does not believe the committee can afford multiple speakers it is important to narrow down what we want the speaker to present on. Dan Leavell reference previous discussions and agreed that content of the presentation should be

about race. Dominic Wells wanted to clarify that unconscious bias is all types of biases, not just race. Dominic Wells offered to reach out to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Kent State University to see if they could offer suggestions on a presenter. Charlene Adams suggest Dr. JO-Ann Sanders to possibly speak about cultural diversity, cultural sensitivity, cultural awareness. She shared that she is local and from Heidelberg University. Both Jennifer Washington and Ted Huston agreed that Dr. Sanders is outstanding. Dan Leavell asked how much time is required for CEUs. Charlene Adams said a minimum of three hours is required.

Upon motion of Ted Huston and second of Dominic Wells, the members voted to allow the public forum committee and the community organization planning committee come together to come up with a plan for a public forum including identifying/hiring a speaker, securing date/location and executing the event before the next meeting. Jennifer Washington asked for those in favor to say yea. To which all present said yea. The Chairperson declared the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Jennifer Washington brought to the attention of the committee a summary of a presentation by Attorney Geoffrey Oglesby, which was presented at the recent NAACP meeting. The summary of the report was in regards to arrests of African-Americans by the Sandusky Police Department. Jennifer Washington provided the summary to each person and asked them to review. Commission Liaison Naomi Twine shared that she did discuss this report with Chief Orzech. Chief Orzech provided the 2014 and 2016 year to date numbers. The numbers have been consistently lower than the national average. The additional numbers show a comparison vs. a snapshot. Naomi shared that she will email the committee the information. When asked to comment, Dan Leavell said that he would wait to comment until he has an opportunity to review all of the data. When asked, Ted Huston shared that the late Oglesby (attorney) was concerned about this very topic years ago and nothing came of it then. He continued that he was glad to see this topic being revisited. He went on to comment that with the percentage of the population (22%) being minority, he feels that it is pretty high and is concerned for his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who could be affected. He would like to see a breakdown of what these arrests are for. Commission Liaison Naomi Twine shared that the full report separated traffic vs. arrests (warrants) and that its' important to bring out the difference to understand what the numbers mean. Ted Huston commented that his whole life he has had to deal with the police potentially stopping him because of his race. He knows how to deal with that type of situation, but is concerned that the younger population does not know how to deal with it in an appropriate manner. Jennifer Washington did mention that this was a six page report, of which she only provided the summary so the committee could be aware of the numbers. Dan Leavell recommended that the committee invite Chief Orzech and Law Director Justin Harris to the next meeting after all of the information and statistics were reviewed so they could answer any questions they may have. Dan Leavell also referenced hiring practices of the Sandusky Police Department. Commission Liaison Naomi Twine shared that the Human

Relations Committee can work with the city to create a plan to increase minority individuals in city positions. It's important to understand the numbers and come up with a plan of action. Beverly Newell-Hancock asked that when Chief Orzech attends that the topic of nepotism in the police department be brought up. She would like to know who is related to who. She went onto say that the police department is in the same position as they were 40 years ago when the police department made it clear that unless they were ordered to, they were not going to hire black officers. She also mentioned that Dana Newell was the last black officer hired. Commissioner Liaison Naomi Twine shared that the human resources department was responsible to answer the question about nepotism. Beverly Newell-Hancock addressed Madam Chair and asked that Madam Chair ask Ms. Twine, to which she was interrupted by Jennifer Washington utilizing her gavel. Jennifer Washington stated that Naomi answered the question and that it is more important to deal with the arrest numbers instead of who is related to who.

Jerry Garrett shared his past work (4 – 5 years ago) with hiring efforts of the police department. He noted that there four black candidates in the class. Two were eliminated from the security check and two chose to take jobs in larger cities (better pay). He also noted that there was no interest in the black community to become police officers. Strategies that were used to hire minority police officers included career days at various colleges. He acknowledged that locally, they struck out, again, because of lack of interest. He also noted that larger cities have a full recruiting staff and there was also a negative impression with local black communities and the police. He went on to say that recent attempts to hire black officers have not worked out. You cannot hire those who are not there or not interested. Ted Huston added that officers are hired from a test/rigorous exam. The Chief does have a right to say yea or nay to the hire. He went on to say that he would have a concern with nepotism with supervisors. He knows that Chief Orzech is receptive to looking into concerns and feels that when he has brought up issues/concerns with Chief Orzech that he responds and takes concerns seriously. He also shared that in regards to recruitment efforts, the Chief has tried to seek out good recruits. He added that he feels the police department did at one point get to a good level of having minority officers, but we are not back to not having a good level. He shared that he is unsure why but feels the Human Relations Committee should be responsible to seeing it get back to where we need it to be.

Jennifer Washington brought up committee member Dannie Edmon and the fact his term expired in October. Commission Liaison Naomi Twine shared that she did receive applications and shared their names with the committed. Charlene Adams asked if Loretta Riddle submitted an application to which Naomi responded that she was not sure. Naomi asked acting clerk Leslie Mesenburg to see if an application from Loretta Riddle had been received. Dan Leavell asked if each members could receive a copy of each application so they can review and have an idea of who they would recommend for the next meeting. Ted Huston reminded the committee that the makeup of the committee should represent the makeup of the city. Dominic Wells suggested that each committee member review the applications and come to the next meeting

prepared to vote. Then the top two vote getters could have a run-off. The committee was reminded that they make the recommendation to commission in accordance with their bylaws.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget Committee

No report.

Public Forum Committee

No report.

Community Organization Planning Committee

No report.

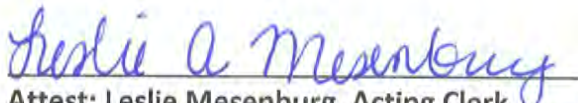
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dan Leavell shared that on October 30 the Souls to the Poles will be hosting a free meal from 2:30 – 5:30 pm in the cafeteria of Sandusky High School. Any person who shows their “I Voted” sticker will be admitted to the meal.

Jennifer Washington shared that SCAASP (Sandusky Churches Adopt A School Partnership) is selling raffle tickets for a cruise. Tickets are \$10 each. Please contact her if you would like to purchase a ticket.

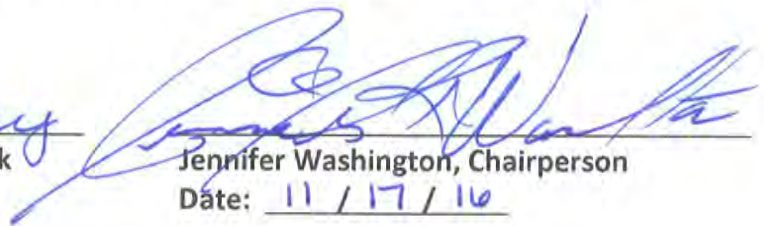
ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Dominic Wells and second of Charlene Adams, the members voted to adjourn at 4:36 p.m. The Chairperson declared the motion passed.



Attest: Leslie Mesenburg, Acting Clerk

Date: 11 / 17 / 16



Jennifer Washington, Chairperson

Date: 11 / 17 / 16