
**CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
September 27, 2017 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on September 27, 2017
at 6:00pm in the Lower Level City Council Chambers at 57 E 1st St.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Colleen Byron- Vice Chair
Joseph Holmes
Nadia Khalighi
Silvia Stanford
Mark Tompert
Keola Tweedy
Louis Wade

MEMBERS ABSENT

Cliff Moon- Chair
Winnie Kaplan
Robert Martinez
Cassandra Sampson

STAFF PRESENT

Chief Batista
Bethany Freeland
Eloy Garza
Ruth Giese
Kelly Gregan
Ray Villa

GUESTS

Diane Belch
Angela Booker
Richard Booker
Sheldon Daisley
Maribel Dillard
John Goodie

1. Chair's Call to Order'

Dr. Byron called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

2. Items from Citizens Present. *

3. Approval of minutes from the August 26, 2017 HRAB Strategic Planning Session.

Mr. Tompert motioned to approve the minutes with submitted changes to item 1: "Dr. Moon called the meeting to order." Ms. Khalighi seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Hear presentation on the City's digital community engagement campaign, Imagine Mesa.

Eloy Garza, who is a part of the Imagine Mesa Advisory Committee, gave a brief overview of the Imagine Mesa campaign. "Imagine Mesa is an interactive, digital forum to engage Mesa residents, businesses, and visitors to share their ideas for shaping Mesa's future. It is designed to be user-friendly on smart phones, tablets or personal computers. Imagine Mesa inspires idea generation and conversations among the participants in an effort to provide feedback to City leaders on community priorities." Imagine Mesa is meant to engage residents through social media and digital platforms. The campaign runs through October 31, 2017.

Dr. Byron asked if the online campaign has been made accessible to residents who are disabled. Mr. Garza stated that he didn't believe so. He said that they had been very focused on making everything available in Spanish since that is such a large population of Mesa. Dr. Byron let him know that making sites accessible to the visually impaired is relatively easy and suggested that be looked into in the future. Ms. Tweedy questioned how populations that don't have access to internet are being reached. Mr. Garza stated that the Imagine Mesa team has had representation

at all major events held by the City and that they are able to provide tablets and assistance to those who want to have input.

5. Hear presentation/discussion from representative of East Valley Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Committee.

Several members of the East Valley Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Committee, including President of the Committee Ms. Angela Booker, spoke about the history of the Committee and the danger they are facing of being unable to hold the upcoming year's celebration activities. This event is the largest festival of its kind in the state and will soon celebrate the 30th year anniversary since its inception in 1989. The Committee informed the Board that due to a lack of funding, the celebration (this includes the breakfast, parade, and festival) is in danger of being cancelled. Based on these new facts, the Board made the following motions:

Mr. Tompert made a motion to recommend to Mayor and Council that the City waive all imposed City fees for the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration and also be open to discussing ways that the City can help make the event more sustainable going forward. Ms. Khalighi seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Tompert made a motion that a letter be drafted outlining the requests in the prior motion to then be sent to Mayor and Council. Ms. Khalighi seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wade made a motion that a single Board member draft the letter on behalf of the entire Board and then submit it to the Diversity office for delivery to Mayor and Council. Ms. Tweedy seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Discuss and take action on Mesa Police Department Monthly Community Engagement Report.

- (6a) Welcome of new Mesa Police Chief, Ramon Batista.

Chief Batista informed the Board that he previously spent 31 years working for the police force in Tucson, Arizona. He said that with his time in Mesa, he'd really like to have a one-on-one, grass roots approach to working with the residents. He said that community engagement and building positive relationships within the community will always be his chief focus.

Mr. Wade welcomed the Chief and asked his thoughts on things such as the Police Activities League and other community policing organizations. Chief Batista said that Mesa has many programs that involve the community, especially within the school system, such as the Making Every Student Accountable program. He also said that each school has a resource officer and they are now in the process of starting a mentorship program with Emerson Elementary through Big Brothers Big Sisters. He said that he would also like to visit the idea of forming programs with various other organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club. The Chief also spoke about the idea of offering some kind of paid internship for high school students.

Mr. Wade also stated that the police force within Mesa should represent the demographics of Mesa. He asked Chief Batista what ideas he had to address this within the Mesa Police Department. The Chief stated that he sees the need to work toward improving this. He felt that there was a great need for more women in policing.

Ms. Tweedy stated that she often sees officers, not just in Mesa, not leading by example. For instance, they will fail to use turn signals while driving. She said that this can tend to undermine the authority of the police department and questioned if issues like these would be addressed. She also wanted to add that doing outreach to ROTC programs within Mesa might be a great avenue to recruit youth that may be interested in law enforcement. Ms. Tweedy also commented on the issue of equal pay for women within the force. She stated that if there are already tools in place to address this, it could serve as a great recruiting tool. Lastly, she explained her involvement with a group called Justice That Works. The group focuses mainly on stopping the school to prison pipeline and she wondered what involvement the City of Mesa had in addressing this issue. Chief Batista said that school resource officers coach and mentor students with the hopes of avoiding issues with the law altogether, but it will be something that he will look into further as he gets to know Mesa's programs better. Mr. Villa added that each school resource officer spends 180 hours of classroom time each year, teaching and coaching students. He said that due to this intensive program there are very limited instances of students becoming perpetual offenders.

Dr. Byron welcomed the Chief and said that she also places importance on relationship building in uniform within the community. Though she wondered if always soliciting information in uniform would yield authentic responses. Chief Batista said that there are still traditional models of information collection such as community forums and surveys, but he said he also talks to the residents in plain clothes, as well as his uniform. He would also like to look into bringing a positive police presence directly into the neighborhoods.

Ms. Tweedy added that she appreciates the presence of officers along Main St. in the evenings. She stated that with many of the business closed it lends to her feeling of safety to have the officers there. Chief Batista said that he would like to see more bicycle officers in downtown Mesa with the addition of the light rail.

(6b) Updates on Diversity related police incidents and activities.

Mr. Villa informed the Board that often MPD will target a special project area and partner with the nearby churches to help them gather survey information. He said that they also meet with the neighborhood and often hold fairs or festivals.

(6c) Updates on scheduling of upcoming Police Advisory Board meetings.

Mr. Villa discussed the upcoming Coffee with a Cop meetings. There are currently three locations scheduled on October 4, 2017: Kneaders at 1142 S Signal Butte from 9am to

11am, Starbucks at 2015 S Alma School from 8am to 10am, and Whataburger at Lindsay and Broadway from 11am to pm.

On October 14, 2017, he will be attending the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) 2017 Freedom Fun Luncheon. He also commented that the month of October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and that the MPD would be participating in various awards and recognitions given to school children at a function at Mesa Community College.

The Asian Community Advisory Board meeting will be coming up on October 10, 2017.

Ms. Tweedy asked Mr. Villa to elaborate on the MESA Program (Making Every Student Accountable). He stated that it is held at Kino Jr. High School and is a nine-week program. This includes physical fitness and life skills training. Each Tuesday night they invite the parents to learn about the things the kids are learning in the program. The Mesa Fire Department will soon be helping as well. Mr. Villa informed the Board that they are in need of community volunteers to assist with tutoring.

7. Discuss and take action on the cancellation or rescheduling of the following Board meetings:

- Rescheduling of November 22, 2017 Board meeting to December 6, 2017.

Mr. Tompert made a motion to reschedule the November 22, 2017 Board meeting to December 6, 2017. Mr. Wade seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

- Cancellation of December 27, 2017 Board meeting.

Mr. Tompert made a motion to cancel the December 27, 2017 Board meeting. Mr. Wade seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

8. Hear reports on conferences and/or meeting attended.

Keola Tweedy:

- 9-2-17 Un-American: Japanese Internment in Our Backyard exhibit
- 9-5-17 Just That Works (JTW) School-To-Prison-Pipeline (STTP) meeting
- 9-07-17 Retail Arts Innovation Livability (RAIL) Mesa Housing Forum panel discussion
- 9-8-17 OCA Build Breakthrough Believe Leadership Summit
- 9-9-17 Arizona Multicultural Education Conference: Making Diverse Voices Heard
- 9-9-17 Lau Kanaka No Hawaii General Meeting
- 9-12-17 Asian Community Advisory Board Meeting
- 9-13-17 2017-18 Honors Forum Lecture Series, Democracy in Action
- 9-20-17 Creative Catalysts Well Fed Artist Workshop Series: Got Creative Confidence
- 9-23-17 Arizona Humanities Frank Talks, Is This Racist
- 9-23-17 8th Annual Brazilian Day Festival
- 9-26-17 Mesa Public Schools Regular Meeting

Mr. Wade stated that the recent Regional Human Relations Commission meeting was very successful and that each City shared wonderful ideas.

9. Scheduling of meetings, future agenda items, and general information.

Ms. Khalighi informed the Board about the Zen Nights event coming up on September 28, 2017. She also invited the Board to the Baha'i Bicentennial celebration of the birth of their prophet the weekend of October 20, 2017. The celebration will be held at Poston Junior High at 7pm.

Ms. Freeland shared that the Diversity office will be sponsoring a Hometown Heroes Banner for Mr. Wade and that they can view it beginning the week prior to Veteran's Day on November 11, 2017.

- (9a) Next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at 6PM in the Lower Level City Council Chambers (57 E 1st St).
- (9b) Celebrate Mesa will be held on Saturday, October 21, 2017 at the Red Mountain Soccer Complex (905 N Sun valley Blvd) from 5PM to 9PM.
- (9c) 15th Annual Latino Town Hall will be held on Saturday, October 28, 2017 at the Mesa Arts Center (1 E Main St) from 7AM to 12PM.
- (9d) Proposed dates for next Regional Human Relations Commission meeting are December 7, 2017 or December 14, 2017.

10. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54PM.

***Members of the audience may address the Board on any item. The Arizona Open Meeting Law (ARS § 38-431 et seq.) limits the Human Relations Advisory Board to discussing only those matters listed on the agenda and other matters related thereto.**

The City of Mesa is committed to making its public meetings accessible. For accommodations, translation, or additional information, please contact the City of Mesa Diversity Office at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at (480) 644-5432 or AzRelay 7-1-1 for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Si necesita asistencia o traducción en español, favor de llamar al menos 48 horas antes de la reunión al 480-644-2767.