
**CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
March 22, 2023 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on March 22, 2023 at 6:00pm via Zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jared Smith, Chair
Tom Brennan, Vice-Chair
Nina Allred
Brett Caldwell
Margaret Duarte
Christiana Hammond
Rochelle Johns
Oscar White
Ron Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT

Willie Campos

STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Alicoate
Angela Siebrecht

GUESTS

Donna DiFrancesco
Laura Hyneman

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Mr. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:01PM.

(1a) Announcement of excused absences.

Willie Campos was announced as an excused absence for this meeting.

2. Items from Citizens Present.

No citizens wished to speak to the board.

3. Approval of minutes from the February 22, 2023 HRAB meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Williams and seconded by Mr. White that the above-mentioned minutes be accepted as written.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Ms. Allred, Mr. Brennan, Mr. Caldwell, Ms. Duarte, Ms. Hammond, Ms. Johns, Mr. Smith, Mr. White, and Mr. Williams

NAYS- None

4. Hear and discuss presentation from Environmental & Sustainability Department on 'Trees are Cool' and other climate action initiatives.

Mr. Smith invited Ms. DiFrancesco and Ms. Hyneman to speak to the Board. Ms. DiFrancesco introduced herself and Ms. Hyneman and explained their desire to share Mayor John Giles' recently introduced "Trees are Cool" climate initiative. Ms. DiFrancesco asked Board members to indicate their level of familiarity with Mesa's Climate Action Plan (MCAP) and then provided a brief background on the origin of the MCAP and its goals, including citywide carbon neutrality by 2050 and developing a climate ready community. She further explained that these goals were developed

into six focus areas to assist the community in meeting the goals of the MCAP. Ms. DiFrancesco explained that planting trees is a climate-friendly action that has several “co-benefits”, such as mitigating urban heat output, improving air quality, reducing water usage, and helping to keep homes and other buildings cool without the use of air conditioning. She explained that within cities and other areas with extensive development, several building materials have been introduced to the environment which retain heat and lead to an overall temperature increase in the local area. This has led to an increase in the average daily and nightly temperatures in the Phoenix area, as well as an increase in the number of heat-related deaths within Maricopa County. Additional heat mitigation initiatives were reviewed, such as the SRP Shade Tree Program and programming and grants through the Arizona Sustainability Alliance. Ms. DiFrancesco then began her explanation of the initiative to plant 1 million trees within Mesa by 2050 and informed the Board about City initiatives to distribute tree seedlings within the community to help in meeting this goal.

Ms. Hyneman provided information regarding water conservation programs within Mesa, specifically landscape incentive programs which offer HOAs and residents the opportunity to receive a financial incentive for converting their existing landscaping into low water use alternatives. Ms. DiFrancesco and Ms. Hyneman gave a brief overview of the steps involved in the implementation of the Trees are Cool initiative and provided an estimated timeline for each phase of the plan. Further, they provided the Board with information regarding potential community venues for tree planting, such as students at schools, neighborhood leaders, corporate sponsors and non-profit organizations. They encouraged Board members to utilize the Trees are Cool online platform to document newly planted trees. Finally, they opened the floor for the Board to provide ideas, suggestions and questions regarding the efforts to increase the tree canopy in Arizona or more generally regarding the Mesa Climate Action Plan. Following some brief questions and remarks from the Board, Mr. Smith thanked Ms. DiFrancesco and Ms. Hyneman for their time.

5. Hear and discuss pronouns to demonstrate respect and inclusion for HRAB.

Mr. Smith invited Mr. Caldwell to speak to the Board. Mr. Caldwell reviewed with the Board the intention of these discussions and the items previously discussed in the January 2023 meeting. He provided the Board with information regarding the “layers of diversity”, noting that only a few of these factors which influence diversity come from an individual’s sense of identity. He reviewed terms and how factors influence an individual’s sense of self and in turn, the pronouns they may identify most closely with. Mr. Caldwell briefly reviewed strategies and opened up the floor for Board members to ask questions regarding the use of preferred gender pronouns.

6. Discuss and take action on the cancellation of the 2023 June and July Board meetings.

It was moved by Ms. Allred and seconded by Mr. Williams that the 2023 June and July Board meetings be cancelled.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Ms. Allred, Mr. Brennan, Mr. Caldwell, Ms. Duarte, Ms. Hammond, Ms. Johns, Mr. Smith, Mr. White, and Mr. Williams

NAYS- None

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

(7a) Next HRAB meeting will be held on April 26, 2023, at 6pm in the Lower-Level City Council Chambers (57 E 1st St).

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

Ms. Allred reported that she recently hosted the Multicultural Fair in partnership with the East Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She also attended and helped organize a health fair in conjunction with the Mesa Welcome Center for Immigrants. She has also been invited to join the board of the Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens.

Mr. Caldwell reported that he attended the Pacific Islander Festival as well as the Multicultural Fair hosted by Ms. Allred. He also attended the HRC CEI monthly meeting.

Ms. Hammond reported that she attended the One-n-Ten Fresh Brunch, as well as a panel presented by the AZ State Attorney titled "United Against Hate" addressing the rise in anti-LGBT rhetoric and policies.

Mr. Williams reported that he attended the Arizona Commerce and Real Estate awards ceremony, where Mesa Public Schools received recognition for modernization at Mountain View High School.

Mr. Smith reported that he has been traveling extensively for work and received entry into one of the major world marathons taking place in Berlin.

No other Board members had meeting or conference attendance to report.

9. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17PM.

***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.**

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

Submitted By:



Andrea Alicoate,
Diversity & Special Projects Manager