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

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on February 22, 2023 at 6:00pm in the Lower Level, City Council Chambers, 57 E First St.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jared Smith, Chair  
Brett Caldwell  
Willie Campos  
Christiana Hammond  
Rochelle Johns  
Oscar White  
Ron Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT

Tom Brennan  
Nina Allred  
Margaret Duarte

STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Alicoate  
Angela Siebrecht

GUESTS

Langdon Alexander  
Kellie Rorex  
Jodi Sorrell

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Mr. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

(1a) Announcement of excused absences.

Tom Brennan and Nina Allred were announced as excused absences from this meeting. Margaret Duarte was not present for the meeting.

2. Items from Citizens Present.

No citizens wished to speak to the board.

3. Approval of minutes from the January 25, 2023 HRAB meeting.

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

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Campos, Ms. Hammond, Ms. Johns, Mr. Smith, Mr. White, and Mr. Williams

NAYS- None

4. Hear and discuss the East Valley United Black Firefighters on their mission and purpose.

Mr. Smith invited Langdon Alexander with Mesa Fire and Medical to speak to the Board. Mr. Alexander briefly introduced himself and his roles with both MFMD and the East Valley United Black Firefighters (EVUBFF). He provided some information regarding the mission statement and core values of EVUBFF, as well as the cities which participate with the organization, including Mesa. Mr. Alexander further explained the purpose and goals of the EVUBFF, which include increasing diversity among East Valley fire department staff and providing support and mentorship for prospective firefighters to ensure their success throughout the interview process.

Mr. Alexander provided information regarding the specific programming offered by EVUBFF, such as twice monthly fire-based skills training and fitness training and monthly meetings for both sworn and associate members. He further explained the mentorship program pairs new group members with a sworn member from an East Valley fire department near to them. Mr. Alexander noted that they participate in several volunteer events with a variety of African American based nonprofit groups and other community agencies focused on providing services to underserved communities, and stated that these volunteer events are a great opportunity to build connections between sworn members and new associates who are just beginning to explore a career in fire. Finally, Mr. Alexander highlighted some of their accomplishments, such as being featured in the *Shoutout Arizona* magazine and receiving recognition from the Hall of Flame Museum and the City of Mesa. Mr. Alexander additionally provided contact information and social media information for EVUBFF.

Following Mr. Alexander's presentation, Board members asked questions regarding strategies for youth recruitment and other potential sites to recruit individuals who might have an interest in a career in fire. Following the Board's questions, Mr. Smith thanked Mr. Alexander for his time and presentation.

5. Hear and discuss the City of Mesa 2050 General Plan update.

Mr. Smith invited Kellie Rorex with the City of Mesa to speak to the Board. Ms. Rorex briefly introduced herself and her work with the City of Mesa 2050 General Plan update. Ms. Rorex provided Board members with information regarding the scope of the General Plan update, as well as a projected timeline for each stage of the update, culminating with the Plan's approval by Mesa residents in late 2024. She reviewed the guiding principles of the current General Plan, which included a focus on creating and maintaining neighborhoods, growing and maintaining jobs, and providing cultural spaces and amenities for residents.

Ms. Rorex provided Board members with visual representations of the amount of undeveloped land in Mesa, as well as the amount of developed land currently dedicated to commercial and residential development. She spoke to the Board about some of the challenges needing to be addressed in the Plan update, such as the need for sustainable development and the need to accommodate social and economic changes following the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Rorex directed Board members to the variety of ways they can become involved with the Plan update, such as by completing the Tomorrow's Mesa survey online or joining a focus group. Finally, Ms. Rorex reviewed the timeline of work to be completed for the General Plan update, including specific information regarding the public hearings and public comment periods required before the updated Plan can be ratified. She concluded her presentation by asking Board members to reflect on what they consider to be their priorities for future development in Mesa and what they would like Mesa to look like in the year 2050. Following some brief questions by the Board, Mr. Smith thanked Ms. Rorex for her time and presentation.

6. Hear a presentation and discuss the Transit Master Plan Update.

Mr. Smith invited Jodi Sorrell, Mesa's Transit Director, to speak to the Board. Ms. Sorrell began her presentation by providing a definition of what transit is and why it is important as a public service. She also provided some statistics regarding the current state of Mesa transit services and the amount of rides provided within the last year of service. Ms. Sorrell stated that transit utilization numbers are still lower than average due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic but are quickly beginning to recover as people go back to work and back into the community. She provided information regarding the scope of the Transit Master Plan and its efforts to enhance existing transit

programs and identify areas of need for future transit expansion. Ms. Sorrell invited Board members to take the Transit Master Plan survey to provide their feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses of Mesa's current transit offering. She provided additional ways for Board members to become involved, such as attending community events or emailing with any feedback or suggestions.

Board members asked questions and provided comments based on their own experiences with Mesa transit services, as well as the reported experiences of others within their social networks. Following the Board's questions, Mr. Smith thanked Ms. Sorrell for her time and presentation.

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

Board member Brett Caldwell provided a brief overview of the conversation held in the previous HRAB meeting regarding pronouns and the inclusion of pronouns on HRAB nametags and noted that one of the main strategic goals for the Board is increasing personal education and awareness surrounding topics related to human relations. He outlined the intent for the Board to revisit this discussion in three parts over the next several meetings in order to expand the conversation surrounding allyship and increase the Board's knowledge of pronouns and inclusion. Mr. Caldwell invited Board members to bring any questions they have regarding pronouns to these conversations.

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

(8a) Next HRAB meeting will be held on March 22, 2023, at 6pm virtually via Zoom.

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

Mr. Smith, Ms. Johns, Ms. Hammond, and Mr. White all reported attending the Annual Regional Unity Walk at Tempe Beach Park on January 28, 2023.

Ms. Johns additionally reported attending an exhibition at the IDEA Museum, as well as several Black History Month programs throughout the month of February.

Ms. Hammond reported that she attended the MLK Street Dedication ceremony in January, as well as the Mesa Chamber of Commerce "Mesa Has Heart" awards event.

Mr. White reported that he attended the Asian Festival at Mesa Community College, the group picture for the MLK Proclamation, the "Matriarchs of Washington Park" event facilitated by Bruce Nelson, and several other Black History Month events throughout February.

Mr. Caldwell reported that he attended a corporate equality index workshop.

Mr. Campos reported that he attended "Pitch In", a City of Mesa and ASU sponsored entrepreneur pitch event.

Mr. Williams reported that he attended the AZ MLK Debrief meeting, the Arizona Veteran's Hall of Fame induction, a Mesa Police Foundation meeting, the Mesa State of the City address, the Mesa Has Heart awards, an NFL Gospel event, a Black History Month event at South Mountain, and a Black History event with the FBI branch located in Phoenix.

Mr. Smith reported attending the Asian Festival at MCC, the Mesa Marathon, and reported that he began his new professional role in mid-February.

10. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12PM.

**\*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