



CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
October 26, 2022 Minutes

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on October 26, 2022 at 6:00pm in the Lower Level, City Council Chambers, 57 E First St.

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

- Andrea Alicoate
Angela Siebrecht

GUESTS

- Mini Salas
Tara Hall
Amy Fa'atoafe

1. Chair's Call to Order.

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

(1a) Announcement of excused absences.

There were no board members absent for this meeting.

2. Items from Citizens Present.

No citizens wished to speak to the board.

3. Approval of minutes from the September 28, 2022 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, Mr. Campos, Ms. Duarte, Ms. Hammond, Ms. Johns, Ms. Nonthe-Sanchez, Mr. Smith, Mr. White, and Mr. Williams.

NAYS- None

4. Hear and discuss update from the Mesa Police Department Community Relations Division on program and engagement initiatives.

Ms. Hall briefly introduced herself and Ms. Salas and made note of the work Ms. Salas has done since assuming a supervisory role with the Mesa Police Department Community Relations Division. Ms. Hall stated that one of Ms. Salas' contributions has been building the Community Relations

webpage, which provides an overview of Mesa PD Community Relations programs. Ms. Salas presented the webpage to the Board and provided Board members with a handout containing a QR code that will lead them to the same webpage. Ms. Salas stated that the goal was to create a page that would be user-friendly and allow community members to easily access and view the Community Relations efforts of the Mesa PD. Some of the information displayed on the webpage includes youth programming, community engagement efforts, citizen's academies, and diversity and inclusion efforts. Ms. Salas stated that prior to the creation of the webpage, there was difficulty ensuring that information about Community Relations programming was reaching its intended audiences, even within the Department. She further added that the webpage includes an online form for individuals or organizations to request attendance from Mesa PD at events to streamline this process and ensure that the relevant units are attending community events.

Ms. Salas additionally provided the Board with information regarding joint programming with the Mesa PD and Mesa Public Schools. This program, titled SPARC, is an umbrella program which encompasses all of Mesa PD's youth programming and focuses on utilizing sports teams and other recreational activities to form community partnerships between youth residents and the Mesa Police Department. She reported that approximately 20 students are participating at this time, with Mesa Police staff and officers serving as coaches. A tournament will take place on November 17, 2022, at Eagles Recreation Center to celebrate the work of both teams. Ms. Salas and Ms. Hall recognized Ms. Allred for her work with Mesa Public Schools and the instrumental role their partnership has played in the success of this program.

Following Ms. Salas' comments, Ms. Hall provided the Board with information regarding Mesa PD's participation in the Department of Defense's SkillBridge program, which allows active-duty military personnel within the last 180 days of their service to work alongside officers in the Mesa Police Department. The goal of this program is to help veteran's build and apply their existing skills to the career of law enforcement, and to provide a bridge to employment with Mesa PD once the individual is no longer on active duty. She highlighted some photos of individuals who have participated with this program and gave some brief details about where their experience with Mesa PD has led them in their career paths. Ms. Hall additionally highlighted that Mesa PD is one of only a few law enforcement agencies across the nation to be selected to participate in this program, and one of only two located within Arizona.

Ms. Hall also briefly provided some information regarding a restorative justice program with Teen Court. Mr. Smith asked if these youth programs also function as a form of recruiting for youth to eventually pursue careers in law enforcement as well. Ms. Hall provided some general information about the status of recruiting new police officers in Mesa and stated that the Cadet Program is a program for high school students specifically interested in pursuing a career in law enforcement. However, she notes that the purpose of all the youth programming offered by Mesa PD is to build positive community relationships with Mesa youth that will extend into their adulthood, whether they choose to pursue law enforcement themselves or not.

There were no further questions from the Board. Mr. Smith thanked Ms. Salas and Ms. Hall for their presentation and their time.

5. Hear and discuss presentation from the Native American Fatherhood & Families Association on their programs and services.

Mr. Smith welcomed Ms. Fa'atoafe as a former Board member and invited her to begin her presentation regarding the programs and services offered by NAFFA. Ms. Fa'atoafe introduced herself as the Executive Director of the Native American Fatherhood & Families Association, which is a non-profit organization based in Mesa. Ms. Fa'atoafe provided the background of the organization, which was founded by her father. She described her father's work as creating a

program to help strengthen families by supporting responsible fatherhood and motherhood. She stated that the organization began by working with one tribe and has since grown to work with over 270 tribes across North America. She provided some information regarding the mission and vision of the organization and noted some statistics regarding the struggles faced by Native American communities across North America. Ms. Fa'atoafe provided more information regarding the purpose of the program and the goal of creating healthy and safe families. She noted that most programs which target families typically focus on providing services to women and children, while fathers and fatherhood is not a focal point of family stability. She stated that while the popular understanding is that fathers are part of the problem within Native American communities, the view of NAFFA is that responsible fatherhood is one of the solutions to dysfunction and is an untapped resource in creating stronger families and communities. Ms. Fa'atoafe noted that many things are held as sacred within Native American belief systems, but the most sacred of all these things is the role of fatherhood and motherhood.

Ms. Fa'atoafe noted some of the success had by program participants, including reuniting with their families, regaining custody of children, pursuing stable educational and employment opportunities, and reducing recidivism. She noted the wide range of organizations which participate with the NAFFA curriculums, including education departments, Head Start providers, courts, and behavioral health providers. She provided information regarding the use of NAFFA case workers in Community Court programs and noted that NAFFA has recently begun offering an intensive outpatient program as part of their offerings for overall wellness. Ms. Fa'atoafe also noted the services offered by Native Search Solutions under NAFFA, which focus on providing resources to help with cases concerning missing and murdered indigenous people (MMIP). Ms. Fa'atoafe provided information regarding some community outreach programs that NAFFA offers in partnership with law enforcement which work to create a positive association with law enforcement for Native youth. She also made note of the NAFFA National Conference, held in Mesa, which provides keynote speakers and workshops highlighting the impact of NAFFA programming and best practices for implementation. Ms. Fa'atoafe encouraged Board members to attend the conference if they are able and made note of the upcoming Precious Gems Award Banquet on November 2, 2022, which recognizes individuals who have had a significant impact on the community in keeping with NAFFA's principles and mission.

The Board asked some follow up questions and Ms. Fa'atoafe responded. The Board thanked Ms. Fa'atoafe for her time and presentation.

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

(6a) Next HRAB meeting will be held on November 30, 2022, at 6:00PM in the Upper-Level City Council Chambers (57 E 1<sup>st</sup> St).

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

Ms. Nonthe-Sanchez, Mr. Campos, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Williams, Mr. White, Ms. Allred, and Mr. Smith reported that they attended the Calle Cesar Chavez Dedication ceremony held at Eagles Recreation Center on October 11, 2022.

Mr. Campos additionally reported that he attended an event at Benedictine University and the Mesa Pitch event, both of which were also attended by Mayor Giles. Mr. Caldwell reported that he

attended the Phoenix Pride Parade and Festival, as well as the Pride on the Block party. Mr. Caldwell additionally attended a week-long LGBTQ+ conference in relation to his professional work.

Mr. Williams reported that he spoke in front of the Congressional Black Caucus on September 28 in Washington DC and visited the Pentagon on September 30. On October 1, he attended an update for the National AZ Delegation, and spoke on a panel at Arizona State University featuring Vice Mayor Duff on October 4. On October 10, he attended a meeting of the Visit Mesa finance committee and attended the Visit Mesa Board meeting on October 11. Mr. Williams additionally attended the Mesa Regional Foundation Strategic Planning meeting on October 12 and attended a meeting with STEP with Mesa Public Schools on October 14. Finally, Mr. Williams noted that he was inducted to the Arizona Veteran's Hall of Fame on October 14. Mr. Williams received applause and congratulations from the Board for this accomplishment.

Ms. Duarte noted that she attended the Phoenix Pride Parade and Festival, as well as the Asian Festival in Scottsdale on October 22. Ms. Duarte further reported attending events for Dia de los Muertos, Diwali, and Breast Cancer awareness throughout the month of October.

Ms. Allred reported that she attended meetings in planning with Mesa PD for the SPARC program, as well as meetings in collaboration with Mesa Community College and the Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens for an upcoming Latino student conference. She further attended Celebrate Mesa on October 8 and has been working with community partners to establish a Migrant Parent advisory council for Mesa Public Schools.

Mr. Smith additionally reported that he attended the Grand Opening of the Plaza at Mesa City Center on September 28. No other event or meeting attendance was reported by Board members.

8. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:51PM.

**\*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