
**CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
February 24, 2021 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on February 24, 2021 at 6:00pm via ZOOM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ron Williams- Chair
Colleen Byron
William Campos
Margaret Duarte
Joseph Holmes
Bill McAllister
Jared Smith- Vice-Chair
Lou Wade

MEMBERS ABSENT

Tom Brennan
Amy-Lyn Faatoafe

STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Alicoate
Cisco Luzania
Mary Brandon

GUESTS

Michael Hall

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Mr. Williams, called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

(1a) Announcement of excused absences.

Mr. Brennan was noted as an excused absence.

2. Items from Citizens Present.

No citizens wished to speak to the board.

3. Approval of minutes from the December 2, 2020 HRAB meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Campos that the above-mentioned minutes be accepted as written.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Mr. Williams, Dr. Byron, Mr. Campos, Ms. Duarte, Mr. Holmes, Mr. McAllister, Mr. Smith, Mr. Wade.

NAYS- None

4. Hear and discuss a presentation on the City's 2021 Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance Program.

Ms. Brandon, Community Services Deputy Director, provided an overview of the City of Mesa 2021 Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance Program. The City received \$15.7 million of funding provided by the U.S. Treasury, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 to provide financial

assistance to Mesa households financially impacted by COVID for rent and utility assistance to prevent eviction and homelessness. 14 million or 90% of that amount will go directly to Mesa residents who are eligible. Program funds are available now and must be expended no later than Dec 30, 2021. To qualify for the program, the applicant must live within the City limits of Mesa; they will need to demonstrate that they are financially impacted by COVID through a significant life changing event, loss of job, reduced hours, or medical expenses; and demonstrate income eligible up to 80% Area Median Income. If an applicant is ineligible, they will be given additional resources. The guidance received from the US Treasury notes that this funding must have a priority to those Mesa residents who have the most need. Applications are sorted by priority and must be processed first.

Mesa residents can go to the City of Mesa's MesaCARES webpage for information and the application. The City is partnering with MesaCAN for residents that need computer access or may need assistance with the application. Landlords can also apply on behalf of their tenants. A thorough marketing plan will be conducted to reach and inform the public.

Ms. Brandon advised that an applicant can expect to be contacted within 14 days once they submit a completed application. Each morning a report is pulled based on priority to be reviewed first. The City began this process on January 25th with interested party list. They have received over 350 applications to date and have made \$130,000 in payments to landlords and utility providers.

HRAB members commended Ms. Brandon for this City programs and offered words of support.

5. Hear, discuss, and take action on the updated proposed Non-Discrimination Ordinance to City Council.

Ms. Alicoate provided an overview of the proposed Non-Discrimination Ordinance (NDO) as recently modified and discussed by the City Council. The stated purpose of the NDO is to provide equal access to goods, services, and housing for all and to keep workplaces free from harassment/discrimination. The NDO applies to business, employers with 5 or more employees, as well as City employees, facilities, contractors, and vendors. To protect the constitutional rights of all residents, the NDO excludes: State agencies, public school districts, churches and religious practices, public accommodations that provide beneficial pricing or policies to senior citizens, veterans, students or individuals with disabilities, and speech and expressive activities protected under the First Amendment. The implementation of the NDO will be administrated by the City Manager through his designee- the Diversity Administrator with City Attorney's Office. Ms. Alicoate detailed the proposed civil penalties to follow standard courses of action, similar to other civil violation such as through Code Compliance.

It was moved by Dr. Byron, seconded by Mr. Wade for the board to approve the recommendation of the proposed Non-Discrimination Ordinance as written in Mesa.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Mr. Williams, Dr. Byron, Mr. Campos, Ms. Duarte, Mr. Holmes, Mr. McAllister, Mr. Smith, Mr. Wade.

NAYS- None

6. Hear and discuss HRAB creation of job skills resource guide for the public.

Mr. Smith advised that he would be working with staff to provide research and parameters for what the job skills resource guide will look like to the public. Mr. Smith stated that a narrower strategic approach to creating a list would be preferable to ensure that the maximum of people who require these resources receive them. Ms. Alicoate advised of a new resource that staff provided Mr. Smith to look into: Arizona at Work. Mr. Smith will be contacting representatives from the County agency for a future presentation.

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

(7a) Next HRAB meeting will be held on March 24, 2021 at 6pm via ZOOM to be later announced.

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

Mr. Smith reported that he had attended the 2nd Inaugural Equitable Voter Council that looks to ensure equity in communities. Mr. William's reported that he had attended a Visit Mesa board meeting, of which he is also a sitting member, and spoke about the business community is in support of the NDO. He will also be chairing the Visit Mesa Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force.

9. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05PM

***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.