
**CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
November 17, 2021 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on November 17, 2021 at 6:00pm via ZOOM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ron Williams- Chair
Tom Brennan
Amy-Lyn Faatoafe
Joseph Holmes
Christiana Hammond
Bill McAllister
Yudit Nonthe Sanchez
Jared Smith – Vice Chair

MEMBERS ABSENT

Willie Campos
Margaret Duarte

STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Alicoate
Natalie Lewis
Lynn Spillers

GUESTS

1. Chair's Call to Order.

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

(1a) Announcement of excused absences.

Mr. Campo and Ms. Duarte were announced as excused absences.

2. Items from Citizens Present.

No citizens wished to speak to the board.

3. Approval of minutes from the October 27, 2021 HRAB meeting.

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

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Mr. Williams, Mr. Brennan, Mr. Holmes, Ms. Hammond, Mr. McAllister, and Ms. Nonthe Sanchez.

NAYS- None

4. Hear and discuss presentation on the City's strategy for addressing homelessness.

Deputy City Manager Natalie Lewis reported on the City of Mesa's strategy for addressing homelessness, poverty, and housing. Ms. Lewis explained that homelessness is a complex, social, and human challenge where there is no one size fits all approach. It requires many partners with right expertise with responsive and preventative approaches. In addition, Ms. Lewis stated that communities need local programs that are supplemented by a strong regional system.

Ms. Lewis explained Mesa's strategy, "Housing Path to Recovery" which includes both 'Temporary Housing' coupled with greater service needs for stabilization, and 'Permanent Housing' where the City can slowly help people reliance on public services. Ms. Lewis further provided examples and context to the strategy, as well as a description of the "Off the Streets" program.

Ms. Lewis expanded that a local approach is not enough as no single or few communities can handle the social and financial costs of homelessness. The region must participate. Regional discussions have led to another strategy that Mesa is participating in called "Pathways Home". Foundational goals for this effort include commit to work regionally to reduce homelessness; increase safe housing options; support diverse partnerships to address homelessness. This plan will be discussed and agenized for approval at the next Maricopa Association of Governments "Regional Council" meeting on December 8th at noon, which can be virtually viewed at <https://www.azmag.gov/Committees/Policy-Committees/Regional-Council>.

Ms. Lewis also shared that "Housing America" is another landside policy move at the Federal level for a housing-first model. This effort will provide billions of dollars to respond to homelessness, housing instability and affordable housing needs throughout entire country. Ms. Lewis stated that State, county, and local communities will be called on to act, and Mesa will be ready.

Lastly, Ms. Lewis discussed the intersection between education and employment in Mesa and in Arizona. In parallel with homelessness, poverty and housing, the City wants to support education. We know it leads to a strong and talented workforce. And that leads to community prosperity. With programs and initiatives such as the Mayor's Education and Workforce Development Roundtable; Mesa K-Ready; AZ Achieves 60; and Mesa College Promise, the City is making investments in these areas. Mr. Williams thanked Ms. Lewis for providing the update and information.

5. Hear and discuss an update on Regional and City diversity celebrations in January.

Ms. Alicoate announced that the City will be celebrating Annual Regional Unity during the month of January in collaboration with sister Cities of Phoenix, Tempe, Chandler, Scottsdale, Gilbert, and more. Traditionally there is annual walk around Tempe Beach park that will be postponed again this year as a committee of regional human relation commission members come together to reimagine this event for 2023. For 2022, cities will be showcasing art, festivals, events, and program that promote diversity and unity within their jurisdictions.

Additionally, the East Valley MLK Day Parade & Festival will be held on Monday, January 17, 2022 beginning at 10am. There will be volunteer opportunities for board members and Ms. Alicoate encourages board members to participate in parade or promote vendors for the festival.

Lastly, there will be a regional human relation commission meeting held on Thursday, January 27, 2022 hosted by the City of Mesa via Zoom. Guest Speaker will include Jeff Olivet

6. Hear and discuss an update on the Community Learning Series.

Ms. Alicoate provided an update that staff has been working with individual board members to coordinate interviews and filming for the Community Learning Series.

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

(7a) Next HRAB meeting will be held on November 17, 2021 at 6pm in the Lower-Level Council Chambers (57 E 1st St).

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

Mr. Smith shared that he attended an Equity Advisory Council meeting for Mesa Public Schools. Williams advised of his attendance at the following meetings and events: October 28th World's Best Connectors Hosted Diversifying Tech Leadership Conference; November 4th Mesa Regional Foundation for Accessibility, Diversity Inclusion; November 10th Veterans Medical Leadership Council 2021 Heroes Patriotic Luncheon USAD, Desert Storm/Cold War award recipient.

9. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:49PM

***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.