



City of Albuquerque - Office of Civil Rights
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City of Albuquerque Human Rights Board Minutes

Date/Time: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 starting at 5:00 pm (MST)
Location: Zoom
Contact: Crystal Velarde, 505-768-4544

Board Members Present:

Adrien Lawyer
Sradha Patel
Samia Assed
Michael Jefferson
Denisha Pierre
Joel Trujillo

City Staff Present

Bryan Rowland, Board Attorney
Torri Jacobus, Managing Assistant City Attorney for Office of Civil Rights
Michelle Melendez, Director of Office of Equity & Inclusion
Crystal Velarde, Program Coordinator Office of Civil Rights
Jordan Vargas, ADA Title II Coordinator
Lillian Parker, Office of Civil Rights Intern

I. Call to Order

- a. The meeting was called to order by Chair Lawyer at approximately 5:04 pm.

II. Introductions

- a. Board members introduced themselves to the public.

III. Approval of Agenda

- a. Chair Lawyer called for any corrections to the agenda. There were no corrections. The agenda was approved as distributed.

IV. Approval of Minutes from November 17, 2020

- a. Chair Lawyer called for any corrections to the November 17, 2020 minutes. There were no corrections. The minutes were approved as distributed.

V. Public Comment

- a. Rosemary Blanchard shared her concerns regarding Albuquerque's homeless population and their wellbeing. She is also requesting the Human Rights Board take an active role in overseeing the way the city deals with its homeless population.

VI. Discussion/Q&A with APD Forward Robert Heckman

- a. APD Forward background
 - i. APD Forward was established in 2014 with community groups as well as family members of people who have suffered from police violence.
 - ii. It was organized to be a powerful advocacy outreach and education platform for the Albuquerque community.

- iii. APD Forward has also created a website smartCASA.org. They have broken down the reports created by the Independent Monitoring Team. They have made them easier to access and provide summaries of the over 500-page reports. They have resources on apdfoward.org as well.
 - b. Overview of the 12th Independent Monitoring Team report
 - i. In the 12th Independent Monitoring Report released in October of 2020. It identified systemic failures at every level. Including policy violations, lack of discipline, and improper training.
 - ii. The report also provides proposals to address and remedy the issues the monitoring team identifies and provides recommendations.
 - c. Mr. Heckman is asking the Board to help pressure the Mayor into not hiring a police chief from within APD. APD Forward's position is that the City needs someone from outside. Someone who will allow officers to be held accountable for their actions. They are also wanting someone who has reform experience and could possibly address these issues.

VII. Director's Report

a. Office of Civil Rights (OCR)

- i. A report was sent out prior to the meeting for the members to review. It included statistics for the time period of November 14, 2020 to January 15, 2021 as well as events planned by the office.
- ii. OCR has handled 49 new matters since our last meeting.
- iii. OCR provided updates on 5 pending complaints, and 1 completed complaint.
- iv. Outreach included:
 1. Presentation to UNM Regent Scholars regarding civil rights.
 2. Co-presented at the City Legal Ethics Continuing Legal Education Seminar.
 3. OCR is co-sponsoring the 30-days of nonviolence which is from January 18, 2021 to February 17, 2021.
 4. Will also be presenting on the CROWN Act. House bill 29 is also regarding the CROWN Act and currently pending in state legislation.
 5. Chair Lawyer presented Transgender 101 last week at an OCR training.
 6. The Domestic Violence Task Force which Ms. Jacobus is the Chair. Received \$250,000 in CARES funds. The money was distributed amongst 13 agencies to help with unexpected expenses. They received a little over \$19,000 each the week before Christmas.
- v. Upcoming Outreach
 1. Presentations on racism and anti-racism, fair housing, CROWN Act, and voter suppression.

b. Office of Equity & Inclusion (OEI)

- i. OEI will be hiring a new African American Affairs Liaison and hopes to have the position posted by the end of the week.
- ii. Ms. Melendez offered to provide the Board funding to sponsor or co-sponsor an event with a Kellogg grant she has.
- iii. OEI has trained nearly 600 city employees and 300 community members this year.
- iv. Chair Lawyer and Member Assed provided a training to the APD Cadets.
- v. OEI is also working on the 2020 workforce equity analysis and mapping evictions.
- vi. They also partnered up with community organizations to distribute \$2.5 million to people who were left out of the stimulus payments.

VIII. Administrative Matters and Agenda Items for February

a. Jordan Vargas, ADA Title II Coordinator.

- i. Ms. Vargas briefly described her role with the city. She also explained how she works closely with the ADA Advisory Council. Ms. Vargas will be placed on next month's agenda to discuss in more detail her role with the city.

b. Subcommittees

- i. Items the subcommittees could review are the homeless issues, providing information regarding COVID to poor communities, and start a recommendation for the APD Chief.
- ii. Member Assed suggested having a media subcommittee.
- iii. Subcommittees and members will be discussed at the February meeting since the Board will have two new members. Current subcommittees are Research & Investigation, Outreach and Education.

c. Discussion regarding HRB staff and budget.

- i. This item will be moved to the next agenda.

IX. Adjournment

- a. Chair Lawyer adjourned the meeting at 6:40 pm.

Adrien Lawyer, Chair

Date