



MINUTES
 Tuesday, February 22, 2022
 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Virtual Meeting
 Via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT	STAFF
Frances Castillo	Sharron Hinton, Interim Director
Ellis Driver	Melvyn Blackwell, Civil Rights Specialist
Ana Garcia Turner	
Dion Graham	
Michael Fath	
Shawnee Seese	
Special Guest(s)	
Bonnie Hammersley, County Manager	
Steve Arndt, County Asset Management Director	

MEMBERS ABSENT
Stephanie Harrell (resigned)
Samantha Beecham (unexcused)
Allison Mahaley (unexcused)

I. Call to Order

- A. Commissioner & Chair, Frances Castillo
 - i. Called meeting to order at 5:11 p.m.

II. Minutes Approval

- A. Approval
 - i. *10 January 2022*
 - 1. Motion by Commissioner Garcia-Turner
 - 2. Second by Commissioner Graham
 - 3. All were in favor of approving the January 10th meeting minutes
 - ii. *1 February 2022*
 - 1. Motion by Commissioner Garcia-Turner
 - 2. Second by Commissioner Graham
 - 3. All were in favor of approving the February 1st meeting minutes

III. County Updates

- A. County Manager, Bonnie B. Hammersley
 - i. Orange County will reorganizing the Human Rights & Relations department. Going forward, it will be housed in the County Managers department as a division because of its size.

- ii. The title of the Director for Human Rights & Relations will be retitled as the Chief Equity and Human Rights Officer.

IV. Executive Committee Report

A. Commissioner & Chair, Frances Castillo

- i. The NC 18th Judicial District Bar, NC Carolina Council of Churches will also be co-sponsoring the February 27 screening and discussion panel of, *Who We Are*, at the Chelsea Theater.
 - 1. There will be a limited number of tickets available for live attendance but community members can participate with the panel virtually afterward.
 - 2. The movie will only be shown at the Chelsea.
- ii. *My Name is Pauli Murray* was screened at Carraway Villages on February 20, 2022 since the ceremony was not held in February.
- iii. Commissioner Harrell notified the committee that she will no longer be able to serve on the Commission and Commissioner La Barre had resigned his commission on February 1st, 2022.

V. Climate Control Grant Award

A. Background

- i. In 2019, the Board of County Commissioners voted for and approved a quarter cent tax increase in sales taxes for funds to be allocated to climate-related projects in Orange County. This program has been in place for about three years and on annual basis, the quarter cent tax increase generates about \$536,000. This varies from year-to-year based on sales taxes.

Each year, the County lists the grants available, what they are intend for and instructions on how to apply to them—including supporting information required to submit a successful grant proposal.

The grants are geared toward Orange County non-profits and/or small businesses with under 100 employees and less than \$3 million in annual revenue. The intention was for the grant to match with small businesses and/or non-profits in order to enhance their environmental position through energy efficiency and/or other sustainability efforts that would have a positive impact on the climate.

Per BOCC guidance, the available grant funds were distinguished into two halves—one fund that was available for the general public to apply to and the other fund that would be available for schools to apply to.

Applications for the grant funding available to the general public were reviewed and decided upon in the Fall of 2021 and, at that time, the school districts had not submitted an application for a review to be made. BOCC decided to extend the application period for the school districts to November and only one application was received during that time from Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools.

B. Current Considerations

- i. The Human Relations Commission is charged with discussing the merits of the grant and directing their recommendations to the BOCC.
- ii. Proposal
 - 1. CHCCS are requesting \$250,000 to install solar panels in three high schools (Chapel Hill High School, East Chapel Hill High School and Carrboro High School) to offset

energy consumption, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and incorporate sustainability related educational content for CHCCS students.

C. Decision

- i. Commissioner Seese motions for the Human Relations Commission to deny a recommendation of the CHCCS proposal because it has not met social justice and equity standards.
- ii. Commissioner Graham seconds motion.
- iii. Commissioner Fath declines motion. Motion carries with five commissioners in favor.

VI. **Terms & Elections**

- A. The Human Relations Commission welcomes two new members, Commissioner Michael Fath and Commissioner Shawnee Seese.
- B. Commissioner Castillo has been reappointed for her second term on the commission.
- C. Commissioner Castillo and Commissioner Garcia-Turner are both up for re-election for their positions as Chair and Secretary.

i. Nominations

1. Chair

- a. Commissioner Graham nominates Commissioner Castillo to be re-elected to the HRC Chair position.
- b. Commissioner Garcia-Turner seconds the motion.
- c. All in favor of the motion. Motion carries.

2. Secretary

- a. Commissioner Graham nominates Commissioner Garcia-Turner to be re-elected to the HRC Secretary position.
- b. Commissioner Driver seconds the motion.
- c. All in favor of the motion. Motion carries.

3. Vice Chair

- a. Commissioner Castillo nominates Commissioner Graham to be elected to the HRC Vice Chair position.
- b. Commissioner Fath seconds the motion.
- c. All in favor of the motion. Motion carries.

VII. **HRC Events & Committee Reports**

A. Committee Reports

i. *Board Diversity Committee*

1. The survey is available for release to the current commission and board members.
 - a. Human Rights and Relations team has reviewed the survey and it will be released on 2/23/22 and will be due by 3/10/22.

ii. *Communications Committee*

1. No new updates from the committee.
2. There are only two commission representatives on the committee due to the recent resignations. Commissioner Castillo will prepare information to send out to the Commission about the committees available and their functions to open up space for commissioner to volunteer to serve.

iii. *Pauli Murray Awards Committee*

1. The 32nd Annual Pauli Murray Awards will occur on Sunday, March 27 at 3:00 p.m. and the nomination application will be available online next week.
2. Commissioner Castillo has been in contact with one of the director from *I Am Pauli Murray*, Julie Cohen, and she has affirmed that she would be willing to participate and HRC event for no additional costs.

3. Commissioner Seese has volunteered to join in service to the committee
4. Committee will continue to meet over the next weeks to develop the programming of the awards ceremony and a secure speaker.

VIII. **Discussion/Recommendations**

A. Outside Agency Applications

- i. Commission members had not had an opportunity to review the application at this time.
- ii. Motion to hold special meeting on Monday, February 28th at 6:00 for the purpose of considering the outside agency applications
 1. Commissioner Fath seconds the motion.
 2. All in favor of the motion. Motion carries.

IX. **Other Business/Announcement/Upcoming Events**

A. Civil Rights Investigator, Melvyn Blackwell

- i. Orange County Human Rights & Relations department is currently under an improvement plan with HUD to support the department in meeting its deliverables as a Fair Housing Assistance agency.

Given that there has been significant changes in staffing over the past few months and three out of the four HRR personnel are new to their positions, Mr. Blackwell request of the HRC additional grace and consideration regarding the coordination of Commission initiatives.

Mr. Blackwell and Interim Director Hinton will be the primary points of contact for the Commission and will require timely coordination in order to ensure effective support and maintain accountability to departmental responsibilities. Additionally, encouraging members of the HRC to fully participate and engage in the initiatives they lead, whenever possible.

HRR will begin working toward developing a training opportunity for Commissioners to understand their role as it applies to the Fair Housing and Civil Rights Ordinance enforced by the department and will continue to be available as support to the HRC in their service.

B. Executive Committee

- i. EC will develop dialogue around a retreat/orientation opportunity to formally onboard new members and map out how they will engage in their work moving forward.

X. **Adjourn**

- A. Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Castillo at 7:37 pm
- B. NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 via [Zoom](#)