

Advisory Commission on Human Relations & Disability Issues
Meeting Agenda

January 10, 2022

5:30pm

I. Call to order

II. Roll call. Present were James Echols, Tom Alonzo, Julie Xiong, Marge Gasnick, Christina VanCleave

Not present: Abbie Dillard, Karen Greenwood

Also present: Ollie Carroll

Meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m.

III. Old business

- A. Motion by Tom Alonzo, seconded by Julie Xiong, to approve the minutes from Oct. 4, 2021. Motion passed.

IV. New Business

- V. Tom Alonzo gave an update on a conversion therapy ban ordinance. Commissioner Christian Ramirez met with the former mayor on two occasions, and the former mayor was not open to the idea and suggested the state handle it. In the meantime, Tom was working on it with Equality Kansas. Since then, KCMO was the first city to pass it, then Roeland Park, and then Prairie Village, and Independence, MO. Tom reminded the board that a conversion therapy ban only applies to secular activities, not religious or within a family. After Tyrone Garner was elected, Commissioner Ramirez talked to him about this, and an internal group is looking at ordinance language with James Bain. Tom offered to send links from other cities' bans. There is a meeting scheduled for Jan. 24th with the Standing Committee on Human Relations where Commissioner Ramirez will be presenting the ordinance. Tom would like to have as much support at this meeting. In the past the ACHRDI passed a resolution supporting a conversion therapy ban. Tom would like to locate that resolution. Tom says the ordinance would send a positive signal that residents' human rights are protected. He said he would send a power point presentation about the issue of conversion therapy to the ACHRDI members. It adversely affects young kids by trying to force them to change their sexual orientation. Christina added that homosexuality used to be a diagnosis, and that is no longer the case. The American Psychological Association ruled in 1973 that sexual orientation is not an illness. Jim

thanked Tom and asked him to send details about the Jan. 24th meeting and other background material.

- VI.** Health and Equity Taskforce and Initiatives/Updates – Christina said the UG Public Health Department has hired a staff member to lead the Health Equity Task Force. His name is Matt Kleinmann. James suggested Matt might come to a future meeting.
- VII.** Police/Law Enforcement – After the presentation from Chief Oakman, Tom Alonzo said he did some more research on the issue of documenting hate crimes. He had asked Mr. Bain about whether there was an issue with the state of Kansas on documenting LGBTQ-based hate crimes and needs to follow up with him.
- VIII.** Systemic Racism – James said he has spent a lot of time in this space with schools and other institutions. He said he wasn't sure what direction would be appropriate for ACHRDI, and asked members for input. Tom Alonzo pointed out that source of income discrimination for housing has a lot of racism built into it. He would be in favor of doing more study of this issue in Wyandotte County. He is on a panel that meets once a month about housing issues, and was going to ask about it in that forum to help start a conversation.
- IX.** Housing and Landlord/Tenant
 - a. Homelessness task force – Marge mentioned that Mayor Garner announced there is going to be a new homelessness task force.
 - b. Proposed apartment development at 6th and Central – There is a development proposal to put a new 8-storey apartment building. The developer says it will be “market value” and rents comparable to those in downtown KCMO and the West Bottoms. Marge expressed concern that it could drive up rental prices in KCK. Tom Alonzo added this development is not in keeping with the Central Avenue master plan. The risk is these new projects will contribute to gentrification and could drive out people with moderate and low incomes who live in the area. Tom said he would be willing to go to the neighborhood association as a representative of ACHRDI and ask them their position on the project.
 - c. Discussion about the issue with the overnight shelter at the Reardon Center. Julie stated it's important to provide something more permanent, in light of the disagreement that flared up with the new mayor.
- X.** Projects/Taskforces Chairpersons – James Echols stated he wanted to get brought up to date on this. No further update.

- XI.** Goal/Initiatives Alignment Presentations by Community – No further update.
- XII.** Open Discussion - None
- XIII.** Chairperson Observations – James stated that the mayor has the prerogative to appoint the chairperson of ACHRDI. He is not aware of progress on that with new Mayor Garner. Abbie was appointed by the previous mayor, but could be reappointed by the new mayor. There are approximately 5 vacancies to fill on the ACHRDI.
- XIV.** Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: February 7, 2022