

Racial Equity Commission Minutes for March 22, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Attendance –

Liz Carter, Betty Curry, Namdi Brandon, Nate Davis, Kenyatta Clark, and Donald Hawkins – members, Anna, and Sonia – residents, Jackie Jenks, Inter-Faith Council for Social Service and Rachel Waltz, Orange County Partnership for Homelessness – guests, Council members Barbara Foushee and Randee Haven-O'Donnell – Council Liaisons and Anita Jones-McNair – Staff Liaison.

Call the Meeting to Order – 6:09p

The meeting was called to order by Donald Hawkins, Chair.

Approval of January meeting minutes

Minutes were approved by consensus.

Presentations

Recent Incident - Jackie Jenks, Inter-Faith Council for Social Service

IFC provides services for residents that experience homeless, and their mission is to confront homelessness in Orange County. They provide meals, groceries, hygiene items, medication, accepts donations, shelter services, etc. A question was asked about when donations are accepted because community members were not able to drop things off. Drop off is from 9a-5p M-F. Jenks apologized for the miscommunication and will emphasize to volunteers that donation are accepted during that time frame. Commission members expressed concerns as to why would the IFC have people on their property and cannot accommodate services needed? Also, why would people have to sleep in a parking lot instead of the IFC providing accommodations, especially in extreme temperature? The response included the fact that the men's shelter is full. It was also noted that the Street Team goes out to check on homeless residents and provide items such as blankets. Jenks mentioned, the day the gentleman died, he came over to stay with his friends and the temperature dropped. That morning staff tried to wake him up. Commission members emphasized finding a better way to address extreme weather cold/hot to prevent something like this from happening again. There is no excuse for anyone to die that way.

Present/Future Direction - Rachel Waltz, Orange County Partnership to End Homelessness

OCPEH mentioned unfortunately there are gaps in the system. The mission is to get folks off the streets and into their own space. Waltz emphasized various points - the system is broken, housing vouchers are issued and cannot be used, and limited resources such as shelters, and staff constantly change. Providing more options for those in need would be helpful. Strategies to promote choices. OCPEH is trying to figure things out.

Input on Grant Application to Promote Travel Choices to/from Work & School - Tina Moon, Carrboro Planning Department

Moon provided a presentation of potential grant funding identified to help travel choices is available and requested ideas to use the funding. One idea provided was to consider bicycle giveaways and/or provide bicycle availability in town neighborhoods in need. She ended by saying if additional ideas surface, please share.

Adjourn – 7:35p

The meeting was adjourned by Hawkins, Chair.