



CITY OF NORMAN, OK
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING
Municipal Building, Executive Conference Room
201 West Gray, Norman, OK 73069
Monday, February 26, 2024 at 5:30 PM

MINUTES

The Human Rights Commission of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in the Municipal Complex located at 201 West Gray Street on February 26, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., and notice and agenda of the meeting were duly posted 24 hours prior to the meeting.

PRESENT

Commission Chair Jackie Farley
Commission Vice-Chair Aisha Ali
Commissioner Chris Nanny
Commissioner Christopher Tall Bear

ABSENT

Commissioner Michael Ridgeway
Commissioner Stephen Machovic

STAFF PRESENT

Grace Holloman, ADA Technician, Culture & Social Responsibility
Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager
Anthony Purinton, Assistant City Attorney
Sarah Encinias, Legal Admin Tech

ROLL CALL

A quorum was present.

MINUTES

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE NOVEMBER 27, 2023, REGULAR MEETING

Motion was made by Commissioner Nanny to approve the Minutes for the November 27, 2023, regular meeting and the motion was duly seconded by Vice-Chair Ali. A vote was taken with the following results: all approved and none opposed. The Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE JANUARY 24, 2024, SPECIAL MEETING

Motion was made by Commissioner Nanny to approve the Minutes for the January 24, 2024, special meeting and the motion was duly seconded by Vice-Chair Ali. A vote was taken with the following results: all approved and none opposed. The Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 17, 2024, INTERFAITH BREAKFAST

Commissioner Nanny asked why attendance roll wasn't taken for the Interfaith Breakfast and why it wasn't mandatory for HRC Commissioners to attend. Mr. Purinton said attending the breakfast wasn't mandatory. At one time, there were discussions with the previous Chief Diversity & Equity Officer to make attendance mandatory but due to the way the City's ordinances are written, it is not possible to make attendance mandatory.

Motion was made by Commissioner Nanny to approve the Minutes for the February 17, 2024, Interfaith Breakfast and the motion was duly seconded by Vice-Chair Ali. A vote was taken with the following results: all approved and none opposed. The Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

ACTION ITEMS

4. ANNUAL ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Chair Farley opened the floor for discussion and Vice-Chair Ali said she would like to be considered for the position of Chair. Motion was made and Commissioners voted unanimously that Aisha Ali now serve as Chair.

Commissioner Tall Bear volunteered to serve as Vice-Chair. Motion was made and Commissioners voted unanimously that Christopher Tall Bear now serve as Vice-Chair.

5. DISCUSSION REGARDING SAFETY OF CITY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Commissioner Nanny said she requested this item because she and several other bus riders have experienced negative situations in both the Transit Center and while riding on buses. At the Transit Center, people are smoking on the property, the toilets are backing up, the waiting space is full of people not using the bus, and the building has only one exit. On buses, riders are being harassed by other riders and she witnessed police forcefully remove a rider who was causing a disturbance.

Taylor Johnson, Transit and Parking Program Manager, briefly introduced himself and said this Transit Station is the City's first and was opened in October 2023. The issue of security was not a concern when the facility first opened however it has since come to his attention that it has become an issue. Currently every bus has cameras and when an issue arises, he can go back to the recordings to view incident(s). "No Smoking" signs were put up 2 weeks ago but he realizes this is still hard to enforce. Also, soon after opening, plumbing quickly became a problem. The sewer lines were inspected and it was determined that they had to be replaced. Additionally, paper towels were removed from the restrooms so they wouldn't be flushed and clog the lines, and hand dryers were installed instead. The restrooms are cleaned twice daily. The Transit Station is small and so it has one entry/exit. Sleeping in the facility or in buses is not allowed and riders are not allowed to ride an entire route without getting off.

Mr. Johnson said he can be notified of problems by email or riders can contact Embark by utilizing their contact info contained in the Embark Norman Ride Guide. If he or Embark are notified of issues, then they can work on solutions.

email: transit@normanok.gov (or visit the following website)
normanok.gov/residents-visitors/transit-parking/transit-bus-operations

Vice-Chair Ali asked if vaping is considered smoking and Mr. Purinton said yes. Commissioner Tall Bear suggested that the smoking cessation help phone number be posted. Commissioner Nanny clarified that current issues are not with bus passengers but with the homeless. Vice-Chair Ali suggested that 988 info be posted as well and also asked if an emergency phone could be installed at the station. Mr. Johnson said he will implement as many suggestions as possible.

6. DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE CITY OF NORMAN EMERGENCY SERVICES AND OKLAHOMA'S 988 MENTAL HEALTH HOTLINE

Commissioner Nanny had questions regarding the 988 hotline and if it could be used by people who see another person experiencing a mental health crisis. Mr. Purinton said the 988 hotline is not necessarily set up to be a third-party wellness check service; it is a voluntary helpline geared at helping individuals or family members of persons who are experiencing a mental health crisis. Mr. Purinton said 911 and police already refer callers to 988, when possible and appropriate. Commissioner Nanny requested that City staff arrange to have 988 representatives come in person to an HRC meeting to clarify what it is that they do and to have City Council attend.

7. DISCUSSION AND/OR UPDATE ON ACCESSIBILITY OF WOMEN'S RESTROOMS IN CITY HALL AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Commissioner Nanny said she requested this item because she has submitted complaints to the City on multiple occasions about how the restrooms in City Hall are very hard to utilize. At this point, Commissioner Nanny feels since the City has been through 3 different ADA technicians from when she first notified the City of the problems, that either her complaints have been lost in the shuffle of new staff or she's being ignored. She feels she has given the City plenty of time to rectify the problem.

Ms. Holloman reintroduced herself to Commissioners and said she is the ADA Technician for the City. Ms. Holloman said she has received all of Commissioner Nanny's complaints and that the restroom was recently corrected by maintenance staff. The soap dispensers were lowered and the doors should now pull open utilizing no more than 5-pounds per square inch in weight. Commissioner Nanny will test the doors and provide feedback to Ms. Holloman.

8. DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF THE 2024 INTERFAITH BREAKFAST

Commissioners said they received feedback from attendees that they were very unhappy with the keynote speaker but that they were happy with the rest of the program. Commissioner Nanny asked if the keynote speaker was vetted and by whom. Vice-

Chair Ali believes he was chosen by previous Culture & Social Responsibility Chief Strategist, Maylon Wesley.

Vice-Chair Ali then said many people expressed their unhappiness to her for not getting an invitation to the breakfast. She said the site Constant Contact was used to send out the invitations and that based on previous experience, she knew it wouldn't work. The emails were flagged as spam by most recipients who never knew to check their spam folders. Others said they didn't get an email at all. Vice-Chair Ali asked that Eventbrite be used for next time. She also mentioned that people were upset that they couldn't just call to reserve seats and that the City should have low tech options for them. She looks forward to making next year's breakfast much better than it was this year.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.