

AGENDA

CITY OF OXFORD COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

**THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2017
4:00 P.M.**

LANE PUBLIC LIBRARY HAVINGHURST MEETING ROOM

MEMBERS

Patrick Meade
Rebekah Bolser
Kathy McMahon-Klosterman

Dan Umbstead
Brian Revalee

STAFF

Doug Elliott, City Manager

Kim Newton, Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order.
2. Approval of Minutes.
 - A. Minutes of the March 9, 2017 Community Relations Commission Regular Meeting.
3. New Business.
 - A. Introduction and welcome to new member, Brian Revalee.
4. Old Business.
 - A. "Bystander" Training
5. Adjournment.

OXFORD COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION
March 9, 2017

ITEM 1
CALL TO ORDER

The Oxford Community Relations Commission Meeting of February 9, 2017 was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Doug Elliott, Director. Those members present were: Patrick Meade, Kathy McMahon-Klosterman, Dan Umbstead and Rebekah Bolser.

Kim Newton, Recording Secretary was in attendance for the City.

Guests: Erin Von Bergen and Dave Christman.

ITEM 2
APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the February 9, 2017 Community Relations Commission Meeting.

Ms. Bolser inquired how the meeting went with the Talawanda High School students and Mr. Elliott advised he thought it went well noting the group of students was different than the group they had met with several years ago. Mr. Elliott advised he has learned something each time he has met with the students and expressed his feelings that they had a good discussion. Ms. McMahon-Klosterman expressed her feelings the meeting was not terribly useful from her perspective noting the students who were chosen to meet with the CRC were all outstanding students and are not students that are marginalized in any way. Ms. McMahon-Klosterman expressed her feelings these students are not going to know what it feels like or what is going on with the students who are marginalized and advised while it was good to meet with them and get their perspective, it was not enough. Ms. McMahon-Klosterman expressed her feelings the CRC should meet with students again and ask a teacher to choose students who may feel disenfranchised and marginalized at the High School noting the CRC would hear different information which would be more beneficial for the Commission to hear if they really want to get the temperature of the climate at the school. Mr. Meade advised a school faculty meeting was held yesterday noting the main topic was the increase in bullying that is happening at the High School and advised there has been a significant, noticeable increase in bullying at the school. Mr. Meade expressed his opinion the students they met with would probably not notice the increase in bullying.

Mr. Meade moved to approve the February 9, 2017 meeting minutes. Ms. McMahon-Klosterman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 3
NEW BUSINESS

Ms. McMahon-Klosterman advised the League of Women Voters had a meeting a few weeks ago and noted she had a conversation with some of the young women who were there regarding the lack of childcare opportunities for young families in Oxford. Ms. McMahon-Klosterman advised there used to be a lot more early, child care facilities in the community which are no longer available and noted she spoke with Sandy Drewes who has been working with a group in Toledo who have developed a program for early childhood education and caregiving in the city that is connected in some way with the hospitals and the schools. Ms. McMahon-Klosterman noted Ms. Drewes would be happy to come to a CRC meeting and share with the Commission what they are doing and how they got it going. Mr. Elliott advised the focus of the CRC is discrimination noting City Council may need to consider some sort of social issues type thing that goes beyond the Commission's purview. Ms. McMahon-Klosterman noted she is trying to figure out how the Commission can proactively make the community welcoming and inclusive for all families advising she heard at the League of Women Voter's meeting that young families do not feel included because services are not available to them. Ms. Bolser inquired what the Commission can do to be proactive in the community surrounding social issues noting the Commission could have dialog with the community on these issues. Mr. Elliott advised part of the Commission's role is outreach noting the Commission has reached out to different organizations to learn more about them and to also let the other organizations know what the CRC does. Mr. Meade advised the Commission has met with minority and marginalized groups and expressed his feelings he would hate for the Commission to lose their main focus, which are civil rights issues and being proactive about civil rights issues. Mr. Meade noted getting tied up on issues like child care or if the Recreation department does enough for young families is out of the Commission's purview. Mr. Meade advised he is not opposed to hearing anyone talk about Oxford being welcoming and expressed his opinion the CRC is not the group to help them noting City Council charged the CRC to oversee issues surrounding discrimination. Mr. Meade suggested maybe the League of Women Voters could create a group that could brainstorm and go to City Council with some of the problems and solutions and what the City's role could be in solving the issues. Mr. Umbstead noted he agreed with Mr. Meade that another entity needs to be involved and expressed his feelings the Commission needs to be careful when they talk about being proactive due to the Commission's role as an investigative group. Mr. Umbstead advised investigations need to be neutral and should be reactive and not proactive. Mr. Umbstead noted as for being proactive, he likes that the Commission meets with groups to get their perspective on what their experiences are and expressed his feelings that he likes that a lot because the Commission should be proactive in educating themselves about different cultures and different groups. Mr. Umbstead advised when the Commission does have an investigation they could have a working knowledge of what that group is like and noted it is important to remain neutral.

General discussion ensued and the Commission agreed the name "Community Relations Commission" can be confusing to the public and recommended changing the Commission's name to "Civil Rights Commission".

Mr. Meade moved to recommend to City Council to change the name of the Community Relations Commission to the Civil Rights Commission. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. McMahon-Klosterman inquired if the Commission would still like to invite Ms. Drewes to come speak to the CRC and Mr. Meade advised he would prefer to meet with the new Miami University Diversity Affairs Director which the Commission has not met yet noting it would be a better connection for the CRC. Mr. Elliott advised the CRC is not the Commission that would bring issues of childcare forward and the Commission agreed Ms. Drewes would be better served by making a presentation to City Council regarding her model on developing childcare and early childhood learning opportunities in the community.

Ms. Bolser expressed her feelings that protecting civil rights also means talking about it openly and recommended having a central platform such as a Facebook page where diverse organizations can submit what they are doing and post their upcoming events as well as highlight their organizations by posting videos and pictures of different people in the community and show what inclusivity in Oxford looks like. General discussion ensued and the Commission felt it would be best for Ms. Bolser to create an unofficial Facebook page regarding civil rights with a disclaimer that the page is not an official page of the City of Oxford or the Commission.

ITEM 4
OLD BUSINESS

A. “Bystander” Training

Mr. Meade advised there was a citizen who attended the Police Community Relations and Review Commission that stated she was interested in developing and providing Bystander training in Oxford. Ms. McMahon-Klosterman suggested the Commission could encourage the School District to bring in Bystander training for the staff and faculty and allow others from the Library and the City to participate. Mr. Meade also suggested requesting a grant from the Oxford Community Foundation to help pay for the training as well as getting larger entities such as Miami and the Talawanda School District to sponsor the training. Ms. McMahon-Klosterman advised she would speak with PFLAG as well as the Talawanda School District’s Superintendent to see if those groups would be willing to consider bringing in someone to provide the training. Ms. Bolser and Ms. Von Bergen advised they would reach out to their contacts at Miami to see if they could find someone to support the efforts of sponsoring the training.

B. “It Gets Better” Tour

Mr. Elliott advised the events surrounding the “It Gets Better” tour were well attended noting it is a wonderful event and advised Oxford is the first community in which this group has visited twice.

ADJOURN

Mr. Meade moved and Mr. Umbstead seconded to adjourn at 5:12 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.