



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
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As Approved by the EEO Standing Committee on November 1, 2016

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION / EEO STANDING COMMITTEE

Minutes October 26, 2016

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM. The following commissioners were present: Mr. Roland Watkins, Chair, Ms. Sukari Pinnock-Fitts, Mr. Mao Lin, Ms. Bessy Blanco, Ms. Marlene Oronao, and Mr. Abe Bibizadeh. Commissioner Jorge Flor was excused. Also present was Ms. Kitty Clark-Stevenson, Chair of the Human Rights Commission. OHR staff members Raul Torres and Antonio Acevedo were present.

- I. A motion was introduced by the Chair to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2015, meeting. The motion was unanimously approved. The Chair introduced the County Manager, Mark Schwartz, with him were Deputy County Manager, Michelle Cowan, Marcy Foster director of the Department of Human Resources and Melissa Lambert, Diversity Program Manager. Mr. Schwartz briefed the Commission on the diversity issues he faces, the accountability of directors in meeting AAP goals and how they are improving diversity in their departments. He said that even if nothing formal or written is in place at this time, there are ongoing discussions on this matter with the county leadership. He believes the organization needs training before a formal accountability process is developed and implemented. He expressed some of his reflections and his understanding of the barriers to diversity identified in the report. He reviewed the County's "good practices" currently in place in some departments and stated that unfortunately they are not being communicated well enough throughout the organization. Mr. Schwartz recognized the reality of unconscious bias and the need for training in this area. Commissioner

Pinnock-Fits said that accountability of the leadership was necessary to achieve results. She stated that “what is important gets measured.”

Mr. Schwartz mentioned employee resource groups, which are recognized and operational such as Alianza for Hispanics and an LGBT group. He welcomed the development of other groups. He mentioned that the Barrier’s report is still in draft form and will welcome the committee’s input. The discussion turned to the need for funding for some new and expanded programs like mentoring and bringing in the participation of high school and college students through internships and special outreach, as well as others.

Melissa Lambert, Diversity Program Manager, went over some highlights and comments to the barrier report.

Commissioners were pleased with the conversation and asked for the continuation of the analysis and discussion by the Commissioners and county staff. The Committee acknowledged the progress made having this barrier report completed for the first time since 1995.

Ms. Lambert presented the results of a pilot on diverse panels conducted by the county. The county recognizes that having diversity in the interview panels reduces the effects of unintentional bias on the selection decisions and provides for a more balanced process. Human resources and human rights agreed on a method to track, report and measure the use of diverse panels. The data recording has been automated to simplify the tracking and reporting the use of diverse panels. The data will appear in future affirmative action plans.

- II. Pending Business: Commissioners scheduled a meeting on November 1, 2016, for the review, further discussions and development of recommendations of the barrier report.
- III. Employees Miriam Jurado and Debbie Powers participated in the public comment part of the agenda. Among the matters brought to the attention of the Committee were the absence of employee development programs and the lack of meaningful

developmental plans documented in the employee performance reviews. One of the participants brought up a special situation happening in the County's Emergency Management office.

- IV. New Business: None
- V. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.

CERTIFICATION: We certify that Commissioners approved the minutes unanimously during the EEO Standing Committee meeting of November1, 2016.