



**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**  
**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 10, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.**  
**CITY HALL | Main Level Conference Room**

**Members Present**

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Geoff Morrison, Chair  
David Hartung, Vice Chair  
Margie Palazzolo, Secretary  
Carolyn Becker  
Michelle Cole  
Nicole Goldkamp  
Jeanne Webdell

**Youth Advisory Commission:**  
Scarlet Adams

**Council Liaison,** Maggie Duwe

**Staff Liaison,** Russ Hawes

**Other:**  
Jessica Winter, Administration

**Members Absent**

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Jennifer Bean

Paul Ward

**I. Roll Call**

Roll was taken by Margie with attendance reflected above.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Motion was made by Carolyn and seconded by Jeanne to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2023 meeting with the following revisions: change "removing" in Old Business, Section B to "contacting"; revise the first sentence of Old Business, Section D to say: "There was discussion on Heart-to-Heart Tutoring's performance, with Jeanne expressing enthusiasm for the potential enrollment of 57 students and 57 tutors."; and, change the date of New Business, Section D to January 15th. Minutes approved. All in favor, motion carried.

**III. City Council Comments**

Maggie reported on the recent purchase of a building to replace the current Public Works building. She said the building is on Leffingwell and currently houses a moving company that has the option to stay and pay rent to the City for another year.

**IV. Chief Administrative Officer Comments**

Russ furthered discussion on the new Public Works building. He provided details stating that the existing building is on a six-acre lot, while the new building occupies nine acres. Russ also mentioned plans to demolish the old building in

order to stimulate economic development by selling and developing the land to expand the downtown area and revamp the area around KPAC.

A question was asked about turning Jefferson into a cul-de-sac at St. Peter Church. Russ responded saying this topic had come up a couple times before. Another question was asked about the progress of the Grant's Trail extension. Russ said the Phase 1A & 1B were combined but construction is not expected to begin until the winter of 2027. He shared that Phase 1 will be the construction of a side path trail that will connect downtown Kirkwood from near the Farmer's Market down along Leffingwell to the trailhead at South Holmes.

## **V. Old Business**

### **A. Greentree Festival Booth**

Weather was nice and the festival was busy. Geoff would like to revisit the idea of having a candy bowl at the table next year because the interactions with visitors who stopped to take candy did not lead to meaningful conversations, especially with the parents of kids stopping for candy.

### **B. Police Open House on October 7**

There was good attendance and there was a lot more space with the parking lot renovation.

### **C. WVR ("Kirkwood for Everyone") presentation on Attainable Housing on 11/14 HRC meeting**

Geoff announced that Kirkwood for Everyone (formerly WVR) will deliver a presentation at 7:00 p.m. on Attainable Housing at the November KHRC meeting.

### **D. Speaker Event update**

David mentioned a setback with the Executive Director of Promo, Katie Erker-Lynch, not being able to attend as the speaker after the last meeting. However, the subcommittee managed to arrange for three alternative speakers: SQSH (St. Louis Queer+ Support Hotline) & THISTL (Trans Housing Initiative STL) two local groups, and local author Lisa Brennan. Lisa Brennan is the author of "The Auditorium in My Mind: Treasuring My Transgender Child." Each speaker will have a twenty-minute speaking slot, followed by a question and answer session with written questions from the audience. Information tables are expected to have 5-10 groups from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m., and there will be time to mingle. The two groups and Lisa Brennan will each receive a \$300 honorarium.

### **E. Inquiry to MCHR Director re: lack of MCHR Commissioners**

Geoff sent an email to all Commissioners regarding an investigative report in the Kansas City Star from April 2023 prior to this meeting. The report stated that the MCHR is currently underfunded and lacks competence in their work. Geoff also mentioned sending an email to Dr. Warren on September 13 but had not received a response to the questions sent. He expressed the belief that writing to the Missouri Governor about this matter would be unproductive.

**F. Contact with KHS student groups regarding their presentation at HRC meeting of activities this school year.**

Geoff contacted the three faculty sponsors for the student groups Coalition, Gender Sexuality Alliance and the Social Justice Club. Coalition is not active this year and the other two groups lost leadership through graduation last May and are still getting organized.

**G. Meetings with Meacham Park Neighborhood Association and Social Justice Coalition regarding MLK event.**

Geoff, Jeanne, two Kirkwood Social Justice members, and two MPNIA members have met weekly to discuss plans for the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration after MPNIA President Harriet Patton reserved the Keating Center at Kirkwood High Monday, January 15, 2024, for 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. The School District did agree to provide this space for no fee providing that there be student participation (Geoff has proposed that one of the HRC's 2023 Essay Contest winners read their essay). Possible speaker candidates discussed so far have included St. Louis Circuit Attorney Gabriel Gore, Dr. Benjamin Akande, and Judge Robin Ransom (Scarlet Adams suggested her grandfather State Representative Joe Adams as a possible candidate). Geoff stated that the decision had been made at an MLK Celebration meeting earlier in the day to send an invitation to Judge Ransom and Geoff will do that.

**VI. New Business**

**A. Subcommittee report of Meeting with Chief Murphy**

David shared that the Kirkwood Human Rights Commission and Police Chief Murphy held a Quarterly Meeting on October 9, 2023 with Chairperson Morrison and himself in attendance. There was one taser incident related to the robbery of a pizza delivery driver, resulting in four arrests. All Kirkwood officers carry tasers, but SROs do not wear body cameras per school district policy. Two complaints were reported this quarter - one regarding a traffic ticket that was ruled unfounded, and one regarding a traffic stop that was not sustained. Currently, the department is down two positions for a total of 88, with one new female officer hired from St. Louis City and another female

dispatcher entering the academy in January. Training costs continue to rise and are supplemented by asset forfeiture funds.

**VII. Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2023 from 6:30 – 7:30 pm, at the City Hall, Main Level Conference Room. Items for the next meeting will include: a review of the Speaker Event on 11/8; review of the Third Quarter Report; discussion of Essay Contest Guidelines and Prompt; and, “Kirkwood for Everyone” presentation on Attainable Housing.

**VIII. Adjourn**

Motion was made by Michelle and seconded by Margie to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

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Margie Palazzolo, Secretary