

CUMBERLAND COUNTY POLICY COMMITTEE
COURTHOUSE, 117 DICK STREET, 5TH FLOOR, ROOM 564
AUGUST 6, 2015 – 10:30 A.M.
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Charles Evans
Commissioner Jimmy Keefe
Commissioner Jeannette Council

OTHER COMMISSIONERS
PRESENT:

Commissioner Kenneth Edge
Commissioner Larry Lancaster
Commissioner Marshall Faircloth
Commissioner Glenn Adams

OTHERS PRESENT:

Amy Cannon, County Manager
James Lawson, Deputy County Manager
Tracy Jackson, Assistant County Manager
Melissa Cardinali, Assistant County Manager for Finance/
Administrative Services
Sally Shutt, Governmental Affairs and Public Information
Officer
Rick Moorefield, County Attorney
Vicki Evans, Finance Director
Rochelle Small-Toney, City of Fayetteville
Sheila Cuffee, Human Relations Commission
Kathy Waddell, Human Relations Commission
Willie Ratchford, WPR Consulting, Inc.
Candice White, Clerk to the Board
Kellie Beam, Deputy Clerk to the Board
Press

Commissioner Evans called the meeting to order.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JUNE 4, 2015

MOTION: Commissioner Keefe moved to approve the minutes.

SECOND: Commissioner Evans

VOTE: UNANIMOUS (3-0)

2. PRESENTATION OF FINAL REPORT REGARDING JOINT HUMAN
RELATIONS COMMISSION BY MR. WILLIE RATCHFORD

BACKGROUND:

The County entered into an Interlocal Agreement in 2004 for the purpose of providing a joint Human Relations Commission and Department for our community. The mission of the Human Relations Commission is to provide equal opportunity by reviewing equal opportunity complaints, developing programs designed to improve human relations, resolving fair housing and landlord/tenant complaints, providing training, and providing strategies to resolve issues that discriminate citizens in any way. Specifically, our Community Development Department has provided services to the Commission by assisting with fair housing issues.

Mr. Willie Ratchford, with WPR Consulting, Inc., made a presentation to the Policy Committee in April and is prepared to share his final report with the Policy Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the final report regarding continuation of the Joint Human Relations Function.

Mr. Ratchford stated WPR Consulting, LLC was retained by the City of Fayetteville to complete an assessment and alignment of the Fayetteville-Cumberland Human Relations Commission and Department (FCHRC) and to develop a process to hire a director for the Human Relations department.

Mr. Ratchford outlined the primary purpose of the process as follows:

- Legitimate business case for continuation of the FCHRC
- Revisit what should be the direction of the FCHRC
- Relationship between the City of Fayetteville and Cumberland County
- Scope of work for the FCHRC to make it more relevant
- Engage relevant segments of the community in this process for their feedback, input and ownership of the outcome
- Process to hire a new director

Mr. Ratchford stated information gathering consisted of conducting multiple interviews with various stakeholders, engaging focus groups, presentations on the importance of human relations work, surveys, reviewing documents provided by staff including relevant portions of the Human Relations Ordinance and facilitating focus groups and conducting a stakeholder group survey. Mr. Ratchford stated stakeholders consisted of the following:

- Members and staff of the FCHRC
- City and County Managers' Offices
- Fayetteville City Council members
- Cumberland County Commission
- Multiple community stakeholder groups, organizations and individuals

Mr. Ratchford stated the focus groups and survey provided insight into aspects of the FCHRC that might be improved and an organizational chart was prepared on what the FCHRC might look like if it were expanded. Mr. Ratchford also stated a draft memorandum of agreement was developed aligning the FCHRC jointly with the City of Fayetteville and Cumberland County.

Mr. Ratchford stated the following steps were taken to prepare to hire a new FCHRC Director:

- Develop a list of desirable traits for the director position
- Job summary for the position
- Interview guide/questions and assessment tool
- Writing skills assessment
- Role play for a mock staff meeting
- Interview notes
- Assessment tool for persons who will interview candidates for the director's position.

Mr. Ratchford provided an overview of the fifteen (15) recommendations contained in the Final Report-June 2015 as follows:

- ❖ Recommendation #1: The City of Fayetteville and Cumberland County continue their support of the Fayetteville-Cumberland Human Relation Commission and prioritize the work of the FCHRC through strategic planning and with the necessary City and County funding and resources.
 - Stakeholder Feedback: Over 90% of stakeholder and survey respondents expressed a desire for the City and County to continue their support of the FCHRC.
- ❖ Recommendation #2: The City of Fayetteville and Cumberland County sign off on a Memorandum of Agreement for support of the Human Relations Department mission and programs.
- ❖ Recommendation #3: Increase the FCHRC current staff of 3.5 persons to six (6) full time positions with joint City and County funding (50/50); or four (4) full time positions with City funding if the County does not want to engage in this partnership.
 - Stakeholder Concern: Multiple stakeholders expressed concern that the FCHRC is understaffed and underfunded.
- ❖ Recommendation #4: Examine the structure and design of the FCHRC and make sure that it aligns with the tenets of the Fayetteville-Cumberland Human Relations Ordinance.
 - Core Services:
 - Develop, maintain and improve human relations, inter-group relations, inter-racial relations and community relations
 - Provide fair housing conciliations

- Resolve community issues through mediation/group and individual
 - Fair housing, public accommodations and employment investigations
 - Fair housing education and outreach
 - Language access coordination
- ❖ Recommendation #5: Revisit the Vision and Mission of the FCHRC to make sure they are still relevant.
 - Vision First: Before a “mission” is defined, it is suggested that the FCHRC determine the organization’s “vision” for the Fayetteville-Cumberland community.

Commissioner Council stated she agrees the mission needs to be updated and needs to be relevant to 2020 going forward. Commissioner Council further stated she feels the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners and the Fayetteville City Council should have been involved in the survey and assessment.

- ❖ Recommendation #6: Review annually and create new working/standing subcommittees to address human relations issues; in addition to appointing “ad hoc” subcommittees to address specific issues of the day.
 - Ordinance Authorization: Human Relations Ordinance authorizes the FCHRC, “at its discretion, to appoint subcommittees to concern themselves with specific human relations problems”.
- ❖ Recommendation #7: Engage stakeholders to assist in setting a strategic community wide agenda for HRC programs/services. This would determine what subcommittees would be needed.
 - Working Together: Human relations work requires community partnerships and collaborations.
- ❖ Recommendation #8: Raise the value of the Human Relations Department by doing an annual awareness campaign and be more proactive with public relations.
 - Awareness Campaign: Stakeholder groups suggested that the FCHRC needs to do a better job of promoting itself in the Fayetteville-Cumberland community.
- ❖ Recommendation #9: Community Forums be created to bring residents together for deliberative community dialogues on tough issues and community concerns.
 - Honest Dialogue: In Fayetteville-Cumberland County, racial, ethnic and socio-economic tensions could lead to public discourse and cause polarization in many segments of the community.
- ❖ Recommendation #10: Increase outreach to diverse populations in Fayetteville-Cumberland.

- Cultural Competency: FCHRC needs to be in the forefront of providing culturally competent services and outreach to Fayetteville-Cumberland's growing diverse community.
- ❖ Recommendation #11: Provide diversity training to employees of the City and the County and their agencies on continuous basis.
 - A Changing Customer Base: As components of local government, the City of Fayetteville and Cumberland County are dealing with a customer/client base that has and will continue to become more diverse.
- ❖ Recommendation #12: Use community gatekeepers to keep the pulse of the various population needs.
 - Tolerance: Based on feedback received from the community in this process, there is a perception among some that tolerance is not a common human ideal in the community.
- ❖ Recommendation #13: Seek out ways to support organizations working to support Fayetteville-Cumberland's immigrant population in order to maximize their capabilities.
 - Language Access: A Language Access Plan (LAP) would call for City and County departments to identify LAP Liaisons who coordinate language access whenever a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) resident is trying to secure City or County services.
- ❖ Recommendation #14: FCHRC work to increase partnerships across the community with other organizations that have similar missions.
 - Leveraging Resources: FCHRC should continually seek ways to leverage resources through teamwork, collaboration and partnerships with local organizations that have similar visions and missions.
- ❖ Recommendation #15: Conduct quarterly member orientations for HRC commission members.
 - Educating the HRC: Members of the Commission expressed concern that at times they were confused about the work of the FCHRC. Most felt this could be addressed by having more frequent member orientations and not just doing so once a year.

Commissioner Evans stated he would like the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners to receive reports from the Human Relations Commission to keep the Board informed. Mr. Ratchford stated in the proposed Memorandum of Agreement there is a recommendation to have the Fayetteville-Cumberland Human Relations Commission, Fayetteville-Cumberland Human Relations Department and the Fayetteville-Cumberland Fair Housing Board individually and/or jointly submit a report of their activities and recommendations to the Fayetteville City Council and the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners no less than quarterly each year.

Commissioner Keefe stated he would like to know how many cases the Human Relations Commission took on last year. Mr. Ratchford stated he does not have that information but he would make sure to get the information for Commissioner Keefe. Commissioner Keefe further stated he would like to know how many cases were in the unincorporated areas. Commissioner Faircloth asked Mr. Ratchford to also provide a list of all stakeholders that participated in the process.

Mr. Ratchford stated the Board of Commissioners is invited to provide feedback regarding the proposed recommendations.

No action taken.

3. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

No other items of business.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:07 AM