



**City of Salisbury**  
**HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**August 8, 2019**

**Committee Members Present**

Reverend John Wright, *Chair*  
Mark Decker  
Chalarra Sessoms  
Amber Green  
Billy Earl Amos  
Nance Held  
D'Shawn Doughty  
Marcel Jagne-Shaw

**Committee Members Absent**

N/A

**In Attendance**

Alyssa Massey, *Department of Infrastructure and Development, Sustainability Coordinator*  
Kaisha Young  
Linda Amos

The Human Rights Advisory Committee (HRAC) met at 5:45p.m. in Conference Room #306 of the GOB

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:52pm by Rev Wright.

**Last Meeting Minutes**

The meeting minutes from June were acknowledged. A motion to approve the last meeting minutes as written was brought forth by Mr. Amos and seconded by Ms. Held. The motion carried by a unanimous vote in favor.

**Open Public Forum**

Rev Wright asked if any members of the public would like to bring forward any issues for discussion. There were no issues brought forward by the public.

### **Current Events and Local Issues**

Rev Wright asked Ms. Green about the Juneteenth Festival that occurred June 15th. Ms. Green stated that the event was very successful with over 300 individuals attending the event, and it brought together a lot of different organizations including PFLAG and Wicomico Environmental Trust. Ms. Green stated that the goal of the festival was to bring awareness to the significance of the Juneteenth date and the Chipman Cultural Center. Rev Wright asked Ms. Green if there was any pushback on Facebook regarding PFLAG's presence at the Juneteenth festival. Ms. Green stated that there was a negative post by someone who attended the festival, and that the incident highlights an area where progress still needs to be made towards acceptance of LGBTQ members among communities of color.

### **Update on acquiring SPD training materials and speaking with Chief Duncan, as well as an update from those who attended June's YDAC meeting**

Ms. Green stated that Chief Duncan is interested in the juvenile training Ms. Green recommended, called "Strategies for Youth" but the main obstacle to the SPD adopting the training is the cost. The training can cost \$20,000, Mr. Decker asked Ms. Green if SPD currently has any specific policies for addressing youth, Ms. Green responded that she isn't aware of any specific policies but believes that SPD posts their policies on the website so that would be a good place to check. Ms. Held recommended that the committee begin the next month's meeting by creating a list of questions and talking points for Chief Duncan when she visits.

The June YDAC meeting did not have many members present, according to Ms. Green and Mrs. Sessoms, most of the members' terms have expired and have chosen not to renew their appointments. The June YDAC meeting had many guests attend, but only a couple voting members. In order for YDAC to be a fully operational committee again, more voting members must be appointed through the Mayor's Office.

### **Update from the Maryland Lynching Project task force**

Mr. Decker reported that the objective is to establish a plan to create community buy-in and support the creation of a lynching memorial on City property. Ms. Green stated how important it is to link the past and the present for this type of project. Ms. Green stated that the Equal Justice Initiative works towards ending mass incarceration and the death penalty, and if the memorial project is chosen, they will pay for the cost of the memorial. In order to have them come in to complete the project, there needs to be a good amount of community buy-in and initiative for the project to occur. Mr. Decker described the first step moving forward is for the committee to make a recommendation to the Mayor's Office to create a task force to lead the charge planning the memorial. From there, they will connect with key community leaders and set up meetings to discuss topics from business economics to criminal justice, health and education. Ms. Green emphasized how important it is to help the community take ownership of the memorial. Instead of a top-down project, the Mayor would like for the memorial to be a

bottom-up effort through the community. Ms. Green made a motion for the committee to make a recommendation to the Mayor's office that an official lynching memorial task force be formed. Mr. Amos seconded and the motion passed by a unanimous vote of the committee.

### **Fight for \$15 Bill in the City**

Ms. Green stated that she is still working on this legislation and stated that she believes that the \$15 minimum wage legislation will need a lot of discussion. Mr. Doughty agreed with Ms. Green and suggested that a task force might be helpful to assist the smaller local businesses with preparing for the \$15 minimum wage bill that was recently passed through the Maryland General Assembly. Mr. Decker added that the tip wages legislation is also critical. Ms. Green stated that she has seen legislation in other communities focused on raising the tip wage to the Federal standards and that the City could adopt similar legislation. Ms. Green suggested that the committee should recommend that the Mayor's office form a small business advisory committee, and that they should require that the committee be economically and racially diverse. Rev Wright agreed and suggested that the committee discuss this further at the next meeting.

### **Next Meeting**

The next HRAC meeting was set for Thursday, September 12, at 6p.m. in conference room 306 of the Government Office Building.

### **Adjournment**

On a motion by Rev Wright, seconded by Ms. Held, and carried unanimously, the HRAC meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm.

**Minutes Taken By:** Alyssa Massey, City of Salisbury Sustainability Coordinator