

Citizens' Unity Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 15, 2018 ~ 6:00pm-8:00pm
Community Development Conference Room, 5th Floor, 22 Lincoln St. Hampton, VA.

Attendance: Alice Capehart, A. Tyrone George, Carter Phillips, Michael Harper, Mei Stukes, Loretta Ray, Mary Wallace, Darius Swift, Rebecca Jackson, Burley Gardner (Community Liaison)

Absent: Anne Andrews, Milton McDonald, Nolan Dazevedo, Ray Smith, Cassandra Simpson, Deena Franklin (Community Liaison), Nikola Walker, Kercelia Woodruff, Devin Smart, Ellen Shackelford (Community Liaison), Latiesha Handie (Program Coordinator), Steven Bond (Assistant City Manager)

Staff: Synetheia Newby (Executive Director)

Call to Order – Synetheia Newby, Executive Director, 6:12 pm

Roll Call – Synetheia Newby

Action Items

Item 1: Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from 1-11-18

- Commissioner Carter Phillips made a motion to approve the minutes; motion seconded by Commissioner Mei Stukes. Minutes approved by vote of commissioners.

New Business

Item 1: Introductions of guest (NOTE: This agenda item was added by Synetheia Newby, Executive Director during the meeting.)

- Synetheia Newby, Executive Director, requested Commissioner Mei Stukes introduce the Hampton Boys Scout Troop 99, chartered by St. Mark's United Methodist Church, who attended the CUC meeting to earn their communication badges.

Item 2: Update on Vacancies

- Synetheia Newby, Executive Director, explained that the newest appointees Pastor Kevin C. Jones and Devin S. Smart had been notified of their appointments. Shortly after notification, Kevin C. Jones resigned due to prescheduled commitments that developed after his initial application was submitted.

- Currently, the commission has three vacancies that will be filled by the Clerk of Council next month.
- The board has received two new applications of interest since the last appointments and Synetheia Newby, Executive Director asked commissioners to encourage people that would be a good fit to apply.

Item 3: Program Evaluation Updates

- Synetheia Newby, Executive Director, implemented a monthly reporting process to communicate departmental progress and statistics to Assistant City Manager, Steven D. Bond; this process has been used to create annual and mid-year reports to show productivity snapshots.
- Synetheia Newby distributed copies of the FY17 Annual Report and the FY18 Mid-Year Report to each commissioner; the reports are also available electronically upon request.
- Synetheia Newby disseminated a copy of the January monthly report to commissioners for their review; this report is also available electronically upon request.
- [Hampton Diversity College updates: A session of Hampton Diversity College Level I finished last Thursday, February 8, 2018, with 12 Graduates. Level II is scheduled to begin March 15, 2018, with ten current registrants. CUC will launch a pilot Level III course summer 2018, and Marketing Outreach has created a brochure to help disseminate course and program information. Commissioners will receive an emailed version of the pamphlet once it is finalized.](#)

Item 4: International Children's Festival

- Synetheia Newby provided a recruitment sheet with an hour and a half time allotments for commissioners to sign-up for staffing the table on a rotating basis.
- The International Children's Festival date is Saturday, April 21, 2018.
- Synetheia Newby stated that commissioners would be tasked to engage parents and children through interactive activities at the International Children's Festival during their assigned shift.
- CUC Program and Event information will be disseminated at the table and excluded from the children's bags this year.
- Synetheia Newby led the commission in a brainstorm to decide what items will be included in the bags this year.
- Synetheia Newby summarized the brainstorm, stating that the commission would like to cut the cost of promotional items and maximize impact by stocking youth bags with diversity-themed materials such as: "we are special" handouts, bookmarks, pencils, coloring books, fidget spinners and or diversity crayons. The commission would also like to have a culminating activity such as the civility tree used in previous years.
- Commissioners suggested self-assembly of promotional items or requesting assistance from marketing and outreach to create coloring book pages, and adhesive information stickers to label products.

- Synetheia Newby concluded by stating the CUC department will explore item pricing and promotional bag alternatives.

Item 4: Committee Work

- The CUC Commission agreed to utilize this portion of the general body meeting time for committees to provide a brief report of progress and to finalize dates and programming. Committee reports are as follows:

Movie Talks: Synetheia Newby and Luretta Ray provided the report. On Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at 6 pm committee members have elected to show Marshall at the Hampton Main Library.

- Luretta Ray confirmed that the next Movie Talks date would be May 29th, 2018. Synetheia Newby suggested that the next movie title be established by the following CUC meeting on March 8, 2018, for promotional purposes.

YAG: Synetheia Newby provided the report in the absence of CUC Program Coordinator Latiesha Handie. The next Youth Advisory Group meeting will be held Monday, February 26, 2018, 5:30 to 7:30 pm at the Hampton Performing and Creative Art Center. All commissioners are welcome to attend meetings.

- YAG is currently working on a year-end event that will bring awareness to young people relative to diversity, unity, and inclusion.
- There are no major updates at this time, however, an update will be available at our next meeting on March 8th.

1 City, 1 Book: Alice Capehart provided the report; sub-committee looked at postponing the initial launch to a later date to give the committee more time to plan and research.

- The committee has begun working with Rita Scrivener of the Hampton Main Library to collaborate with local book clubs and current mass reading structures.
- Darius Swift will research how to incorporate the reading initiative into the Hampton City Jail reading program.
- An update to details will be provided at the next CUC meeting.

“Hot Button”: Synetheia Newby provided the report. Only one member of the sub-committee was present at the meeting so Synetheia Newby suggested a phone meeting due to the absences of multiple group members. She stated she would send out a Doodle poll to schedule a phone conference.

- The committee was unable to launch the first “Hot Button” conversation on the “Confederate flag”; which was a suggested first topic on Saturday, February 10th from 4 pm to 6 pm. The committee will decide on a new launch date by the next meeting.

- Commissioner Darius Swift suggested to the committee to host a conversation on the recent "school shootings."

Unity through Art: Commissioner A. Tyrone George provided the report; confirmed the event date and agreed to check on wholesale prices for event materials and send to CUC staff.

- The committees would like to continue to host these events quarterly.
- Commissioner Rebecca Jackson stated that in support of the committee, she would contact a freelance artist to cut cost and will partner with A. Tyrone George to communicate information.
- Synetheia Newby suggested that committee members send quotes of event materials via email to both her and Latiesha Handie.
- Commissioner Darius Swift stated that the theme could be Earth Day to support an April date.
- The committee confirmed that the next event date would be April 28th 2pm-4pm.
- CUC staff will secure a location and look into the Hampton Performing Creative Art Center.
- Reservations will be received by the 311 contact center.

Unity Awards: Synetheia Newby and Mary Wallace provided the report.

- The contract to secure the American Theatre has been signed and submitted, and the Master of Ceremony has been confirmed; the Master of Ceremony will be Major General Retired Arnold Wallace.
- The American Theatre will be the location for the June 8, 2018 ceremony.
- The nominations link for the Unity Awards recipients has been activated on the CUC website as of 02/14/2018, along with a newsflash noting that nominations will be open until May 1st, 2018.
- Marketing and Outreach is currently working on a flyer to advertise and invite the public to attend this year's Unity Awards. This flyer will be used for both nominations and invitation to attend the Ceremony. *Suggested wording:* "You are cordially invited to attend." All attendees will need to contact 311 to RSVP.
- CUC Staff obtained the menu options from 2017 and will begin securing last year's catering companies.

LGBTQ: Commissioner Rebecca K. Jackson provided the report; the committee has confirmed a partnership with Outwire757 and the LGBT Life Center will be present at the next LGBTQ Awareness event.

- The next meeting will be Wednesday, February 28th to discuss the next event details with our community partners.
- There are no additional updates at this time.

Item 5: Committee Report-Outs

- Committee report-outs were performed concurrently with committee work.

Item 6: Elections

- Synetheia Newby asked if commissioners would like to postpone nominations and voting for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson to next month's meeting because most of the commissioners were not present.
- Commissioner Mary Wallace made a motion to postpone nominations and voting; motion seconded by Commissioner Luretta Ray.
- Postponement approved by a vote of commissioners.
- Commissioner Alice Capehart suggested that in the next email meeting reminder include that elections will be done at the next meeting.
- Synetheia Newby will be notifying those that have not attended three consecutive meetings of the meeting attendance requirements.

Announcements

- Community Liaison Burley Gardner announced an upcoming event at Fort Eustis for Black History month that Latiesha Handie disseminated to the commission.
- Commissioner Darius Swift shared that a local community group will be reading a book called "To be a Slave" for Black History Month and encourages commissioners to read along.
- Commissioner Mary Wallace suggested that the Youth Advisory Group receive an invitation to attend the upcoming Movie Talks event.
- Commissioner Carter Phillips shared personal accomplishments for his law practice.
- Commissioner Michael Harper shared an invite for the Bethel High Alumni "Mega Reunion" event.

Next Meeting Date and Time: March 8, 2018, at 6 pm Community Development Conference Room, 5th Floor, 22 Lincoln St. Hampton, VA.

Adjourned at 8:11 pm