
**CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
April 24, 2019 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on April 24, 2019 at 6:00pm in the Lower Level City Council Chambers at 57 E 1st St.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cliff Moon, Chair
Joseph Holmes
Nadia Khalighi
Mark Tompert
Louis Wade
Ron Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT

Colleen Byron, Vice-Chair
Amy-Lyn Faatoafe
Alvaro Gonzalez
Jared Smith
Silvia Stanford

STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Alicoate
Cisco Luzania
Lisa Cartwright-Harris
Tara Hall
Amy Trethaway

GUESTS

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Dr. Moon, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

(1a) Announcement of excused absences.

Dr. Byron, Ms. Faatoafe, Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Smith and Ms. Stanford were announced as excused absences.

2. Items from Citizens Present. *

There were no citizens present who wished to speak to the Board.

3. Approval of minutes from the March 27, 2019 Board meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Williams, seconded by Ms. Khalighi that the above-mentioned minutes be accepted as written.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Dr. Moon, Mr. Holmes, Ms. Khalighi, Mr. Tompert, Mr. Wade, Mr. Williams.

NAYS- None

4. Discuss and make recommendations on Mesa Police Department Monthly Community Engagement Report.

(4a) Updates on Diversity related police incidents and activities.

Ms. Hall, Police Community Partnership Administrator, was present to speak on the pilot Community Engagement Academy that was held on April 13th and reviewed survey responses from the academy comprising of volunteers, MCC students and community forum members totaling 32 attendees. Ms. Hall explained that the theme of the event was "A Day in The Life of an Officer" and

was facilitated by a panel of officers. She gave a brief preview of survey responses saying that many of them were detailing how there was a lot of interest in the background of the officers and how their careers have gotten them to that point. Additionally, there were a lot of suggestions made by those in attendance for the next forum which showed interest that has potential to be sustained. Ms. Hall stated that the next forum will be held in June and invited members of the board to attend as community leaders. Dr. Moon inquired if the attendees represented the demographics of the community to which Ms. Hall responded that there was diversity and even inclusion of international leaders. Mr. Williams commented on the fact that he had reached out and commended Mesa PD Chief Batista on holding the event and he and Dr. Moon expressed interest in attending more community events moving forward.

Dr. Moon inquired for more information concerning a use of case force and the subsequent discipline for the officers. Ms. Hall stated that she would follow up with more information.

(4b) Updates on scheduling of upcoming Police Advisory Board meetings.

Ms. Hall explained that the first event was a more introductory event and there is working being done by both Ms. Hall and Mr. Charles Cobbs to grow the number of first-time attendees. There has been further outreach to other agencies and school districts to display the positive message the forums have provided. Dr. Moon offered support by pledging to relay forum information to those that he knew would be interested from Tempe Union School District and beyond.

(4c) Updates on a meeting of the LGBTQ Community Forum.

Ms. Hall stated that there is a renewed focus on formulating a cohesive team to facilitate this function including a PD Commander expressing great interest in supporting this and pledging to devote time in its success. Ms. Hall pledged more updates as they follow.

5. Discuss and hear presentation from Mesa Counts on College on diversity issues within schools.

Ms. Trethaway and Ms. Cartwright-Harris appeared to make the presentation on Mesa Counts on College. Ms. Trethaway began the presentation by giving an overview of Mesa Counts on College, an education partnership between the City of Mesa, Mesa Community College, and Mesa Public Schools whose overall mission of the organization is to increase college and career readiness and completion in our community and to create a college going culture. Ms. Trethaway then moved to explain how an “education crisis” in the state gives Mesa Counts on College a call to action for achieving these goals. Ms. Trethaway gave statistics that speak to the need for institutions such as Mesa Counts on College to work on this issue. For example, Ms. Trethaway expressed that only about 53% of Arizona HS grads enroll in post- secondary after high school. To further explain the issues presented in post High School attainment in the state, Ms. Trethaway shared that only about 45% of Arizona residents have a 2-4 year degree or certification and that there is a 27% completion rate within 6 years of HS graduation for those students that did pursue. The data used was compiled by multiple agencies including state, local and school district agencies.

Ms. Trethaway then spoke to the overall attainment gap that is burgeoning in the State of Arizona. There were two graphs depicting Project Population Growth and Degree Attainment for multiple different demographic groups throughout the nation. The graphs and Ms. Trethaway spoke to the point that although the Latino population was expected to be the largest group to experience an

increase, the same group held the lowest marks in degree attainment. Ms. Trethaway explained that because of this, Mesa Counts on College focuses heavily on low-income Latino students in Mesa which represents the highest percentage of students in the city. The focus is derived from that nationally supported statistics that show the need to double the completion and degree attainment for those populations of students. Ms. Trethaway explained that a primary goal of Mesa Counts on College is known as “Achieve 60AZ” which is a statewide goal that states that by the year 2030, 60 percent of adults age 25-64 will have a license, degree or certification. Benefits of the program aim to double completion rates to have tens of thousands more workers in the pool especially in Mesa. By doing so Ms. Trethaway said that there is a drive to increase our attainment from 53 to 70%, increase FAFSA completion among HS seniors by 50% and complete over 100,000 “in progress” degrees and certificates. Ms. Trethaway shared that the Highschool in the Mesa Public School District with the highest FAFSA completion rate was Red Mountain High School at 54% and the lowest was Skyline at 37%. Through the work that organization such as Mesa Counts on College achieves, the City of Mesa now has the fifth most improved completion rate in the nationwide FAFSA Completion Initiative among all participating cities.

Ms. Trethaway then transitioned by explaining how Mesa Counts on College reaches out to members of the community in order to increase education for city residents at the College Access Center, which the board was invited to visit and tour. A resource included are GED preparation classes in the morning and evening. There is also financial support for the costs of the tests. There is one on one personalized college advisement available to students who have shown an interest in attending a certified educational institution; as well as outreach and on-site with high schools/colleges that are not solely exclusive to Mesa. This was done so that there was an ample supply of resources for all students who require these resources. Ms. Trethaway spoke to how parent engagement has become a crucial aspect of spreading the goal of Mesa Counts on College. Due to a large contingent on parents within the city being primarily Spanish speaking, there have been multiple bilingual events and informational resources to reach those students and their family. Mesa Counts on College has also worked in collaboration with Arizona State University to participate in these events. Ms. Trethaway explained that there has been a large influx of these type of Spanish-speaking family units who have not had the ingraining college experience and Mesa Counts on College has reached large amounts of them through these types of outreach.

Other resources offered students include participation in the FAFSA Completion Initiative as well as PSAT/SAT and ACT Test Prep that is offered at no charge due to many residents being hindered by the cost of either the tests or the necessary prep sessions. Ms. Trethaway explained that these costs are covered by various grants received by Mesa Counts on College. Another prominent resource that Mesa Counts on College has initiated has been Workplace Development. This is this being achieved through the Mayors Teen Force in which students at Mesa Public Schools are matched with local small businesses that are in the field that the students are interested and will intern with during the summer. They do this along with learning about more available resources to help the students attend college and learn how plan for their college success. There has been a great reception to this program with over 100 small businesses expressing interest in participating and ABC15 news having a TV spot covering the success of the program to date.

Mr. Holmes asked if there have been any cities that have successfully increased the Latino populations degree achievement rate, to which Ms. Trethaway stated that they are working with the

Helios organization to study the topic and once the information becomes available for release she would share it with the board. Ms. Trethaway noted that Mesa Counts on College is one the only five city programs in the country to have received a grant from the Gates Foundation to address this very issue and spoke about how Mayor Giles has created the Mesa Achieves Higher Education Task Force to address these challenges. Mr. Wade asked what could be driving the FAFSA completion rate to be so low, Ms. Trethaway and Ms. Cartwright-Harris answered that the lack of knowledge for the benefits of the FAFSA and fear of releasing personal information acts as hindrance to completion for many students and their families. Ms. Cartwright-Harris stated that she has worked personally with multiple families that have been concerned with citizenship status and has made headway in eliminating concerns to filling out FAFSA.

Mr. Wade asked what else could be done to increase awareness to Mesa Counts of College and the resources that it provides to students to which Ms. Trethaway responded that there has been a large focus on doing just that and invited board members to assist in that outreach. Responding to a question from Mr. Tompert as to who assumes responsibility for student progress after high school graduation, Ms. Trethaway said that businesses are taking a higher responsibility to courting trained and motivated workforce. Mr. Tompert also commended Mesa Counts on College for the work they have done working in the trade field as well as university tracks and implored the board to officially support Mesa Counts on College. Dr. Moon asked how Mesa Counts on College address students who experience poverty and/or homelessness and provide them with the resources needed to obtain education. Ms. Trethaway stated that the location of the College Access Center is placed specifically above a New Leaf property to give an ample opportunity to connect with such individuals. Ms. Khalighi extended an invitation to Mesa Counts on College to have booth at the Zen Nights event. The motion to support Mesa Counts on College is intended to be added to the next meeting agenda on May 22nd, 2019.

6. Discuss and provide direction on advising the City Council related to City services for individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues based on information provided by the Fire & Medical Department.

Ms. Alicoate provided the update that Mr. Ward would be present to provide a detailed presentation on updates related to City services for individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues based on information provided by the Fire & Medical Department at the next board meeting. Ms. Alicoate gave an overview of a few MFMD programs and improvements being initiated due to the passage of the public safety tax. These include two new fire stations and a newer rapid response vehicle. Due to increases federal assistance, there has been a reinvestment in the program that allows MFMD to replicate the ability to provide nurse practitioner care and alternative care locations. Mr. Tompert expressed appreciation for these updates and is looking forward to Mr. Wade's presentation.

7. Discuss implementation of the Youth Peace Building Summit.

Ms. Khalighi provided an update on the Youth Peace Building Summit and stated that there was an overall positive feedback by the attendees and the event was fortunate to have had multiple keynote speakers. Some feedback that Ms. Khalighi received from teachers/counselors was that want for a teacher focused curriculum during the event and a move for the date of the event towards earlier in the year. The date change Ms. Khalighi explained was supported by the

educators so that the students attending could utilize the skills learned at the summit throughout the year. The educators in attendance gave Ms. Khalighi contact information to remain apprised for next year's summit.

Dr. Moon then thanked members of the Human Relations Advisory Board and City of Mesa staff who helped facilitate and attended the 4th Youth Peace Building Summit. Dr. Moon then gave an overview of the survey responses which showed a positive reception by the students and expressed excitement at planning the next years Youth Peace Building Summit. Ms. Khalighi made the requests that an official thank you is also extended to the speakers and volunteers, to which all agreed.

8. Discuss and provide direction on advising the City Council related to the issue of a Non-Discrimination Ordinance.

Ms. Alicoate gave the update that since the AZ House Bill would no longer proceed, the board would be providing Mayor and Council recommendations concerning this topic. Ms. Alicoate advised the board that since the strategic planning meeting was approaching, that the board utilizes this time to formulate their recommendations as well as a formal report to Mayor and Council about the work and achievements by the Human Relations Advisory Board. In addition, Ms. Alicoate presented the board with supporting documents that visualizes to the board as to which previous strategic plan initiatives have been completed and which are still in progress. Although there was a substantial amount of progress made on many different areas of the strategic plan and every initiative had progress made, the Non-Discrimination Ordinance is something that currently would need to be worked on moving forward. Responding to a question from Mr. Williams about how board members can do outreach as a member of the board, Dr. Moon and Ms. Alicoate responded by saying that board member have discretion to reach out to any individual or organization that will add a positive impact to the overall mission of the board. Mr. Wade asked if the One Mesa Campaign would fulfil some aspects of the strategic plan, to which Ms. Alicoate responded by stating that since it is a pledge as opposed to policy so it would not fulfil that qualification but acts a driver to such achievements. Ms. Alicoate finished by reviewing how the strategic planning meeting is an opportunity to relay both achievements and recommendations to mayor and council.

9. Discuss Board members establishing relationships with new community partners as it relates to human relation issues in Mesa.

Dr. Moon stated that members of the board have done their due diligence by reach out and inviting community partners to Human Relations Advisory Board events and encouraged board members to continue doing so.

10. Discuss and take action on the cancellation of the 2019 June and July Board meetings.

It was moved by Mr. Tompert, seconded by Mr. Williams that the above-mentioned minutes be accepted as written.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Dr. Moon, Mr. Holmes, Ms. Khalighi, Mr. Tompert, Mr. Wade, Mr. Williams.

NAYS- None

11. Scheduling of future agenda items, general information, and Board attendees at upcoming meetings and events including those set forth below.

(11a) Next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 6PM in the Lower Level City Council Chambers (57 E 1st St).

- May 22, 2019 Agenda: Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair
- May 22, 2019 Agenda: Strategic Planning Meeting in August

(11b) Regional Human Relations Commission meeting Thursday, May 16, 2019 from 5PM to 7:30PM at Western Spirit: Scottsdale Museum of the West (3830 N Marshall Way).

12. Hear Reports on conferences and/or meetings attended

Ms. Khalighi extend invitations to multiple Zen Nights events and “Juneteenth” celebration as well as a film screening of the movie *Invisible Vegan* that speaks to the drive for affordable vegan eating in numerous areas to better serve minority communities.

13. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39PM.

***Members of the audience may address the Board on any item. The Arizona Open Meeting Law (ARS § 38-431 et seq.) limits the Human Relations Advisory Board to discussing only those matters listed on the agenda and other matters related thereto.**

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Si necesita asistencia o traducción en español, favor de llamar al menos 48 horas antes de la reunión al 480-644-2767.