
**CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
January 22, 2025 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on January 22, 2025 at 6:00pm in the Lower Level, City Council Chambers, 57 E First St.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Christiana Hammond, Chair
Nina Allred, Vice-Chair
William Campos
Sabrina Dobson
Abram Ellsworth
Mary Redwing
Oscar White
Jane Williams-Cooper

MEMBERS ABSENT

Rochelle Johns
Yudit Nonthe Sanchez
Perla Sandberg

STAFF PRESENT

Bianca Amin
Elisha Gutierrez
Oscar Venegas

GUESTS

Jessica Thumas

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Ms. Hammond called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

(1a) Announcement of excused absences.

Yudit Nonthe Sanchez and Perla Sandberg were announced as excused absences for this meeting.

2. Items from Citizens Present. *

No citizens wished to speak to the board.

3. Approval of minutes from the October 23, 2024 HRAB meeting.

It was moved by Oscar White and seconded by Nina Allred that the above-mentioned minutes be accepted as written.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Christiana Hammond, Nina Allred, William Campos, Sabrina Dobson, Abram Ellsworth, Mary Redwing, Oscar White, Jane Williams-Cooper

NAYS - None

4. Hear and discuss the presentation from a community organization, Compudopt, on their programs to provide technology access and education.

Ms. Jessica Thumas, Compudopt's Community Engagement and Outreach Manager, provided the HRAB with a presentation on Compudopt, a nationwide nonprofit organization promoting access to technologies for families and members of the local community. She explained how the organization collects donations of used technology items, such as tablets and laptops. The items are refurbished and distributed to families in need. In 2024, Compudopt distributed over 4000 computers in Mesa alone. She

described the application process and user experience. Ms. Thumas continued her presentation by sharing details on their partnerships with the Mesa Public School District, Valleywise and JustServe. She highlighted T-Mobile, which provides free internet access to families. Through these partnerships, the organization provides digital skills and future career classes to the community. Upon concluding the presentation, Ms. Thumas answered questions and responded to feedback provided by the HRAB.

5. Hear and discuss the presentation from the Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Department on their Adaptive Recreation programs and services.

Mr. Oscar Venegas, the Recreation Supervisor, provided the HRAB with a presentation on the City of Mesa's Adaptive Recreation programs and services. He spotlighted the achievement of the City of Mesa being the first Parks and Recreation organization designated as a Certified Autism Center, which is committed to providing inclusive programming for the community and aims to provide accommodation for any interested attendees to be a part of any available program or event offered. He provided an overview of the programs and services, including data that represented their growth in participation over the last few years. These programs include activities such as team sports, theatre productions, and summer camps for people with every ability. He shared details on an advisory group that consists of community and program members who give feedback on their programming and how they use that platform as a catalyst for growing their services. He expressed gratitude and appreciation for the Adaptive Recreation staff members who strive to create opportunities for community members to be exposed to new experiences. He shared that most of the staff have a personal connection to these programs as they have family members with disabilities or are Special Education teachers.

Mr. Venegas highlighted a partnership with Flagstaff's High Country Adaptive Sports that allowed participants to attend skateboarding sessions. He also provided details on their partnerships with Arizona Disabled Sports (AZDS), Mesa Public Schools, and Special Olympics, which often offer opportunities for community members to compete at a national level, like at the Desert Challenge Games. Upon concluding the presentation, Mr. Venegas answered questions and responded to feedback provided by the HRAB.

6. Hear and discuss the plan for a strategic planning workshop in the Spring and provide direction to staff for scheduling purposes.

It was moved by Oscar White and seconded by Nina Allred that the strategic planning workshop take place during the March 26, 2025 meeting and the time of the meeting be adjusted to 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES - Christiana Hammond, Nina Allred, William Campos, Sabrina Dobson, Abram Ellsworth, Mary Redwing, Oscar White, Jane Williams-Cooper

NAYS – None

7. Scheduling of meetings, future agenda items, and general information.

(7a) Next HRAB meeting will be held on February 26, 2025 at 6 p.m. in the Lower-Level City Council Chambers (57 E 1st St).

8. Hear reports on conferences and/or meetings attended.

Mr. Ellsworth volunteered at a community service project at Arizona State University Polytechnic to salvage the gym floor for repurposing at a local community church in November and December 2024. He also attended the Together in Service Gratitude Gathering event.

Ms. Redwing attended the Down Syndrome Walk, a Gala hosted by GiGi's Playhouse, and the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration events in Downtown Mesa.

Ms. Allred attended the Mesa Police Department's SPARC meetings, the East Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce meetings, and the Together in Service Gratitude Gathering event.

Ms. Hammond attended the Mesa Grande re-dedication ceremony and unveiling of the new name of Sce:dagĭ Mu:val Va'aki.

Mr. White attended the Together in Service Gratitude Gathering and the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration events in Downtown Mesa. He also volunteered time collecting items for the veteran's homeless shelter and visited the shelter to distribute the items during the holidays.

Ms. Dobson attended the Farm to Mesa Market in Downtown Mesa.

Ms. Williams-Cooper attended the Very Merry Eastmark event. She volunteered at the United Food Bank and participated in the Toys for Tots Drive.

9. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Submitted By:



Andrea Alicoate,
Assistant to the City Manager