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**CITY OF MESA  
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)  
February 23, 2022 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on February 23, 2022  
at 6:00pm in the Lower Level, City Council Chambers, 57 E First St.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Ron Williams - Chair  
Tom Brennan  
Willie Campos  
Margaret Duarte  
Amy-Lyn Faatoafe  
Bill McAllister

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Joseph Holmes  
Rochelle Johns  
Yudit Nonthe-Sanchez  
Jared Smith – Vice Chair  
Christiana Hammond

**STAFF PRESENT**

Andrea Alicoate  
Susan Cannady  
Polly Bonnett  
Lisa Cartwright-Harris  
Anna Matthews

**GUESTS**

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Mr. Williams called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

Announcement of excused absences.

Mr. Holmes, Ms. Johns, Mr. Smith, and Ms. Hammond were announced as excused absences.

2. Items from Citizens Present.

No citizens wished to speak to the board.

3. Approval of minutes from the January 26, 2022 HRAB meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Campos that the above-mentioned minutes be accepted as written.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Mr. Williams, Mr. Brennan, Mr. Campos, Ms. Duarte, Ms. Faatoafe, and Mr. McAllister

NAYS- None

4. Approval of minutes from the January 27, 2022, Regional Human Relations Commission (HRC) Meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Campos that the above-mentioned minutes be accepted as written.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Mr. Williams, Mr. Brennan, Mr. Campos, Ms. Duarte, Ms. Faatoafe, and Mr. McAllister

NAYS- None

5. Hear and discuss current diverse programs and inclusive services from Mesa Public Libraries.

Mesa Public Library Director, Polly Bonnett, and Dobson Branch Coordinator, Anna Matthews, presented the Library's current diversity programs and inclusive services. Ms. Bonnett stated that one of the main goals of the Library is to be inclusive, welcoming, and the heart of the community. To further support these goals, the Library has developed a voluntary 'Diversity Team' which looks to enhance diversity and inclusion in three focus areas: collections, programming, and training.

Ms. Bonnet shared a current project example, a review of the Juvenile Easy collection for diversity and inclusion. The goal is to have a well-balanced collection that acts as a mirror of the community, so it can reflect a reader's experience and/or be a window into different perspective. This audit gave a baseline to show where improvements can be made to reflect more diversity. Ms. Bonnett also spoke of the 'Around the World' story time program that introduces children and families to various counties and cultural traditions. The next Around the World Storytime: Columbia will focus on the people and animals of Columbia with songs, maps, stories, and crafts.

The Mesa Public Library has many future goals and plans to continue to build inclusion and diversity within the community. The Library is working to include a mobile library unit to extend outreach opportunities and better serve the Mesa community. To make employment more accessible, the possibility of a Library Assistant Trainee position is being researched to provide broader access to those wishing to enter the library field while continuing to seek and provide additional training for current staff. Ms. Bonnett concluded by sharing that they engage with cultural organizations for programming partnerships and continue to support the City's diversity efforts. The Board thanked staff for the presentation and applauded the efforts of the Library to further diversity and inclusion.

6. Hear and discuss a presentation on the Mesa College Promise.

Lisa Cartwright-Harris, City of Mesa Education and Workforce Coordinator, gave a presentation on the Mesa College Promise. Mesa College Promise is a program that makes it possible for all eligible graduating high school students to attend Mesa Community College for two years with Arizona resident tuition and fees fully funded. The Mesa College Promise offers financial support to students with financial needs but who have not received enough Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) funds or other scholarships to completely cover the cost of college.

Applications will be accepted starting March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 and will close on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022. There are approximately 250 available openings for eligible students. Students must have graduated in 2020, 2021 or 2022 from a public, private, charter, home school or received a GED in Mesa with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher to be eligible.

To set students up for success each student works one-on-one with an academic counselor for advisement and support. This includes rental assistance resources for housing and a food pantry. Students will also receive free parking, counseling, job skill assistance and tutoring. A part time Mesa Promises coordinator was hired to facilitate student success. This program also includes a \$250 dollar stipend for miscellaneous educational needs outside of tuition.

Mayor Giles and the City of Mesa pledged the first \$100,000 dollars and challenged businesses and philanthropists to match the funds to ensure that the promise to Mesa students is kept. The

board members thanked Ms. Cartwright-Harris for sharing the information and commended the program.

7. Hear and discuss a recap of the Regional HRC Meeting held on January 27, 2022 virtually.

Mr. Williams shared a recap of the Regional HRC Meeting that was held virtually on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Mr. Williams facilitated the meeting on behalf of host Mesa, along with Human Relations Commission board members, city staff, and members of the public from the fellow cities of Phoenix, Chandler, Tempe, Gilbert, Scottsdale and Fountain Hills. Jeff Olivet with Jo Consulting was the keynote speaker and spoke to how communities can work together for equality. The City of Chandler staff member Cisco Luzania discussed the Regional Unity Walk that is scheduled to be in person in 2023. Also, the City of Chandler will schedule and host an in person Regional Human Relations Commission meeting in the fall of 2022. Mr. Williams stated it was wonderful to see everyone again and it was a very productive meeting.

8. Hear and discuss City of Mesa's Black History Month recognition and local events.

Ms. Alicoate informed on local events happening in Mesa to celebrate Black History Month. Ms. Alicoate shared the City's social media cover art featuring the Alston House that was built in the 1920's and was the home and office of Dr. Lucius Alston the first black doctor in Mesa. The Veterans of Washington-Escobedo Community Exhibit is on display at the Mesa Public library. Available reading lists were also discussed at the Mesa public library featuring Black History reading lists. Other highlights include Proclamation by the Mayor, conference event from the National Forum of Black Administrators, other arts and entertainment.

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

(9a) Next HRAB meeting will be held on March 23, 2022 at 6pm in the Lower-Level Council Chambers (57 E 1st St).

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

Mr. Williams highlighted several events he participated in: Visit Mesa Board participation at the Bell Bank Park grand opening; Mesa Regional Foundation for Accessibility, Diversity & Inclusion programs; Black History month proclamation at City Council meeting on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>, acknowledged Mayor Giles' State of the City address, retirement event and celebration for Sean Stoddard

11. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00PM

**\*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.**