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**CITY OF MESA  
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)  
March 24, 2021 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on March 24, 2021.  
at 6:00pm via ZOOM.

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u>	<u>MEMBERS ABSENT</u>	<u>STAFF PRESENT</u>	<u>GUESTS</u>
Ron Williams- Chair Tom Brennan Colleen Byron Amy-Lyn Faatoafe Joseph Holmes Bill McAllister Jared Smith- Vice-Chair Lou Wade	William Campos Margaret Duarte	Andrea Alicoate Cisco Luzania Bethany Freeland	

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Mr. Williams, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

(1a) Announcement of excused absences.

Mr. Campos and Ms. Duarte were announced as an excused absence.

2. Items from Citizens Present.

No citizens wished to speak to the board.

3. Approval of minutes from the February 24, 2021 HRAB meeting.

It was moved by Dr. Byron, seconded by Mr. Smith that the above-mentioned minutes be accepted as written.

Upon tabulation of votes, it showed:

AYES- Mr. Williams, Dr. Byron, Ms. Faatoafe, Mr. Holmes, Mr. McAllister, Mr. Smith, Mr. Wade.

NAYS- None

ABSTAIN- Mr. Brennan

4. Hear and discuss presentation from Citywide Volunteer Program Coordinator on Mesa CARES programs, upcoming volunteer recognition efforts, and future volunteer efforts.

Bethany Freeland, Citywide Volunteer Program Coordinator, provided an overview on City of Mesa volunteer engagement and recognition efforts. In the past year during the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteer efforts were also impacted due to facility precautions and program restrictions. Essential volunteer programs continued for Mesa Fire & Medical and Feeding Mesa programs in person, and

continued virtually through the Mesa Arts Center and Museums, Community Engagement Division and Library.

Ms. Freeland also shared the impact of the Adopt-A-Grandparent Program which she began to administer along with For Our City, Just Serve and faith-based organizations starting in March 2020. This program paired homebound seniors with volunteers who provided weekly food box deliveries and companion phone calls to combat loneliness. Partnerships with United Food Bank and Midwest Food Bank were forged to provide the seniors in the program with all of the food needs they had. City staff at the community center were responsible for packing and distributing the food boxes to our program's adoptive volunteers. The program served 219 seniors, engaged 155 volunteers, and delivered 1,293 boxes of food.

Ms. Freeland advised that the City will be recognizing all the volunteer efforts in the past year during National Volunteer Week occurring April 18-24, 2021. City departments such as the Police Department and elected officials will be invited to participate in a 'thank you' video message for volunteer service. Additionally, they will be conducting a Volunteer Walk of Fame in downtown Mesa by symbolizing eight volunteers per chalk star along the walking path. QR codes will also be placed throughout downtown to correlate with the webpage for information on the efforts being recognized and volunteer projects occurring during the week.

Ms. Freeland closed by sharing upcoming volunteer programs and events. Ms. Freeland also acknowledged the following volunteer coordinators in designated areas: Kylie Clore- Police Department; TJ Gaudelli- Arizona Museum of Natural History; Janice Dell, Vicki Posler- Library; Ana Bentancur- I.D.E.A. Museum; Nanette Rodriguez, Kelsey Brown, Brenton Strickland, Greg McDowell- Fire & Medical; Michelle Prosser- Mesa Arts Center; Katie Paul- Parks & Recreation.

HRAB members congratulated Ms. Freeland for the accomplishments in the past year and thanked her for her work. Dr. Byron and Ms. Faatoafe asked about information for the Little Libraries program. Dr. Byron also thanked the Library for their programming during the past year as it was very valuable and used by her personally.

5. Hear and discuss HRAB creation of job skills resource guide for the public.

Mr. Smith advised that he has been communicating with a County representative for Arizona at Work and is coordinating a presentation for them to speak at the May Board meeting.

6. Hear and discuss creation of educational HRAB community forums.

Mr. Williams informed that he has a follow-up conversation with the Mayor in response to the Board's letter in the fall and their recommendation for more community engagement. Mr. Williams shared the basis of a program he implemented at the City of Phoenix when he worked their called 'Faces of Our Community' which was a cultural learning series for the public. Mr. Williams stated that he will be working with staff over the summer to develop the bones of a similar program for HRAB to implement in their next year and will be engaging board members for their topic expertise. Board members were supportive of the concept and continuation of program development.

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

(7a) Next HRAB meeting will be held on April 28, 2021 at 6pm via ZOOM to be later announced.

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

Mr. Smith, Mr. Williams, Dr. Byron viewed and participated in the City Council meeting on March 1, 2021. Dr. Byron attended a COVID remembrance ceremony in Tempe which she commented was very diverse crowd. Mr. Wade stated that his employer the Phoenix VA Hospital has reconvened their Diversity Action Committee. Mr. Williams participated in the ADL 'Understanding Bias and Emerging as an Ally' informational session on February 25, 2021, as well as the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Task Force on the Visit Mesa Board.

9. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56PM

**\*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.**