



**DURHAM HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 2016 MEETING**
**Neighborhood Improvement Services Department Conference Room
Golden Belt Center, Building 2, Floor 3
807 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701
Date: Tuesday, February 2, 2016
Time: 7:00 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

*Members of Commission: Commissioners Phil Seib, Chair, Norris Wicker, Vice Chair, Ricky Hart, Gerri Robinson, Richard Ford, Jacob Kliatchko, Ashley Taylor, Girija Mahajan, Susan Austin, Ian Kipp, Risa Foster, Sejal Zota, Diane Standaert, Franklin Hanes
Council Persons Don Moffitt, City Council Liaison, Jillian Johnson, Alternate City Council Liaison*

Call To Order

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Roll Call

Juanita English, Administrative Assistant, called the roll for the meeting.

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Phil Seib, Chair, Norris Wicker, Vice-Chair, Ricky Hart, Gerri Robinson, Richard Ford, Jacob Kliatchko, Girija Mahajan, Susan Austin, Risa Foster, Sejal Zota, Diane Standaert, Franklin Hanes

Commissioners Absent – Excused: Commissioners Ashley Taylor, Ian Kipp

Commissioners Absent – Unexcused: None

City Council Liaison Present: Council Person Don Moffitt

City Department Staff Present: Delilah Donaldson, Senior Human Relations Manager, Juanita English, Administrative Assistant

Orders of the Day

1. Ceremonial Items

None

2. Public Comments

Delsia Acosta, Mother of Wildin David Guillen Acosta:

Delsia Acosta spoke to the Commission in Spanish and a translator interpreted for her in English. She explained to the Commission that her 18 year old son, Wildin David Guillen Acosta, who is a senior at Riverside High School, was taken into custody by U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) agents on Thursday, January 28, 2016, as he was leaving their Durham home to go to school, and that she fears that her son will be deported back to his native country, Honduras, where she and her family fled to the United States to avoid gang violence, and that if he is deported, she fears he will be killed by gang violence. She asked the Commission for support in getting her son released from custody and from being deported.

There were many people at the meeting that were in support of Delsia Acosta and her son, Wildin David Guillen Acosta.

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, and Commissioner Richard Ford provided resources to Ms. Delsia Acosta that specifically handle immigration and ICE issues.

Commissioner Girija Mahajan had informed the Commission by email on Tuesday afternoon, February 2, 2016, before the Commission meeting was held, that a friend of the Acosta family, who was organizing community support for Wildin David Guillen Acosta, had reached out to her, and she informed him that anyone is welcome to speak at the DHRC meetings during the public comment portion of the meeting. She had also informed the Commission in the email that she planned to propose a resolution at tonight's meeting in support of the Wildin David Guillen Acosta, and she provided her proposed resolution in the email; copy of email attached, (see Attachment 1).

Commissioner Girija Mahajan informed the Commission at the meeting that she was proposing a resolution in support of Wildin David Guillen Acosta, and she read the proposed resolution aloud as follows:

The Durham Human Relations Commission calls for the immediate release of Wildin David Guillen Acosta (A# 206-799-049) of Durham. Wildin was a victim of an ICE raid earlier this week as he was leaving for school. He does not have a previous criminal record, and at the time of his arrest was a student at Riverside High School. He came to the United States fleeing gang violence. If Wildin is deported, this would go against our humanitarian principles and place his life in grave danger. According to DHS guidelines, Wildin is a low priority for deportation, and for that reason, we would urge that he be granted favorable exercise of prosecutorial discretion. Please don't separate this young man from his family. We, the Durham Human Relations Commission urge you to take action and release Wildin David Guillen Acosta from detention and call on ICE to immediately stop his deportation.

The Commission discussed Delsia Acosta's plea to the Commission for support of her son and the proposed resolution in support of her son. Some Commissioners voiced their concern that addressing federal government issues would be outside the scope of the Commission's authority. Some Commissioners voiced their support of the proposed resolution, and their belief that this matter is a human relations issue involving the Durham community.

Commissioner Ricky Hart called for "Orders of the Day" to get back to the order of the agenda since discussing a proposed resolution was out of order during the public comments portion of the meeting.

Commissioner Girija Mahajan requested that her proposed resolution be put on the meeting agenda as new business, and Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, added the proposed resolution to the meeting agenda under Item 10. New Business.

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, exercised his right to take agenda items out of order; he went from Item 2. Public Comments to Item 10. New Business; then he went to Item 4. Presentations.

3. Approval of Minutes

Note: Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, tabled this agenda item until the next meeting.

4. Presentations

Bull City Connector Route Change:

John Tallmadge, Director of Regional Services Development of GoTriangle, made a presentation to the Commission about the Bull City Connector and the route change that eliminated service to the Durham Transportation Station. He provided the Commission with a copy of his PowerPoint presentation; copy of presentation attached, (see Attachment 2).

There was one GoTriangle representative present at the meeting in support of the GoTriangle presentation as follows:

Jeffrey Sullivan, Public Involvement Associate

There were three City of Durham representatives present at the meeting in support of the GoTriangle presentation as follows:

Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager
Mark Ahrendsen, Transportation Director
Armando Sullivan, Transit Apprentice

There were three Duke University representatives present at the meeting in support of the GoTriangle presentation as follows:

Phail Wynn, Jr., Vice President, Durham and Regional Affairs
Carl DePinto, Director of Parking and Transportation
Alison Carpenter, Transit Planner

Bull City Connector Route Change Impact to Riders:

Nikki Brown of SpiritHouse, Inc., made a presentation to the Commission about the Bull City Connector and the impact to riders due to the route change that eliminated service to the Durham Transportation Station. She provided the Commission with a handout; copy of the handout attached, (see Attachment 3).

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, formed an ad hoc committee to address the Bull City Connector route change impact to riders issue with the following Commission members: Commissioner Diane Standaert, Commissioner Risa Foster, and Commissioner Franklin Hanes. Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, appointed Commissioner Diane Standaert as Chair of the Bull City Connector Route Change Impact to Riders Committee.

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, asked the committee to review the information presented to see if there were any recommendations that needed to be made to the Commission about this issue.

5. Executive Committee Report

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, conducted an Executive Committee meeting at 6:30 PM, before the Commission meeting was held.

6. Committee & Special Project Reports

Standing Committees:

Community Outreach Committee:

Note: Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, tabled this agenda item until the next meeting.

Human Relations Hearing Committee for Housing Appeals:

Note: Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, tabled this agenda item until the next meeting.

Policies & Procedures Committee:

Note: Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, tabled this agenda item until the next meeting.

Special Events Committee:

Note: Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, tabled this agenda item until the next meeting.

Website/Marketing Committee:

Note: Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, tabled this agenda item until the next meeting.

7. Commissioner Communications and Announcements

Note: Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, tabled this agenda item until the next meeting.

8. Human Relations Manager's Report

Delilah Donaldson, Senior Human Relations Manager, provided Commission members with the Human Relations Manager's Report for January 2016.

Delilah Donaldson, Senior Human Relations Manager, provided Commission members with the HUD Fair Housing Case Report for January 2016.

8.01 Human Relations Communications/Announcements

Delilah Donaldson, Senior Human Relations Manager, provided Commission members with the Human Relations Division Calendar for February 2016. She also provide Commission members with a flyer of the upcoming 14th Annual Women's Forum celebrating "Women's History Month" to be held in City Hall on Thursday, March 24, 2016 at 6:00 PM.

9. Old Business

City of Durham Human Relations Survey:

Note: Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, tabled this agenda item until the next meeting.

Development of Priority Subjects for 2016:

Note: Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, tabled this agenda item until the next meeting.

10. New Business

Proposed Resolution in Support of Delsia Acosta's Son, Wildin David Guillen Acosta:

Commissioner Girija Mahajan made a motion for the Commission to accept her proposed resolution as stated; Commissioner Risa Foster seconded the motion.

The Commission members discussed the proposed resolution.

Some Commission members thought that since this issue was just brought to the Commission at this meeting, and no fact findings had been done, that a vote on the motion should be tabled at this time, and an ad hoc committee formed to do research on the issue, then hold a special meeting to hear the committee's findings and to vote on the motion, or do so at the March meeting.

Some Commission members thought that a resolution of support would help, but if the Commission waited to take action for two weeks or a month that it may be too late.

Commissioner Girija Mahajan expressed her belief that a resolution of support could make a difference, and she asked the Commission to take time at the meeting to come up with a resolution that the Commission could support, and she informed the Commission that she was open to amendments to her proposed resolution.

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, formed an ad hoc committee with the following members: Commissioner Girija Mahajan, Commissioner Gerri Robinson, and Commissioner Norris Wicker, Commission Vice Chair.

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, had the committee members leave the meeting to revise the proposed resolution that could be presented to the Commission for a vote at the meeting.

The ad hoc committee returned to the meeting and Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, asked the committee to present the revised proposed resolution to the Commission.

Commissioner Girija Mahajan read the revised proposed resolution aloud as follows:

“The Durham Human Relations Commission is very concerned by the targeting of Durham immigrant youth by immigration authorities. We have learned of one young man being arrested on the way to school. Like many others, he came to the United States fleeing gang violence. If these young people are deported, this would go against our humanitarian principles and place their lives in grave danger. These young people are low priority for deportation, and for that reason, we would urge that they be granted favorable exercise of prosecutorial discretion. Please don't separate these immigrant youth from their families and the Durham community. We, the Durham Human Relations Commission urge suspension of ICE raids in our local community and for the release of currently detained Durham youth. It has generated enormous fear among our immigrant and Latino community and has also disrupted their school attendance. We, the Durham Human Relations Commission value every member of the community.”

Commissioner Risa Foster made a motion for the Commission to accept the revised proposed resolution as stated; Commissioner Diane Standaert seconded the motion.

Commissioner Richard Ford proposed an amended resolution to the Commission. He read his amended proposed resolution aloud as follows:

“The Durham Human Relations Commission supports Mr. Acosta and his family to ensure that his rights are exercised and protected in the Obama ICE proceedings. We have provided contacts for resources for Mr. Acosta and his family. We urge them to utilize these resources. We recognize the pain of family separation, whether due to immigration issues, violence, or other social forces, and urge them to exercise all their rights.”

Commissioner Richard Ford made a substitute motion for the Commission to accept his amended proposed resolution as stated. The substitute motion was not seconded.

The Commission members voted on the motion to accept the revised proposed resolution; the motion was approved with nine (9) votes “For” the motion, two (2) votes “Against” the motion made by Commissioner Richard Ford and Commissioner Ricky Hart, and one (1) “Abstention” made by Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair.

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, informed the Commission that the approved resolution would be submitted to the City Council.

Note: Council Person Don Moffitt informed the Commission by email on Friday, February 5, 2016, that the City Council voted to endorse the Commission’s resolution regarding ICE actions in Durham; copy of email attached, (see Attachment 4).

11. Durham Human Relations Commission (DHRC) Long-Range Calendar

The DHRC Public Forum on Muslim Community Issues is scheduled for Monday, February 29, 2016 at 7:00 PM at the Main Branch of the Durham Public Library located at 300 North Roxboro Street.

The March 2016 DHRC Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 1, 2016 at 6:30 PM.

The March 2016 DHRC monthly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 1, 2016 at 7:00 PM.

Adjournment

Commissioner Phil Seib, Commission Chair, adjourned the meeting at 9:38 PM.