

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA



<b>Agenda Date:</b>	June 19, 2017
<b>Action Required:</b>	Update
<b>Presenters:</b>	Charlene Green, Manager, Office of Human Rights
<b>Staff Contacts:</b>	Paola Salas, Community Outreach and Investigation Specialist
<b>Title:</b>	2016 Annual Report – Office of Human Rights

**Background:**

On May 20, 2013, City Council approved the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance which included responsibilities for an Office of Human Rights (OHR) and a Human Rights Commission (HRC). The overall focus of both the OHR and the HRC included;

1. Systemic and Institutional Change that focused on addressing discrimination barriers in public institutions. The scope of this work could include but would not be limited to, soliciting community feedback by conducting focus groups on various topics, reviewing City policies for equity and possible changes and providing legislative recommendations for City Council.
2. Service Coordination and Awareness that would be responsible for increasing the awareness and ease of accessing existing resources that address illegal discrimination. These resources would include preparing individuals for their appointments with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and making referrals to the Piedmont Housing Alliance and the Virginia Fair Housing office.
3. Community Dialogue and Engagement that built on the success of the Dialogue on Race. The OHR and the HRC would engage Charlottesville residents in honest dialogue, community awareness and brainstorming on issues of equity and opportunity and potentially provide the systemic and institutional change group with recommendations for further study.
4. Investigation and Enforcement that addressed individual allegations of discrimination but also recognized the need to establish strong ties with support organizations in housing and employment due to the limitations of the enforcement in those two areas.

## Discussion:

### **Human Rights Commission**

#### ***Mission Statement:***

***“Promoting an inclusive, empowered, and diverse community through education, engagement, and enforcement of Charlottesville’s Human Rights Ordinance”***

The Human Rights Commission meets monthly for its regular business meetings and additional meetings are scheduled to address concerns that are handled through their subcommittee work. Those standing committees are:

- **Race Discrimination Committee (RDC):** The RDC shall be responsible for advancing the goals of the Charlottesville Human Rights Commission and shall expressly be responsible for identifying and reviewing policies and practices of an institutional nature regarding discrimination within the City against the protected classes of race, color, and national origin. The committee shall also be responsible for development of legislative recommendations for City Council.
- **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Concerns Committee (LGBTQCAC):** The LGBTQCAC shall be responsible for advancing the goals of the Charlottesville Human Rights Commission and shall expressly be responsible for identifying and reviewing policies and practices of equity within the City as well as hearing from the public the concerns and issues related to sexual orientation, transgender status and gender identity. The committee shall also be responsible for development of legislative recommendations for City Council.
- **Disability, Age and Religious Discrimination Committee (DARDC):** The DARDC shall be responsible for advancing the goals of the Charlottesville Human Rights Commission and shall expressly be responsible for identifying and reviewing policies and practices of an institutional nature regarding discrimination within the City against the protected classes of disability, age, and religion. The committee shall also be responsible for development of legislative recommendations for City Council.
- **Administrative Matters Committee (AMC):** The AMC shall be responsible for developing and recommending all Commission operating rules and procedures and any amendments, meeting structure, officer election procedures, officer nominations, additional committee formation, and any training and education initiatives for the Commission.
- **Community Engagement Committee (CEC):** The CEC shall be responsible for developing and facilitating community dialogue and engagement pursuant to City Code Sec. 2-434. The CEC shall plan and provide assistance for ongoing community engagement, dialogue, and educational and informational programs on human rights and issues of equity and opportunity, including those raised by the City's Dialogue on Race Initiative.
- **Housing Concerns Committee (HCC):**  
The HCC shall be responsible for advancing the goals of the Charlottesville Human Rights Commission and shall expressly be responsible for identifying and reviewing policies and practices of an institutional nature regarding equity and discrimination related to housing within the City. The committee shall also be responsible for development of legislative recommendations for City Council.

## **2016 Work Plan Focus**

The Human Rights Commission 2016 Work Plan was based on community input as well as Commissioner discussions about topics of local and state importance. Some of the HRC priorities were:

- Community Bridge Builders
- Safe Space Training Collaboration with Cville Pride
- Police and Community relationships

In addition to addressing work plan priorities, the HRC members were able to participate in different City department meetings such as the Historic Resources Committee and the Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Committee when scheduled. A HRC member also participated on the Blue Ribbon Commission on Race, Memorials and Public Spaces. The 2017 Work Plan is reflective of the social and political climate in Charlottesville. Therefore HRC priorities for 2017 (Attachment A) involve immigration, law enforcement, deaf and hard of hearing, housing, and transgender concerns. The scheduled Dialogue on Race study circles will also play an important role in the work of the Human Rights Commission for 2017.

## **Office of Human Rights**

*“Acting as a strong advocate for justice and equal opportunity by providing citywide leadership and guidance in the area of civil rights.”*

The primary responsibilities of the Office of Human Rights are to: 1. Assist individuals who believe they have been victims of an unlawful act of discrimination as outlined in the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance; 2. Educate and engage community members in meetings, forums, and other activities that involve collaboration with different City departments and community organizations; and 3. Provide staff support for the Human Rights Commission. Some of the 2016 goals for the OHR were:

- Promote the visibility of the Office of Human Rights
- Maintain a customer friendly intake process
- Support the Human Rights Commission with their Work Plan priorities

With the addition of a part-time staff person in the Office of Human Rights, it has allowed for increased community access for walk-ins and phone calls. There is also more opportunity for expanded community outreach and stronger support to the HRC Work Plan priorities with immigration, refugee, religious and disability discrimination concerns.

## **Inquiries and Complaints**

Contacts with the OHR were categorized as an inquiry or a complaint. Inquiries were defined as a question about services, programs or procedures. If a person wanted to file a complaint and his/her discrimination allegation occurred outside of the city limits then their contact was logged as an inquiry. If a person who felt he/she experienced discrimination and it fell within the jurisdiction of the Human Rights Ordinance and that individual wanted to take action, the

contact was logged as a complaint. The following is the breakdown of contacts with the OHR since the last update:

CONTACTS FOR 2016 – 2017	NUMBER
Inquiries (includes calls, emails, walk-ins)	1,250 (4-5 per day)
Complaints (Charlottesville only)	41
Investigations	7

**Alignment with City Council’s Vision and Priority Areas:**

Community of Mutual Respect

In all endeavors, the City of Charlottesville is committed to racial and cultural diversity, including racial reconciliation, economic justice, and equity. As a result, every citizen is respected. Interactions among city leaders, city employees and the public are respectful, unbiased, and without prejudice.

**Budgetary Impact:**

The Office of Human Rights is not making a budget request at this time.

**Recommendation:**

The Office of Human Rights encourages City Council to accept this report reflective of the 2016-17 activities.

**Attachments:**

- A. 2016 Human Rights Commission Work Plan
- B. 2016-17 Inquiries and Complaint Data

## ATTACHMENT A

<b>2017 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION WORK PLAN</b>	
<b><i>COMMITTEE</i></b>	<b><i>PRIORITY</i></b>
<p><b><u>Race Discrimination</u></b> Alignment with City of Charlottesville Goals &amp; Objectives <b>Goals 2 and 5</b></p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine City policies for inequities based on race, skin color or national origin</li> <li>• Identify and address immigration and refugee concerns</li> <li>• Collaborate with the Police Citizen Advisory Panel</li> <li>• Collaborate with the Adult DMC group</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>LGBTQC Ad Hoc</u></b> Alignment with City of Charlottesville Goals &amp; Objectives <b>Goals 1,2, and 5</b></p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine City policies for inequities based on sexual orientation, transgender status and gender identity</li> <li>• Continue to collaborate and support the Charlottesville Albemarle Safe Space Training Coalition</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Disability, Age, Religious Discrimination</u></b> Alignment with City of Charlottesville Goals &amp; Objectives <b>Goals 1, 2, and 5</b></p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine City policies for inequities based on age, disability or religious/non-religious beliefs</li> <li>• Continue to participate in the Charlottesville ADA Advisory Board</li> <li>• Identify and address issues related to the deaf and hard of hearing</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Administrative Matters</u></b> Alignment with City of Charlottesville Goals &amp; Objectives <b>Goal 4</b></p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the “Rules and Guidelines” for the HRC for accuracy and consistency</li> <li>• Make necessary amendments to ensure a smooth and efficient commission</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Community Engagement</u></b> Alignment with City of Charlottesville Goals &amp; Objectives <b>Goals 1, 2, and 5</b></p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in refining the Community Bridge Builders mission, selection criteria, and promotion to expand community involvement</li> <li>• Implement outreach plan of community engagement in collaboration with other city and community groups</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>HR Commissioner Priorities</u></b> Alignment with City of Charlottesville Goals &amp; Objectives <b>Goals 1-5</b></p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase visibility with attendance at local events</li> <li>• Create opportunities for public responses to community concerns</li> <li>• Strengthen subcommittees</li> <li>• Review HRC work in a timely manner in order to submit recommendations to City Council for policy or program considerations</li> </ul>

## 2017 HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION WORK PLAN

### Housing Concerns

Alignment with  
City of Charlottesville Goals  
& Objectives

### **Goals 1-5**

We will:

- Examine City policies for inequities in housing and housing related matters
- Complete Charlottesville Community Impact Assessment Tool

## ATTACHMENT B

### 2016-17 Office of Human Rights Inquiries and Complaints Data

PROTECTED ACTIVITY	NUMBER
Employment	35
Housing	10
Public Accommodation	12
Credit	0
Private Education	0
Did not list/would not say	3
<b>TOTAL # OF COMPLAINTS</b>	<b>60</b>

PROTECTED CLASS	NUMBER
Race/skin color	30
Sex	3
Age	3
Disability	8
Religion	8
National Origin	15
Marital Status	0
Pregnancy/Childbirth	0
Did not indicate	9
Other (i.e., criminal history)	3
<b>TOTAL # OF COMPLAINTS</b>	<b>79</b>

LOCATION	NUMBER
Charlottesville	41
Albemarle County	4
Other	7
<b>TOTAL # OF COMPLAINTS</b>	<b>60</b>

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