



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
STUDY MEETING AGENDA
Tuesday, July 21 – 7:00 PM
Via Zoom

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Glover called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Those present include

Rich Glover, Chair
Kevin Aoun, Secretary
Haitham Fakhouri
Don Jordan
Rachel Zuckerman
Wafa Dinaro
Jessica Kandalajt

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda moved by K. Aoun, Second by W. Dinaro

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Agenda moved by K. Aoun, second by W. Dinaro

IV. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

R. GLOVER: There are some things that you all might see that I don't because I'm not on social media. But I was riding my bike this weekend on Saturday and I saw a Black Lives Matter booth selling t-shirts. So I engaged with them trying to see who organized it. I don't know if the City knew about it. So I gave them my card to maybe engage with them. I am just careful about it because I don't want people capitalizing on this movement but I do want to support it. So I did get the card of the person who

designed their shirts and I purchased something, but I didn't know of anything about it. So is that something we knew about?

No one responds affirmatively.

R. GLOVER: There were a lot of people there—black and white. Initially when I was riding I saw an interracial couple and they had a Black Lives Matter shirt on and I said hi as I rode by. And then I saw a little gathering of people. And I thought I guess this is something more than I knew. Just wanted to see if you knew anything about that.

H. FAKHORU: From what I've seen though, they are planning several rival protests between the Black Lives Matter and the Blue Lives Matter people. And the most prominent one is that they did one at the City Council meeting that is coming up. So I heard there is a counter protest that might be planned for that as well.

R. GLOVER: I guess that's something that we need to.... As you know more keep us aware. It would be cool to be aware and potentially be there to represent as much as we can... or at least me. I don't know if anyone else is interested in doing that. I just wanted to reiterate that we are in this educate and inform kind of phase. We are trying to learn everything that we can and also inform the community at large about who we are and what we're doing. I think after we get the information from Chief Caid that will be the genesis of us thinking through our next steps.

Similar to last week for the public, if we have people who want to talk, it will be at the end of our meeting portion and then we'll give them 3 minutes to say their piece. We appreciate people stating their name and the City they live in. I know Josh had a few things that he wanted to talk about.

J. SABO: I have three things really quickly. Hopefully they're pretty quick. First the Mayor has asked the City Council for time to address them on August 5 at their meeting. She wants to discuss the work and progress of this Commission so far and she wanted me to pass along her request that as many of you as possible might be able to attend. So that would be 7PM on August 5 is there next meeting. They met in person for the first time last night for the first time since mid-March. They'll likely meet in person for the next meeting too. The Mayor will speak for about five minutes regarding the charge of this Commission currently, what work has been done so far, and where things are going and where we are in that timeline. Second thing is on virtual meetings—Governor Whitmer's latest executive order extended the flexibility of the Open Meetings Act rules in a more open-ended way. This one is open-ended such that it allows flexibility to meet remotely for 28 days after the State of Emergency around COVID has ended. Finally, and Haitham this is related to what you had just said sort of, there was a protest at the Council meeting last night. There is one planned for August 5 as well. So last night, prior to the meeting there were about 20-25 people who had gathered. At 7 p.m. most made their way into the meeting. They were carrying signs and speaking to issues about Black Lives Matter. Most of the audience communication portion was dominated by these folks. It was a more a tense meeting than usual. Many of those who spoke were calling for Council to take action. Councilmember Jim Jolly introduced a resolution that would have condemned racism in Livonia. And that will be brought up at their next meeting in August.

R. GLOVER: Will we be in a position to need to speak or present anything at the meeting?

J. SABO: I don't think so, unless there are questions from council.

K. AOUN: Do you know if Council has been provided our letter to Chief Caid?

J. SABO: I don't know, I don't think so.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Question for all of us, do we see a role for Council... do we feel like the partnership is valuable and needed? And is there an opportunity to have a clear ask of them? Or is it too soon to say?

R. GLOVER: I do believe partnership is definitely needed, but we haven't really defined what we need yet. Up to now, I think we're still stuck on the Chief Caid piece. I don't really know the relationship between the Council and Mayor and Chief Caid. But if it behooves the Council to partner with us as well, if they're going to keep having these kinds of sit-ins....

R. ZUCKERMAN: As we all understand the relationship between the Council and the Mayor's Office and the Police Department, we should be sure to understand this correctly... but the Council doesn't have authority over the Department. Where it does actually become very important is in budget decision and practices. But Chief Caid reports to the Mayor not the Council, just to ensure we understand the relationship there. So certainly the partnership is appreciated, but we may not be reliant on the Council to move forward.

K. AOUN: Their support is helpful, but there might be policy recommendations that aren't going to be adopted but Council being able to include things in their budget might be a way of getting things done. You know we've talked about is there room in the budget to involve other professionals in the force and how can that get paid for? Those would all be budget issues and we'd need Council's guidance and assistance to ensure the Department's budget stays where it's at... but there might be a gap that can fill some of the positions.

D. JORDAN: Josh, what is the City's budget cycle? We'd like to maybe have a final ask—we're making recommendations around the Police Department and we'd like to bring them to you before the budget is passed.

R. ZUCKERMAN: It would be good to have clarity on the fiscal year, but then also what the flexibility is to shift within line items. How rigid are those requirements? To Don's point I think that would be helpful.

D. JORDAN: I could just see us going back to the Council when we develop recommendations and presenting them. But it would be nice to be able to say... you know do it when they haven't just set their new priorities for the year. But if the timing works out, that's great.

R. GLOVER: Okay... moving forward to old business. Some of you probably saw the email relative to our survey. Kevin made some changes, I edited it, Josh got it up.

H. FAKHOURI: I took a look at it. I already made a couple suggestions to Josh. There was one error on the age that glossed over one group. I feel like on question 5, 6, and 7, where it says strongly agree, somewhat agree, etc. that those should be balanced out. If we're going to have a somewhat agree we should have a somewhat disagree. And we should have a neutral.

K. AOUN: I thought the same thing looking at it today. We needed an uncertain option for people, so if you don't have a position you can put that.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Yeah, number 10 needs an unsure. It is like "have you ever been the victim of racially-motivated action" and I think rather than yes or no we need an uncertain. Number 9 also needs an other for folks who may have experienced racism in places other than what is listed. Can I ask about number 12, I am still unclear as to what we are trying to get at with "please tell us your story, you will remain anonymous. Please provide as much detail." Does that pertain to a specific question prior or are we asking people an open-ended question to have a platform.

R. GLOVER: It was intended to be open-ended but maybe it can be worded differently to make sure they understand that. Would you agree?

J. KANDALAFT: I liked giving the flexibility because we have been in quarantine for a lot of this year now. And so even if I haven't experienced something in the last year, it gives me a chance to share an experience that I want to that was outside of the last year.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Yeah, I think the point of the question is good. I just think we need to clarify the language so that it is helpful so that people can answer it the way that we are expecting. Because it sounds like it is not "tell us your story about an experience with the police," but that's not necessarily all we want.

R. GLOVER: Yeah, it is tell us your story relative to anything that was racially-motivated or racially-charged. Kevin and I can get together to make some changes here.

H. FAKHOURI: One other thing is number 18. I feel like the "some" options there shouldn't be there.

D. JORDAN: I have one really quick one... I don't want to screw up any of the reporting out of this, but in questions where we ask people to... Like in 11 or 9 can we add a notes section in the end so that people can elaborate if they choose to? I think that might be helpful.

K. AOUN: And really "tell us your story" is really give us some context. And so maybe we can address that in that question.

R. GLOVER: Only other thing that you all haven't said yet that I had... at the top, I want to make sure that the name is optional. So we can put that in parentheses. Because I don't want people to be discouraged from doing it for that reason. I noticed that number 3 isn't mandatory, it isn't starred... maybe it should be still?

J. SABO: The reason I didn't do that... and maybe it should be consistent throughout. Is I wanted to give people the opportunity to not provide any identifying information if they didn't want to.

R. GLOVER: It would be cool if we had a prefer not to answer option. That way we can force them to answer the question, and their answer can be "I prefer not to tell you." For age and stuff like that, for instance.

K. AOUN: I think everyone should take it over the next couple days so we can see what the product looks like. Josh are you able to make the changes in SurveyMonkey?

J. SABO: Yes I can do that. Just let me know what you want to do about number 12. But other than that I have made notes of all the changes we just discussed so they can be made.

K. AOUN: Either way I don't think any changes need to be made before anyone takes it. It only takes a few minutes unless you are writing a long story. It takes a few minutes to help our city, kind of thing.

R. GLOVER: So as this gets up we hopefully can get it up on our page and in places where it could be beneficial. We'll need to have a blurb to go with it that describes the timing and purpose. So Kevin and I can work on the blurb that will go with it to support the survey.

R. ZUCKERMAN: What is the timeline? What do we want the open period to be? Perhaps a related question, do we have a date scheduled with Chief Caid?

J. SABO: No I haven't heard back.

H. FAKHOURI: Do we want to shoot for the end of August? For the 31st?

K. AOUN: You mean to have the results analyzed?

H. FAKHOURI: To just have it out. To have all the entries collected by then. That will give enough people a chance to disseminate it through social media. Or are we looking for something quicker.

R. GLOVER: I don't know about the whole month of August, but... Rachel?

R. ZUCKERMAN: Do we need that long?

K. AOUN: I think we need about 10 days. People will either do it or not do it. But maybe I'm wrong.

R. ZUCKERMAN: We can always extend it if we need to.

W. DINARO: Can we consider partnering with another city so that we could have something to compare to?

R. GLOVER: Now that we've added other identifies in there, it's definitely scalable to see what other cities would say.

K. AOUN: Other cities would have to change some elements, tweak it a little bit, but....

H. FAKHOURI: The survey itself is non-specific to Livonia residents, right?

K. AOUN: But a lot of the questions are what have you experienced in Livonia.

R. GLOVER: But we still want to know that.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Wafa's point is that this would be a chance to record how people are experiencing different cities.

W. DINARO: Exactly

K. AOUN: Yeah they'd only have to change some things.

R. GLOVER: Yeah, OK. I didn't get that.

H. FAKHOURI: That's maybe something we can partner with other commissions in other cities about. They can go through their channels as well.

R. GLOVER: The invitation for another community would be awesome, but I don't think we have the time to handhold them through that process.

K. AOUN: But let's go back – are we okay with a 10 day window to do the survey?

W. DINARO: How are we pushing it out?

K. AOUN: My thought was, we put it out on the Facebook page for Livonia Community and the Parks & Recreation Department listserv. Bill Joyner and Friday Musings. All Things Livonia Facebook group. Ms. Upshaw's group. Then if there's any others.

R. GLOVER: The business community as well, the Chamber.

H. FAKHOURI: I can hand it off to the Chamber.

R. GLOVER: Okay, so right there we named 7, and there's probably more we could think of.

H. FAKHOURI: So we would open the survey now and it could go through what the first week of August?

K. AOUN: We should give some time after that Council meeting because we could have it be announced then. So we could give people the time after that.

D. JORDAN: When can we expect something from the Department?

K. AOUN: I think we will have something soon, but last week we talked about a more rolling production of answer and documents and data from Chief Caid, so he isn't waiting to have everything before he sends everything to us.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Just to mention something I've said before, but this dynamic what we're experiencing right now. This could be a collaborative experience where we're analyzing then meeting and so on. I think there's value in the buy-in that is developed... I don't know if there is a way to open up that ask and that channel of communication. Should there be a regular cadence for when we meet? Whatever that looks like, I worry about this dynamic and how it might persist. And how recommendations might not be perceived if they are developed by us and forced on the department rather than in partnership.

R. GLOVER: I think the intent was we'd begin this whole big process when we heard back. What we're learning now is that it is taking a little longer. So if we don't get everything at one time we would have several little meetings. But we hoped we would get these answers and we'll talk about them and we can plan out the rest of the year.

R. ZUCKERMAN: I'm sorry I'm jumping all over the agenda... but the AG study that Kevin shared, some of the other things... this is all truly dense, and there's a lot of work to do here. I wonder if there is an opportunity for us to start thinking about what subcommittees might look like or how we are going to do this work in a systematic way. Do we need a group on data recommendations and evaluation? Do we need a policy group? Do we need a culture and community relationships group? Would it be helpful to start parsing this out so that we can report back to the larger group. We don't have to decide on that right now. I just want us to think about it.

H. FAKHOURI: I agree with Rachel. Obviously some of us are better for different tasks than others. It would save time for our weekly meetings too. We could be more precise.

R. GLOVER: Is that something we do now? Is that something we do later? To some degree though we all want to be informed. So it would still be important for subcommittees to communicate what is going on. And I think it is important we all share a point of understanding. But we could certainly parse it out to what is most helpful.

H. FAKHOURI: Rich, to go back to your earlier question about the data. I have been going through the numbers and I'm not a statistician so I am not super versed in it. But there's an obvious gap between the African American population and the citation rate. But we don't know the reason behind that. Without the number of stops, without the number of people who are let go. If a small percentage of African Americans are pulled over and even fewer are cited, but right now people are assigning a reasoning to their beliefs on the data and it isn't moving us forward.

R. GLOVER: Yeah I think we are all there. And I know we'd all love to get more information. In my head, once we meet with Chief Caid to get his take that really is the platform to bounce off of. At this point I don't think they have a lot of positions on a lot of things. Through our questioning, it is making

the force have a position. Now there are questions. And we've never collected that data or we don't have a policy on that. So you either have to tell us that or make up a policy.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Yeah.

D. JORDAN: I just want to go back to what Rachel said about how best to be using our time and since our committee is growing. What strengths we can each bring.... Would it make sense to just get the ball rolling? I think we can all agree that dividing and conquering is good, but this format right now isn't the best way to figure that out. So what if we made a google doc so we can start to look at what aspects of these issues we are most interested in focusing on?

W. DINARO: I think that's a great idea. Let's put together a doc together with some different committees and each week we report out to the greater group.

D. JORDAN: And we were already doing that with the letter or the survey too.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Just to state the obvious, but all of this should be done with a lens for best practices. We don't necessarily need data to do that first. Data may not be particularly enlightening in some areas, but we would have a chance to introduce a best practice. For instance as we think about culture, there is value for us in this area to grow... but the Department should also be taking the initiative to read best practice documents and read them on their own. The Sheriff of Kent County, for instance, had talked about how one of her first acts was to create a strategic plan which is unique in the law enforcement community. But perhaps as we think about recommendations maybe there is some clear goal setting for areas of improvement that the Department could take on for itself?

R. GLOVER: Great. Thanks Don for giving us some insight into that document that we can all chime in on. On a much lighter note, have any of us been to the UNITY Project or intend to? Because I believe it started already right.

J. SABO: Real quick – tonight I think is the second or third time that it is staffed and there. It should have been the third or fourth but one of the concerts was canceled in the middle. So the event adjacent to the project wasn't there. But it looks pretty nice and it looks like a lot of people have done it. There was a video that the City put out last week, I don't know if folks have seen that. They took a lot of the recommendations that the Commission brought forward. They had a chalkboard type thing set up for people to have some light reflections on things... the HRC's logo was on the signs....

R. GLOVER: Do people want to go on Thursday? Do we want to go as a Commission? To just be down there?

H. FAKHOURI: I'll go.

D. JORDAN: Sure

J. SABO: Oh also they did a drone timelapse of it too.

K. FAKHOURI: If you can shoot out the time and information Rich we can make it.

D. JORDAN: Yeah the pictures I saw on social looked... it looked like they had a ton of people doing it.

R. GLOVER: I had seen kids doing it too, which I thought we didn't want, but OK.

H. FAKHOURI: I have two points if I can. One is if we're going to be holding the meetings every week moving forward, is there any way we can stagger them – not always on a Tuesday? There are other things going on in the Community at these times. Maybe we can do a Tuesday or a Wednesday alternating?

R. GLOVER: I don't have a problem with that.

H. FAKHOURI: Just to throw it out there. We can alternate. And the second thing, to go along with what Rachel said earlier, I know we brought this up in the past, but I think it might be good for us to have a strategic plan to move beyond the police and focus on the community issue. What if we did a meet-your-neighbor video series? Maybe people could make a 30-60 second video... what they like most about Livonia, that kind of thing. We could put together a compilation video that we can advertise to welcome people to Livonia and celebrate its diversity.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Haitham just wants an excuse to come interview me.

H. FAKHOURI: I have to get her back because she got to interview my kids before. I've got the equipment ready.

R. GLOVER: We talked about the Janet Reno study already, those that of us that got through a lot of it... But for those that did, I did appreciate in chapter 3 and I guess this is to Rachel's point but I do want to get these ideas to you guys. Well let's back up did anyone read it?

R. ZUCKERMAN: Yes I read it, and I think the information is super valuable. It's an academic study level. It reminds us that even when the intentions are good, outcomes can be concerning and problematic. But there's all sorts of suggestions, best practices, things that we can think about how to start implementing. It's really actionable. So it is something that we should absolutely leverage while making recommendations.

R. GLOVER: They talked about the potential for collecting data. I am sure that is a lot of what we are going to hear about when we get it back, but...

J. SABO: I also have a few studies that might be worth the group looking at that are from a consulting firm that does research and work with public safety.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Jaycees is on the 18th. They're really just curious in hearing what we're about.

H. FAKOHURI: I can join Rachel.

R. GLOVER: Wafa, would you like to come?

W. DINARO: Yes

R. GLOVER: Have you had a chance to look at our webpage at all? Now that we've put the survey up? I just jotted down some things as we drive people to the site. One of my suggestions is if we can move the information about the Commission up on the page so that they'll see that first. And they can see the information relative to our meetings.

J. SABO: Sure.

R. GLOVER: I haven't looked at other Commission sites but I don't know if they have pictures or past events or anything that shows they have some history.

H. FAKHOURI: Is there any way to make the CONTACT HRC part bigger? Is there any way to make that into a button or make it more prominent?

J. SABO: Yeah, I wanted to have it embedded so that the contact form was embedded into that.

H. FAKHOURI: There's simple CSS tricks that you can do that you can make it bigger and more prominent.

R. ZUCKERMAN: I think it is prudent for the Mayor's office to be aware of what citizens are saying as well.

R. GLOVER: Wafa, did you have any update for us on the racial justice forum?

W. DINARO: I don't but I have a really rough draft. I will have something probably by Thursday that I will email to the group.

R. GLOVER: Okay, new business. I was contacted by Madonna and they're looking to involve us as they have in the past relative to their MLK event. And speaking with the Mayor she wants us to do more with it than before. In the past they had one of us sit on the committee or what not, and I agreed to have that happen as well. And it'd be great if someone else could do that too, attend the meetings and help put together the MLK thing.

D. JORDAN: Is it the same team from Madonna doing it?

R. GLOVER: Same team.

D. JORDAN: How often are they meeting?

R. GLOVER: I am not sure yet. But Don does that mean you're locked in?

D. JORDAN: Uhhh, let me think about it. Can I add that into the subcommittee thing?

R. GLOVER: Sure.

D. JORDAN: I'm still kind of scarred from the last one.

R. GLOVER: Yeah, that's why I want to be more involved this time because... I don't know enough to make the decision about how to make it better.

K. AOUN: Are we going to do a scholarship again and an essay contest this year?

R. GLOVER: My thought is we go and look at what they're willing to do. I don't know if we have the money to do that this year, but yeah, I don't know. Did you have an opinion one way or another?

K. AOUN: Josh, we used to have an MLK trust fund that I thought still had either \$200 or \$700 in it.. umm.. can you see that in any of Chris Swish's documents?

J. SABO: I don't think I was sent anything budget related but I'll look into that.

R. GLOVER: That was our last year for that, right?

K. AOUN: I can't remember if last year or this year was supposed to be the final year for it. I can't remember off hand. I'll go back through my documents.

D. JORDAN: I could have sworn we had a little left over. Weren't we talking about how we didn't think we had enough to do x, y, and z but we had enough money to give to them?

K. AOUN: I kind of remember that too, yeah. It wasn't going to be the same amount as we had in the past unless we dipped into our budget.

D. JORDAN: With the tone of things right now in our community and society in general, if it would be easier to get someone to sponsor something like that. Maybe like the Chamber or someone like that to throw a little money in if the essay question was a very timely one with what we're dealing with right now.

H. FAKHOURI: I agree, I can get some connections involved and raise \$500 or even \$1000 towards a scholarship. If people donate, would it be considered a 501c3 or how does that work, Josh?

J. SABO: It depends. Obviously if it is on behalf of this Commission it could go straight to a non-profit or it could go through the City.

R. ZUCKERMAN: Just so I understand are these for individual high school or college students?

K. AOUN: We used to have separate essay contests. One was for all of the high school students, and we had a separate scholarship for each of the four. That we've done for two years. And that was more later

in the fall when kids go back to school. And the other one was for college students at Madonna, since this was a very Madonna-specific event. And there was money that the HRC had generated years ago... at least before 2016, and we've been using those funds instead of anything in the budget. And it's actually just a VISA gift card and not a true scholarship where it goes to the school.

AUDIENCE COMMUNICATION

KATHLEEN MCINTYRE: Commission – thank you. Very interesting discussion tonight. Just as we have audience communication during Council, where oftentimes the audience asks us questions, sometimes the Council.... residents don't understand that we don't have to answer their questions. I would not characterize the tone as just tense but as unfortunate. But that's for you to characterize. I have a number of questions that I don't expect an answer to tonight but off of the last few meetings.

The first is how do you see yourself relative to the police department. Is it your role to have oversight over LPD policies and practices? And if you don't see that as your role what is it relative to the police department? Number two I'm just curious, there was more conversation non-public safety related, I am just curious if any of you have any experience in law enforcement or public safety? I am wondering if you have participated in citizen-police academies? And I am wondering if any of you have done any ride-alongs with police departments? And I wanted to know about the metrics? Pressing departments for D&I goals and strategic plans which I found interesting, and I think it is good to look at this strategically across all departments, but relative to the metrics of your commission, what metrics will you base your success on? How will you assess your success? Will it be when we have the end of protests? Will it be when we see changes in LPD's arrest and citation agenda? Will it be when Chief Caid gives you the information you're asking for. Again, nothing I expect answers to, but just questions to consider.

One other comment: you all had asked about the budget cycle. The way the budget cycle works is in August we have a preliminary budget review with the departments. By that time the departments have put together their budgets. Then we have a committee meeting in late September – a very detailed committee meeting where we go over the budget in great detail. In early October there's a public hearing where the budget is presented. And then we have a budget approved by the end of October. So I hope that's helpful. Thank you.

ASHLEY CIARAMITARO: HI there, can you hear me?

J. SABO: YES

A. CIARAMITARO: I just have a quick statement and a question. I just want to echo the statements... I think everyone should watch the Council meeting from last night to watch the Council meeting to understand the interactions people have had with Council up until this point. I also just wanted to confirm that your opinions on the budget are critical for this community and I strongly encourage that you all are able to have purview before anything passes. I am sure a lot of the activity and outreach that I have been doing for information probably overlaps with what we're interested in. Daily logs, original reasons for stops, these aren't recorded in whatever data management tools are being used. But my main

question is have you up to this point been told how the PD is being used to drive officer performance reviews or how they should do more outreach to the community based off what they do have? What's the cadence of the analysis that is happening with that data? I think it is critical to understand as a community: how are they using the data or lack thereof? But I think it's really important. And the last question I had is just getting some information on how you might be selecting and vetting community members and how community members might be able to participate or volunteer.

SARA OVERWATER: As citizens, mothers, people with jobs, just trying to make the time to do these things and it is so wonderful to see that there are people who are so intelligent and so engaged that are also interested in finding these things out, so I wanted to thank you and tell you how much I appreciate that. I would love to help you in any way with any of the research that we have already done, what Livonia Citizens Caring About Black Lives can pass on... and I really want to echo what Ashlee said about the City Council meetings and seeing what is going on there. It is a deep rift. It is very hard to watch. The tension and combative atmosphere. So if there was ever a time for Human Relations I think our City Council meetings need it right now. Thank you so much.

MOVED TO ADJOURN BY W. DINARO, SECONDED BY D. JORDAN.