

Rowlett Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 16th, 2022

7:00 PM

Municipal Building- 4000 Main St, Rowlett, Texas

Present: James Spencer, Phaleria Hollins, Cynthia Manning, Susan Urrutia, Terence Kessee, Michael Hernandez, Diana Moore, Michele Stoute-Smith, Chance Jobe, A'Mera Frieman, Jacquelyn Vitosh, Myranda Congi

Absent: Kellie McKee, Franchesker Scott

Staff: Munal Mauladad, Managing Director of Community Development and Engineering; Tara Bradley, Neighborhood Planning Supervisor; Lilyana Morejon, Neighborhood Planner II

City Council Liaison: Debra Shinder, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem

1. Call to Order at 7:01 pm

2. Select Voting Alternates

- a. Commissioner Jobe was selected as the voting alternate.

3. Consider Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

- a. Vice-Chair Urrutia motioned to amend the August 17th meeting minutes that was previously adopted. The change was to item 6a, which now states, "The Commission reached a consensus for the subcommittee to work with the library on this initiative" The quote is in reference to the Driving While Black film that Vice-Chair Urrutia spoke on during the meeting. Commissioner Vitosh seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. Vice-Chair Urrutia motioned to approve the October 19th meeting minutes. Commissioner Congi seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Citizens' Input

- a. No citizen input

5. Receive Presentation on Aphantasia Awareness from Tom Shinder

- a. Tom Shinder presented on the topic of Aphantasia. Aphantasia is known as the inability to voluntarily create mental images in one's mind. Otherwise known as image-free thinking. People with Aphantasia do not create any pictures of familiar objects, people, or places in their mind's eye.
- b. Mr. Shinder asked for a call to action to spread awareness about Aphantasia. In addition, he requested a proclamation to be drafted and presented to City Council to recognize and create awareness of the challenges faced by individuals living with

Aphantasia. Lastly, Mr. Shinder asked for the water tower lights to be turned off a few minutes to symbolize what Aphantasics experience daily.

6. Receive Report on Curbside Voting Review Results

- a. Commissioner Hollins is working on finalizing the Curbside Voting Report. In the meantime, she asked for feedback from Commissioners that came out to vote. The Commissioners commented on the challenges they faced finding curbside voting signs. There were difficulties reading the small print on the signs at the sites offering curbside voting. Curbside voting is approved by law, but there are no current size or printing standards.

7. MLK Event Discussion

- a. Commissioner Vitosh presented an update regarding the plans for the MLK Event.
 - i. Planning Phase:
 - 1. Considering having a parade.
 - 2. Getting the community involved by having them participate in a contest with prizes for the winners.
 - 3. Recite a speech commemorating this day of service.
 - 4. The MLK Event Planning Subcommittee is talking to local businesses to have them sponsor the raffle and contest prizes.
 - b. The Commission plans to start advertising and conducting community outreach at holiday events approaching soon.
 - c. Neighborhood Planning will offer support and will contact respective City staff to assist with the event.

8. Committee Reports

- a. **Communications Committee**
 - i. No current update from the Communications Committee.
- b. **Community Outreach Committee**
 - i. No current update from the Community Outreach Committee. Commissioner Manning was selected as the chair of the committee.
- c. **Government Processes and Programs Committee**
 - i. Commissioner Hollins was selected as the chair of the committee.
 - ii. The Government Processes and Programs Committee is keeping the same mission for FY23. Their goals for FY23 consist of:

1. Share the news regarding the new Median Ordinance and what it entails.
2. Continue curbside voting education.
3. Continue working with the Crisis Response Team. This year they want to focus on community education and awareness of available resources and staff that can assist with questions or concerns.
4. Mental health awareness.

d. Chairs Committee

- i. Chairperson more informed that the Chairs Committee made an addendum to their mission, now stating “We exist to facilitate, coordinate, and drive the Commission towards fulfilling its mission and to sustain the Commission's presence in Rowlett to ensure our community members feel safe and welcome.”
- ii. Vice-Chair Urrutia gave an update on “Driving While Black”, the documentary that had a showing at the Rowlett Public Library, November 3rd. She stated that good discussions happened with the individuals present at the showing. Overall, the event was a success.
- iii. Chairperson Moore informed the Commission about the veterans’ recognition at City Council this past Tuesday, November 15th.

9. Update from City Council Liaison

- a. Deputy Mayor Pro Tem, Debra Shinder presented city announcements that include:
 - i. Mainstreet Fest Event - December 3rd, from 5:00 – 8:00 pm at the Village of Rowlett Downtown (4000 Main Street).
 - ii. The City is looking for input to help assess the new solid waste service provider.
 - iii. The City Manager, Brian Funderburk, announced at that he will be retiring July 12th, 2023.
 - iv. Capital Improvement Projects - The public can find more information by reading the mayor’s spotlight newsletter, where all city capital improvement projects are listed.

10. Update from City Staff Liaison

- a. The City of Rowlett is going through a Development Code Update. Staff will be looking for the Commission’s input in the near future.
- b. Ms. Bradley asked for all the committee updates relating to the mission and goals for FY23 to be sent to her. After receiving the information, she will put together the plan of work.

11. Public Announcements

- a. No public announcements

12. Agenda Items for Future Meetings

- a. Commissioner Hernandez wants to share the presentation created by the Community Review Board that will later be presented to the Public Safety Subcommittee and City Council.
- b. Commissioner Hernandez has been in communication with KultureCity. KultureCity is an organization that provides equipment and training to help individuals with sound and visual sensitivity. Commissioner Hernandez wishes to present the information he has gathered from them.

13. Adjournment at 8:42 pm

 12/21/22

Diana Moore, Chair Date

 12.21.22

Lilyana Morejon, Staff Date