

Lakewood Community Relations Commission (LCRAC)

August 13, 2020

Attendees (Virtual Meeting): Neil Chavan, Rachel Donaldson, Melissa Garrett, Tracy Greenberg, Jon Gromek, Gwendolyn Holden-Seckers, Jasany Jenkins, Anastasia Loejos, Gary Rick, Ella Sutcliffe, Walter Wright

Absent: Tariq Atta, Robin Beavers, Lise Stephens

Meeting called to order by Walter Wright (WW), Chair of LCRAC at 6:36 p.m.

1. Welcome New Members

New member Jasany Jenkins (JJ) welcomed by WW. JJ introduced herself and is a new resident of Lakewood, interested in social justice issues. Her suggestion of an Anti-Racism Task Force will be implemented by Mayor George.

2. Old Business

- a. Approval of Minutes from July meeting: Melissa Garrett (MG) requested clarification of item #4, "Future Goals." Changes will be made to include language "and the mayor." Jon Gromek (JG) motioned to approve revision to minutes of previous meeting, seconded by Rachel Donaldson (RD). All present voted to approve minutes of meeting on July 9, 2020.
- b. Status of 2019 Report to City Council: Tracy Greenberg (TG) will reach out to Lise Stephens (LS) about current status of report. If LS hasn't been able to move forward with the project, TF will create a powerpoint presentation documenting activities of 2019 LCRAC activities.
- c. Update on status of Youth Council: MG reported that the current focus of Youth Council will be to recruit new members as five are due to "roll off." The recruitment process is likely to be made more difficult by remote learning at area schools. The council self-appoints new members. Ella Sutcliffe (ES) asked if Youth Council would be interested in helping Lakewood students practice English in a social setting. MG and Gary Rick (GR) agreed that the council is likely focused on other projects at this time

3. City Updates

MG reported that all pavilion events are cancelled through the end of the calendar year and that any scheduled fall events will be done differently or not at all. The City of Lakewood passed a resolution requiring businesses to comply with mask policy and

social distancing that allows for more enforcement than the state mandate/ MG noted that every municipal department is functioning and active. WW asked about the potential impact of Covid-19 on the city's finances. MG replied that the finances are likely to be impacted for quite a long time.

4. Community Outreach Survey Status Report and Next Steps

JG presented an update of the current status of the task force. Initial discussions have taken place with the intent of gauging the interests and needs of the community's residents. Neal Chavran (NC) suggested that LCRAC also use this opportunity to get a sense of how the Covid-19 challenge is affecting residents. JG created a shareable document to keep the task force informed about current progress, recording suggestions and ideas, and next steps to be taken. Once a draft is created, the survey will be shared with the mayor and city council to solicit suggestions and endorsement. The task force hopes to issue the survey by the end of the year or beginning of 2021, avoiding competing with the U.S. Census and general election. TG and JG discussed creation of a database to collate responses and whether or not respondents need to add a name or may submit anonymously. ES added that while working for the Census, she came upon a surprising number of households who do not know their neighbors. ES also noted that many renters did not seem to be engaged in Lakewood as a community. TG and JJ would like to have the following questions included: Are you a Lakewood resident; if yes, why did you choose to live here or if no, why did you choose to move? WW and JG discussed ambassador programs and block clubs.

5. LCRAC Member Bios

MG reminded LCRAC that all members are volunteers and no one is obligated to publicly share biographical information. TG said that the bios were more important to share privately amongst LCRAC members and the mayor and city council to facilitate communication and availability for issues of interest. Gwendolyn Holden-Seckers (GHS) volunteered to collect the information and create an internally shareable document. Anastasia Loejos (AL) reminded LCRAC of important privacy concerns.

6. Announcements

GR will be leaving the council as he is relocating out of state. WW warmly thanked GR for his service and many accomplishments, a highlight of which was GR's work establishing and guiding the Youth Council. GR has been a valuable member of the commission and will be greatly missed. WW said that GR is a force of positivity.

WW asked everyone present to share something they've been inspired by during this challenging time. WW is grateful and inspired by his children. GR shared his gratitude for the experience of serving on LCRAC and Youth Council. TG is excited about the survey

and the insights it may provide, which should lead to action. TG offered an illustration of how the survey could help, especially as it relates to accessible housing for people aged 18-59. JJ expressed her gratitude for being in Lakewood and noted that she feels safer and more welcomed. ES described her meaningful experience as a census taker. RD is inspired by the resiliency and activism of her children. NC shared that he has been inspired by a book, Atomic Habits, which has given him new insights into rethinking daily practices leading to self-improvement. JG is happy to have the chance to get to know commission members a bit better through one-on-one engagement. AL is grateful to be involved with operation Welcome Mat and noted that every time she posts a need, Lakewood residents respond immediately. GHS noted the positive response and commitment of the Lakewood Public Library during the Covid-19 crisis.

AL and JG suggested an extension of the potluck dinner with publication of recipes and perhaps video demos.

7. Adjournment

GR motioned to adjourn and WW seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Upcoming LCRAC Meetings:

September 10, 2020

October 8, 2020

November 12, 2020

Minutes prepared by GHS