

**City of Schenectady**  
**Affirmative Action Advisory Board**  
**MINUTES**  
**City Hall, Room 106**

**February 18, 2016**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Hector Ramirez, Chair  
Dave Chetram, Vice Chair  
Ellie Pepper, Secretary  
Kanema Haynes  
Adriel Linyear  
Rev. Arnetta Dix

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jennifer Eaddy-Garvin

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm by Chair, Hector Ramirez.

**Guests:** Councilwoman Marion Porterfield, Carl Falotico, City Corporation Counsel

Hector Ramirez opened the meeting by introducing the newest member, Reverend Arnetta Dix. Reverend Dix is the pastor of Refreshing Springs Church. She is also the president of the Capital Region chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and a Board member for MCTAP.

**Old Business:**

**Approval of January minutes:** The January 2016 minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve, Adriel Linyear, seconded by Kanema Haynes. Accepted by unanimous vote.

**Report from Chair:** Hector Ramirez reported on a meeting he had with David Fronk, Director of Operations, as a follow up to the meeting several board members had with the mayor to present and discuss our annual report and recommendations. Mr. Fronk will be one of the points of contact for the board. The discussion focused on three main topics: staff support for the board, vacancies on the board and presentation of the annual report to City Council. In relation to staffing the discussion focused on the Affirmative Action Manager and her lack of attendance at monthly meetings of the board. Mr. Fronk had no further feedback on this matter. As for other staffing support, someone from City Corporation Counsel Office will be available for assistance. Carl Falotico has agreed to be present to provide support. When he is unavailable, someone from his office will be present to provide support as needed.

Councilwoman Porterfield asked what kind of support the board hoped for beyond what is currently provided by Mr. Falotico. Mr. Ramirez responded that the board would like to have someone to act as a liaison between the board and various city departments as well as other administrative tasks.

**Annual Report:** The board discussed presentation of the annual report to members of city council. Councilwoman Porterfield offered to request that the board be given time on the agenda to present the report at the next City Council Committee meeting. The next meeting will be held on 3/7 at 5:30. Mr. Ramirez will provide a copy of the report to Councilwoman Porterfield who will distribute copies to all city council members. Board members will highlight key points from the report at the committee meeting and be available to answer any questions that may come from the council members.

**Committee Reports-**

MWBE- None

Anti-Discrimination- None

Recruitment and Hiring- None

Subcommittees have nothing to report at this time as we have not met due to the board working toward public release of the Annual Report including recommendations to the Mayor.

**New business:**

David Fronk provided a list of board terms by name. Board members discussed the process for being reappointed at the completion of a term. Mr. Falotico explained that an active member would remain in the position until a new member could be appointed. A current member whose term is expiring can submit a request for reappointment to the Chair. The Chair then sends the request to the Mayor who reviews and decides if the applicant is appropriate to present to city council for a vote.

Vacancies: Currently there are no applicants for the two vacant positions. Councilwoman Porterfield will reach out to those who have expressed interest in the past but were not appointed.

Members discussed possible dates to present the annual report at a community forum. April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6pm was set as a tentative date to conduct a “town hall” type meeting open to the public. The Downtown and Phyllis Bornt branches of the Schenectady County Public Library were suggested as possible locations.

Members discussed development of plan to be created based upon on our annual report. The plan would be reviewed annually and updated based upon achieved goals and next steps. Each committee will meet to begin putting this together and will endeavor to include the appropriate department head from the city. Members also discussed the process for moving forward with its recommendations, the process for evaluation, and establishment of benchmarks. The board agreed that Mayor McCarthy’s official response, to the report, is necessary before moving forward to ascertain what we can move on with his approval. Mr. Fronk reported to Mr. Ramirez that the mayor still plans to provide a “written” response to our report.

Mr. Ramirez suggested that members consider inviting relevant speakers to our future board and committee meetings. All agreed and the following speakers were discussed as possibilities:

-Mary Cheeks, GM from Rivers Casino to speak about what they are doing to hire community members.

-MCTAP: they are reorganizing, good time for a conversation regarding what they are doing.

-NY BizLab- what they are doing, how they might do work in Schenectady and coordinate with MCTAP

For future meetings, Mr. Ramirez would like to better publicize meeting notices and send them to the Daily Gazette. This can be done via the city clerk's office. This will be especially important when we are having a speaker and a quorum would not be required to continue.

**Public comment:**

Mr. Jason Planck submitted a written comment via Councilwoman Porterfield. The members reviewed the comments and agreed Mr. Ramirez would prepare a written response for each item. The board also agreed to review concerns and recommendations during committee meetings.

**Announcements:**

Marion Porterfield reported on the Breathing Lights Project underway in Schenectady.

Ms. Haynes reported that the Campaign for Equity Funding petition drive will be held on 2/27, 12-5 with a lobby day to be held on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the Affirmative Action Advisory Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34p.m.

**The next meeting is scheduled for March 17th @ 6:00pm.**

Submitted by Ellie Pepper