



Minutes

City of DeKalb Human Relations Commission February 1, 2022

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) held a regular meeting on February 2, 2022 in the Second Floor Training Room at the DeKalb Police Department.

A. Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm. The following members of the HRC were present: Joe Gastiger (Chair), Nadine Franklin, Norden Gilbert, Andre Powell.

Other City officials/staff present:

- Scott McAdams, Fifth Ward Alderman and City Council Liaison to the HRC
- David Byrd, Chief of Police
- Jason Leverton, Deputy Chief of Police
- Scott Zak, Management Analyst and Staff Liaison to the HRC

B. Approval of Agenda – Additions/Deletions

Chair Gastiger said use of the phrase “Traffic Surveillance Cameras” in the agenda was poor wording when he was referring to License Plate Readers.

Chair Gastiger asked for a motion to approve the agenda. It was motioned by Mr. Gilbert and seconded by Ms. Franklin. Mr. Gilbert motioned to amend the agenda to add item N-2, a discussion on the HRC’s meeting time, seconded by Ms. Franklin. The amendment was approved by unanimous voice vote. Mr. Gilbert motioned to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Chair Gastiger. The amended agenda was approved by unanimous voice vote.

C. Approval of Minutes – December 7, 2021 Regular Meeting

Chair Gastiger asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Gilbert motioned, seconded by Ms. Franklin. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. Public Participation – No public comments were made at this point in the meeting.

E. Old Business

1. Update on Traffic Surveillance Cameras Guidelines



This item was moved up in the agenda. Chief Byrd shared that delivery of the License Plate Readers (LPRs) had been delayed by supply chain issues being seen nationwide but he hoped installation would be underway at the end of the month.

Chief Byrd clarified for what purposes the LPRs will be used. He said there is no facial recognition technology in the devices, and that they will only be used for official law enforcement investigations, including outstanding warrants, missing persons, and people and vehicles wanted in connection to a specific investigation.

Chief Byrd described the operation of the system. The cameras read license plates, take photos of vehicles and recognize taillight configurations. Dispatchers are alerted when there is a match to a wanted vehicle, and officers are told to be on the look out for that vehicle. Chief Byrd said the LPRs will not be used for moving, red light or speeding violations.

Chair Gastiger said the HRC is concerned about the written policy that will guide the Police Department's use of the LPRs. Chief Byrd said a policy is being drafted using existing policies from other jurisdictions, and there will be open access to the policy when it is completed.

Chair Gastiger said the technology will be beneficial, but people are still apprehensive. Chief Byrd reassured LPRs will not impact those who have not committed crimes. He said they will help solve crimes that officers do not see and can become a deterrent to crime.

Chief Byrd explained the policy will include definitions, data entry and the process for dispatchers when they receive an alert. Chair Gastiger said he would like the HRC to review the completed policy.

Mark Charvat, a member of the public, said there are benefits to LPRs if they are used properly but noted a written policy is not yet in place. He asked if other towns' policies were being reviewed, who will have access to the LPR data, can it be used to track people and how long will it be stored. He also said he hoped the HRC and public will be able to see the policy before LCRs are in use.

Chief Byrd responded that policies from the Illinois State Police, Addison and Chicago have been reviewed. He said the data in the system is law-enforcement sensitive, such as LEADS and NCIC data, that cannot be shared with those outside law enforcement, and those who do face termination. He explained stolen vehicle information is removed upon arrest and people wanted on warrants are removed when arrested. He said many other departments keep data collected by the LPRs for 90 days, and it is still being considered how long the DeKalb Police Department will keep its data.

Mr. Gilbert asked if the databases used by the LPR system are statewide or national. Chief Byrd said every plate read goes through LEADS, the Illinois database, and NCIC, which is national. Mr. Gilbert asked if the LPRs can distinguish between people since the person driving a vehicle in the system might not be the person wanted. Chief Byrd said it will not be known if the wanted person is driving until a traffic stop is made.



Joe Mitchell, a member of the public, asked how many LPRs have been purchased, where will they be located and how were those locations chosen. Chief Byrd responded six have been purchased and locations were determined based on traffic volumes, points of ingress and egress and crime statistics. He said the locations will not be revealed so criminals do not learn the locations and avoid those areas. Mr. Mitchell said there will be a high probability that there will be a disproportionate number of devices in high-crime area. Chief Byrd noted crime statistics were just one factor, and they will also be located at points of high traffic and ingress and egress.

Mr. Charvat asked if the LPR cameras will capture residences. Chief Byrd said residences are already captured by safety cameras, and that dispatchers will not be monitoring the images but rather waiting to hear an audible alert. In response to another question, Chief Byrd said bad information can be purged from the system.

Chief Byrd concluded the HRC can review the policy and areas identified as needing clarification can be revisited.

2. Publicizing the Recently-Adopted Landlord Tenant Ordinance Revisions

Chair Gastiger shared the City Council has approved the Landlord Tenant Ordinance revisions that were recommended by the HRC, and he is working with Mr. Zak on videos for social media to inform the public of the changes.

Mr. Gilbert asked how long it had been since the example lease in the ordinance was reviewed and if it should be reviewed by the City Attorney. Chair Gastiger said the DeKalb Area Rental Association could be involved. Mr. Zak said he would bring back information.

N. New Business

1. Update on Cultural Literacy Training for City Staff

Chair Gastiger said the HRC has long advocated for cultural literacy training for the police and all City staff.

Deputy Chief Leverton reported on the training being done by the Police Department. Every officer has completed RITE (Racial Intelligence Training and Engagement) training, which is also being done at the training academy, so new officers will have completed the training when they come to the department. The department also belongs to online training that alone would meet state standards. Leverton said the department is proud they are not just meeting, but exceeding state cultural literacy training standards.

Chair Gastiger shared an e-mail from City Manager Bill Nicklas describing the training done citywide. In the communication, Nicklas said the Police Department is bound by the SAF-T Act to perform cultural diversity and de-escalation training annually, and the Fire Department has instituted diversity training following a social media post made by a firefighter/paramedic that was insulting to persons of color.



There is an overtime cost since firefighters do not have time to do thoughtful training, given their daily ambulance call volume. Annual state sexual discrimination training for all employees has a diversity model, and annual Freedom of Information Act and Open Meetings Act training touches on more subtle forms of discrimination but that is not the focus. Mr. Gilbert said all City employees should receive cultural training, and Chair Gastiger said funding has always been an issue.

Mr. Powell asked Deputy Chief Leverton if the training done by police has been impactful. Leverton said the RITE training is taught by fellow officers, helping with buy-in. He said there has been no pushback against the training.

Mr. Charvat asked if the public could view the training. Deputy Chief Leverton said that would be unlikely since the content is subscription based and law-enforcement sensitive, but the topics could possibly be shared.

2. Discussion on Meeting Time

The HRC discussed the change in the Commission's regular meeting time from 6:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Chair Gastiger shared that Commissioner Lisa King was upset about the time change.

Ms. Franklin said she has never served on a commission where the members were not consulted about a time change. She said the 4:30 time sends a message to the public that the Commission does not want to hear from them since many people are still working at that time. She said the new time also discourages people from serving on the Commission for the same reason. She said she did not know about the new time until the Friday before the meeting and that the Commission could have been consulted by e-mail.

Chair Gastiger said he recollected a conversation with former Assistant to the City Manager Josh Boldt at the last meeting about an earlier time since other City commissions meet earlier. Chair Gastiger said no vote was taken and no decision was made, and he said Mr. Boldt perhaps jumped the gun.

In response to the concerns, Mr. Zak said it was recommended that the process be done correctly with discussion at this meeting and a vote on the meeting time at the March meeting. He apologized for the confusion, and said a cause may have been the transition between staff liaisons.

Mr. Gilbert motioned that the regular meeting of the HRC at 4:30 p.m. March 1 be cancelled and that a special meeting be called for the same night at 6 p.m. at which a decision on the meeting time could be made. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Franklin. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

G. Adjournment

Chair Gastiger motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Franklin. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was declared adjourned at 5:52 p.m. The next meeting is on March 1, 2022.



Scott Zak, Management Liaison & HRC Liaison

Minutes approved by the Human Relations Commission on March 1, 2022.