



COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION AGENDA
December 5, 2019 at 4 p.m.
City Hall, 240 Columbus Avenue

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

**Vilicia Cade, Valerie Cruse, Anthony Harris, Blake Harris, Daryl Murphy,
Taylor Sutphen & Daniel Williams**

CURRENT BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes
September 12, 2019

Update on Neighborhood Initiative
Talon Flohr - Neighborhood Initiative Coordinator

Open Discussion

OLD BUSINESS

Equal Justice Initiative Soil Collection Project

NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

2020 MEETINGS
(Proposed) at 4 p.m.

Thursday, March 12
Thursday, June 11
Thursday, September 10
Thursday, December 10

Chairman Sutphen called the meeting to order at 4 p.m., after the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present: Vilicia Cade, Anthony Harris, Daryl Murphy, Taylor Sutphen and Daniel Williams

Members absent: Valerie Cruse and Blake Harris

Staff Present: Naomi Twine - Commission Liaison, Talon Flohr - Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator and Paige Doster, Acting Clerk

CURRENT BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes

Upon motion of Anthony Harris and second of Daryl Murphy, the members voted to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2019, meeting and suspend the formal reading. The Chairman declared the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Talon Flohr said the **sign toppers are almost completely finished in the neighborhoods** and the only ones left to be placed are in the First Street area from Fifth Street to Cleveland Road. The city has received really good feedback about them so far and the point is to establish the brands. Additionally, we did something new this year. The Walk Wayne/Hike Hancock events included four programming sessions over the past four months. While we debuted some traffic calming measures on these two high traffic, high speed boulevards, it went well and we received good feedback from the community. These efforts will now be moved into other parts of the city. We continue to program spaces around town, for example, an Ice Cream Social was held at the Erie Boulevard Parklet which was well attended. The city's summer intern created a Friends of the Park program which will be kicked off in the spring and any groups who may want to participate by scheduling wellness checks and programming space may contact the city's Recreation Department. Wellness checks would include going into a specific park, looking around and making sure nothing is wrong; if there were trash, limbs on the ground or issues with play equipment, these things would be handled or reported to the city. We have set up the infrastructure for reporting this on the city's website. Anthony Harris asked if this is similar to the Adopt A Highway program and Talon Flohr said the idea is to hold a banquet at the end of each season for people who help and potentially erect signage as to adoptions of parks. From 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on September 21, a Sandusky Sunrise event will be held at the First Congressional Church on Columbus Avenue. They are really focused on diversity and Sandusky's role with the Underground Railroad and hope members of the CRC might join them. Talon Flohr said the timing of this event is during International Peace Week. There will be a transit tour of the Underground Railroad sites and there is no cost to attend or participate in the tours. Taylor Sutphen said it was interesting to have something celebrating diversity to coincide with the Oktoberfest event. Talon Flohr said new play equipment is also being installed at Huron Park and it has been relocated to

the area of this park by the Splash Pad. Kids will no longer run across the street and we are looking forward to this being completed. Daryl Murphy said he likes the signs on Hancock Street to slow traffic; Talon Flohr said there was a bit of a learning curve and is happy drivers have not mowed them down. We have a “yield to pedestrian” problem in Sandusky and we are trying to break this culture and make it safer for people to walk. These will be removed for the snow plowing season and reinstalled in the spring. Taylor Sutphen said another city is trying to brand their neighborhoods and put their branding on a t-shirt and asked if someone owns the rights to this. Talon Flohr said he can check on this. Vilicia Cade said she saw silver city seals in the ground along the shoreline and said these are very nice touch.

OLD BUSINESS

Vilicia Cade said at the last meeting, the SPD made a presentation. Her son has been pulled over and questioned twice by Police Officers. The first time he was pulled over, he was coming home from working at Cedar Point. The Officer told him he was not driving straight and his license and registration was checked. The second time he was pulled over, he was again coming home from his job at Cedar Point and going downtown to get gas. It was about 10:30 p.m. and he was given a warning. Her son told her the Police Officer made him get out of the car, put the flashlight in the car and he was shaken up and she was a little alarmed by this because he is usually a very quiet and introverted. He ripped up the ticket and she had to find it and tape it back together but he did not produce his license which was in the back seat. Nonetheless, she feels like he was targeted because he is new to the community and they do not know who he is and he is pretty big. He is now off to college and she allowed him to take his car although she was uncomfortable about this experience which he did not handle very well. We do need to have more dialogue about how we handle these situations and wants everyone to be safe. Her son was very shaken up by this and refused to go outside and drive his car for a few days. Naomi Twine said asked what the reason was for the second stop but Vilicia Cade said he did not tell her why. Taylor Sutphen said the police log should show the reason why he was pulled over and to check into this. Daryl Murphy said it can always be said the reason is because of crossing the centerline and if an officer wants to pull someone over, they will do so and there is no way to prove this. Chief Orzech has always been very good about listening to issues and taking them back to the patrol officers, but the point is this happens all the time and thinks it is just a few officers, not all of them. If they see an unfamiliar face or simply want to pull someone over, they do this and it does happen, but they try to teach young people to comply by showing their license, not talking back and doing everything asked of them. This would not be the time to be defiant.

Anthony Harris said the **speed trailer** is working but said vehicles still speed down the street. When they see the sign flashing, he can see brake lights and it was good to have this back up.

NEW BUSINESS

Daryl Murphy said the NAACP has been contacted by the Mahoning Valley project who are partnering with the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI). This is the group which has the Peace & Justice Memorial Museum located in Montgomery, Alabama. This museum is dedicated to the legacy of

enslaved black people, people terrorized by lynching, African Americans humiliated by racial segregation and people of color who are burdened with assumptions of guilt and police violence. The EJI wants to come to Sandusky about a lynching which took place in 1878. He reached out to the city about this lynching which took place at Columbus Avenue and Market Street where Bertsch Jewelers used to be. They would like to collect soil to put into the museum. He has a meeting on September 21 and wants it on the record they are looking into this with the city as this is a city affair. There are a lot of great people who speak up and do not remain silent and must or mob rule can and will take over and this is why the EJI thinks it is very important people recognize history so it is not repeated. Young people may not know the history of the City of Sandusky and it is important everyone should know the good as well as the bad. This is not to point fingers, but to learn from and have a peaceful discussion so we all understand one another. There is a Candidate Forum on September 21 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and this visit is planned around that event. This lynching took place on September 4, 1878, and through research in the Sandusky Library archives, there was a newspaper article which was written about this suspected lynching. Daryl Murphy said this location is seven yards from the corner where there now is a tree and there was a lamppost in pictures where the person would have been hung. He will reach out to the city about cutting the sidewalk at this location to use dirt from this corner at the museum. We should be as authentic as we can with our history. The person who was lynched was William Taylor who was accused of killing a woman; he is not saying he is innocent or guilty, but mob rule prevailed without a trial. Daryl Murphy said it is fitting and ties to Sandusky which is known for the Underground Railroad and we have to acknowledge good and bad. Bad things can happen if people do not speak up. They want everyone to be on board with this, including the city's involvement. Taylor Sutphen asked if a ceremony would be involved upon the collection of soil and Daryl Murphy said members of the EJI would be here and plan this. Daniel Williams said this is very important and has done a lot of research about this and said the microfilm is at the Hayes Presidential Center along with hundreds of years of Sandusky periodical information. Sandusky citizens can be proud that after this happened, it is documented in subsequent newspapers citizens were outraged as opposed to in the South where the majority of people were happy and celebratory of such an event. If and when there is a public marker, this is something which could be contained in the narrative. Naomi Twine suggested perhaps the CRC could sponsor an activity around this ceremony. Daryl Murphy said they wanted to put people on trial who were involved in the lynching and people also became upset about this so they let it go although parts of the community were outraged. Daniel Williams said The New York Times covered this story in 1878 and he found out the Toledo Blade learned about it and published a story. Daniel Williams said he put together a survey through Facebook and received a few responses regarding this incident. One common thread was people did not know about it. There was one person who was not for a public marker, but there are also people for it, but the bottom line is to raise awareness.

The next CRC meeting is scheduled for December 5 at 4 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Daryl Murphy and second of Vilicia Cade, the members voted to adjourn at 4:45 p.m. The Chairperson declared the motion passed.

Attest: Kelly Kresser, Clerk
Date: ____/____/____

Taylor Sutphen, Chairperson
Date: ____/____/____