

VILLAGE OF FLOSSMOOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

January 23, 2023, 7pm
Village Hall

MINUTES

Call to Order

Vice Chairperson Riffice called the meeting to order at 7:02pm; Chair Leon-Thompson could not preside due to a family emergency.

Roll Call

Present: Commissioners O'Shea, Ramsey, Deugaw, Dorsey, Riffice

Absent and Missed: Cmmrs Young, Hatcher-Holmes, Leon-Thompson

A quorum was present

Staff Present: Assistant Village Manager Jonathan Bogue, Acting Police Chief Taylor, Village Event Coordinator Stephanie Wright

Trustee: Trustee Mustafa

Community Attendees: Jenny Curtis, Chris Curtis, Lashon Latrice, Eric Crump (online)

Residents Wishing to Address the Commission:

- Ms. Curtis reiterated her concerns often presented at Village Trustee meetings regarding the excessive force during the July incident in question. She is seeking justice for Madeline Miller and stated that the Village is not addressing the incident and she was informed that the Community Relations Commission is now going to address it. Cmmr Riffice stated that the CRC is advisory and is not able to address the incident directly. She also provided to Ms. Curtis the directive from the mayor to ensure there is no misunderstanding about what the CRC has been asked to do. *"Mayor Nelson asked the CRC to provide suggestions on facilitation and format and suggest other educational topics based on the report from the forum."* Interim Chief Taylor explained that the investigation is a three-stage process and he defined each stage for the meeting attendees. He acknowledged the resident's concerns and stated that he is open to meet with residents at any time to explain the process in more detail.
- Mr. Curtis made a comment that the community member his wife mentioned that was involved in an argument during the Community Forum could be a member of any Commission. AVM Bogue described the application process and Trustee Mustafa said many CRC members had been actively volunteering for the CRC before being appointed.
- Dr. Latrice was a late attendee and echoed the comments from Ms. Curtis.

Approval of December 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Cmmr Al-Amin brought forth a motion to approve the minutes with a second by Cmmr Deugaw. Minutes were passed as written.

Resident Reminders – Chief Taylor

- Two police candidates have been hired and are undergoing additional training. Eight more applicants are going to be interviewed over the next 4-6 weeks.

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- Nine pm is the time for all residents to proactively lock up their homes, cars, and personal property to mitigate the chance of theft, damage, or other impediment to safety.

Old Business

Hot Chocolate

- Serving hot chocolate to those attending the first night of Hanukkah and Kwanzaa in Flossmoor Park was a resounding success. The CRC would like to continue that and maybe expand it to other events in the future. We will need to budget for it.

MLK Recap

- The events of the MLK weekend were well-received. Chairperson Leon-Thompson and AVM Bogue will recap the events for the community at the next Trustee meeting on February 6. Photos of any event should be sent to Chairperson Leon-Thompson and Amy Kent.

New Business

Black History Month

- It was a recommendation of Cmmr Deugaw's to the Village to recognize the activities in February as Black History, removing the 'month' from the promotional materials.
- Black History will focus on Black achievers and leaders in STEM. HF High School and SD 161 are planning discussions, presentations, and panels.
- AVM Bogue is coordinating activities for the Village; he requested that the CRC forward the online form to qualified individuals who might be willing to share their stories and experiences in the science, technology, engineering, or medical fields. Nine individuals have already responded.
- The Pan-African flags will fly as of February 1.

New Resident Event

- Cmmr O'Shea will work with Stephanie Wright to bring the event to fruition. Cmmr Hatcher-Holmes also offered to help as documented in the December 2022 minutes. To date, they have not met but will plan to do so in the near future.
- Stephanie Wright said the library has been reserved, the graphic designer is working on the invitation, the Taste of Flossmoor will again be part of the event, and the Small Business Association has already been contacted.

Community Forum Recommendation Discussion

- Commissioners were asked to compile 2-3 recommendations.
- Cmmr Riffice will compile the recommendations from the CRC and ask Commissioners to edit to ensure she correctly captured them.
- The CRC is requesting that the Mayor, upon receipt of the recommendations due in early March, provide a timeline in which she will a) acknowledge the recommendations and b) provide the next steps for moving forward.

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Jamie O'Shea

1. Some community guidelines are already in place that residents might not know about (i.e., Noise Control Regulations). He suggests that we compile the list and share them with residents.

Molly Deugaw

1. Host neighborhood forums twice monthly for coffee and conversation with neighbors and law enforcement.
2. Provide training to community volunteers to aid and assist when individuals are being harassed.
3. Provide training on unconscious bias and community relationship building.

Sugar Al-Amin

1. Citing neighbors' complaint that the police did not follow-up on hearing gunshots, provide some type of improved police response and communication.
2. Encourage youth to get to know police by having more interaction in grade school and high school.

Stephen Ramsey

1. Encourage parents to become role models in the home. Often the positive work done by police unravels at home.

Kevin Dorsey

1. Address mental health by providing de-escalation training to police.
2. Reinstate the Citizen's Police Academy/Ride Along program
3. Provide dispatch training for improved communication between police and community
4. Establish a diversity/equity/inclusion council

Jackie Riffice

1. Create Ask Me videos – residents ask police a question for a 60 second video; it's answered, recorded, and posted on our website
2. Police help establish a formal process for neighborhood watch groups and meet on occasion
3. Bike Along with the mobile police unit
4. Provide a means to build community with residents and police
 - o Chili Cookoff between police, fire, neighborhood associations
 - o Police and Pancakes – pancake breakfast with a small donation per individual/family – proceeds will be used as scholarship dollars for HF senior(s) who will pursue education in policing
 - o Basketball Challenge – game and other activities (most free throws, etc.) between police and residents

Phillippa Leon-Thompson

1. Police Academy- using the map you created, address small communities at a time. Residents Q/A.
2. Ride along- individualized, first-hand look at what an officer does, again provides opportunities for questioning
3. Coffee with a cop and National Night Out both provide opportunities for conversations
4. Try and reintroduce our book club, perhaps we can find a book covering bringing communities together

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Good of the Order

- Cmmr Deugaw commended the CRC and the community on a well-organized MLK Day of Service.

Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

- Cmmr Deugaw brought forth a motion to close the meeting, Cmmr Al-Amin provided a second. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29pm
- Next meeting is February 27, 2023

TO DO's BEFORE FEB 27

- CRC will forward the online form to qualified individuals who might be willing to share their stories and experiences in the science, technology, engineering, or medical fields.
- AVM will reach out to CRC for any help needed to promote Black History events
- Jamie O'Shea and Sandy Hatcher-Holmes will meet with Stephanie Wright to prepare for the New Resident Event
- CRC will review their individual recommendations per the mayor's request and provide final responses to Chairperson Leon-Thompson by Feb 27