

Human Relations Commission
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 5th, 2025
5:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order:** 5:00 pm

2. **Roll Call:** Lydia Young, Chair, Mary Parks, Vice Chair, David Dorsey, Terri Richardson-Sanders, Staff Liaison and Libni Lopez, Council Liaison. **Absent:** Tyrone Wicks and Michael Henle.

3. **Approval of July 1st Minutes:** Motion to approve made by Dorsey, seconded by Parks, the motion was carried unanimously.

- Approval of redacted June Minutes: Motion to approve made by Parks, seconded by Dorsey, the motion was carried unanimously

4. **New Business**

- a. Presentation from Rural Response Network given by Debbie Kelley: she provides a packet of informational pamphlets from the Rural Response Network, and explains that Rural Response Network is both a project name and a consortium that is centered in the rural parts of Lorain County; specifically, Oberlin and Wellington. Funding comes from a grant from Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). The grant was scheduled to end in August but as been extended through January 31, 2026. The main focus is mental health and substance abuse through education and prevention. In southern Lorain County there is a lack of public behavioral health services, and no specific substance use services. In this area, stigma is a major issue. The goal is to increase awareness and understanding that these [addictions] are brain disorders. In the past and moving forward, education around overdose, risk reduction and prevention are key. This comes in the form of Naloxone distribution sites that provide Narcan, fentanyl testing strips and prescription safety distribution sites, for 24/7 access. They've trained over 1,200 people on how to recognize symptoms of an overdose and how to intervene. The Narcan distribution sites have steadily decreased the amount of overdose fatalities in Oberlin and Wellington. The Rural Response Network has set up services in the OCS building for walk-in assessments of mental health recovery meetings and lower risk mental health and substance abuse screenings in order to provide better personalized treatment. There are also more items provided for prevention including Riveon Health and Let's_Get Real, given though the Rural Response Network at OCS. Debbie remarks that the Rural Response Network is always willing and wanting to connect in any way they can in order to provide more effective reach. Riveon Health and Recovery services is a merger of the LCADA Way's addiction services with the Nord Center for Mental

Health. Riveon is working with Lorain County Public Health and the Mental Health Recovery Services (MHARS) Board, to address community needs. Parks asked about services for caregivers; Kelley recommended the National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI). Kelly reported that more overdoses occur in the home. Young mentions future collaboration between Rural Response Network and the HRC; and Lopez, suggested doing a presentation for City Council.

5. Old Business

- a. Update from the Committee for Human Dignity
 - There are no updates at this point. They are still active and still working.
- b. Update on the Affordable Housing Documentary
 - The estimated screening date is set for October before a new council comes into play and with we will have a city manager by then.
- c. Staff Liaison Update: Richardson-Sanders
 - In anticipation of the new city manager there are some changes that have been made in city hall, with office space and who is in old City Hall. In that building there will be the new City Manager, the Communications Manager, the HR Administrator and the Community Liaison, and the building department. In 85 (new City Hall) there will the Council Clerk, and Asst. Clerk. At the Prospect building, Carrie and her group in Planning and Development are in Linda's old office. Linda's office is still here (Office of Sustainability) and the Rec. Department. Senior program is still here also.
 - The first Social Equity Implementation group will meet for the first time on August 26th at 9:30am in City Hall. 69 S. Main in the 2nd floor conference room.
- d. Council Communications: Libni Lopez
 - There have been two council meetings since last HRC meeting in July, however now city council is on recess and will meet again the second week of August.
 - Update on the bus transit. The previous contract has ended for the electric bus service and they have shifted to another company that is more local, (Slider was in Florida) and this company is willing to hire the same workers. These workers are also now deemed full time employees and get full time benefits. Oberlin now has two brand new vans that both are wheelchair friendly without the sacrifice of another seat. There is also an app that tracks the bus routes.
 - Green Acres development issue went to city council; the sub-committee wanted to interview two of the potential developers. We have yet to hear back to see what the next steps will be.
 - In terms of the employment, we are really close to having a new city manager.
 - Lopez presented a resolution on condemning conversion therapy; the resolution passed and he has begun working to hopefully turn the resolution it into an ordinance that prohibits mental health practitioners from doing conversion therapy. Cuyahoga County Commissioners had their first reading of this issue and it passed; now it will go back to the Commission for a 2nd and 3rd reading.

- There was a survey about the Oberlin Enrichment and Activity Center (OEAC) in terms of interest/ input from the community on what they would want to see in this building. Oberlin has an agreement with a company that will conduct an assessment. The Public Works Director came to Council and asked what they wanted to do and gave an estimate on repairs. There is an agreement with the GDP group; a professional planning, architecture and engineering firm, for preparation of a planning and feasibility assessment for the building – this will help Council make an informed decision on how to move forward with this building.
- There will be two new renewal levies; about the libraries and the refuse. Council does not want to raise taxes, member have been mindful of the property value reassessments that have already caused tax increases; these are renewal levels, so taxes will remain the same as they are now. Renewal language will be in English and Spanish.

6. Adjournment

- a. Young calls for motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Parks, the motion was carried unanimously @ 6:53pm.

Jerri Richardson-Borders 10/20/25