

**MINUTES FROM: Advisory Human Relations Council**

**DATE: September 28, 2021**

**PRESENT: Voting members: John Albers, Patrick Lyp, Jennifer Wright, Mike Bendicsen, Jerome Ezell, Laurie Mullet Quorum Established Non-Voting Members: Noor Arfeen, Chief Jeff Balon**

**Staff present: Maggie Clifton**

**RECORDED BY: Laurie Mullet**

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>RESOLUTIONS</b>
Call to Order	The meeting was called to order by John Albers, Chair	
Minutes		The minutes of the July 27, 2021, meeting were entered into the record with no corrections.
Report from Chief Balon	<p>Chief Balon reported that through a grant with Healthlinc, the Valparaiso Police Department has hired a social worker to be part of the VPD team. Chief Balon introduced Samantha Bergett, MSW and Julia Reardon, a VU Intern.</p> <p>Responsibilities of the Social Worker will include reading police reports to identify people who made need assistance such as child who have experienced a trauma, victims of violence, substance abuse cases. Julia will work with other social services agencies and the schools in these duties.</p> <p>In addition, Chief Balon has secured the services of a psychoanalyst to assist officer wellness. Effective January 1, 2021, officer physical fitness standards will be enhanced to confidence and mind set.</p>	Further information or questions can be directed to Chief Balon.
Community Spotlight	Christine Livingston, the Assistant Director of Porter County/Indiana Dunes Tourism office presented a program on the plans to create an Indigenous Cultural Trail at the tourism property on rte. 49 north which is the gateway to the national and state parks. This effort is a partnership of the National	Further information or questions can be directed to Christine Livingston at Christine@IndianaDunes.com

	Park, the Indiana Dunes Tourism and local Indigenous People.	
Report from the Chairman	<p>John reported that there have been reports of incidents of bias. John encouraged individuals to complete the incident aperi work according to the Human Relations Ordinance (HRO)</p> <p>John introduced our newest member appointed by Mayor Murphy. Noor Arfeen is the representative from Valparaiso High School. Noor is interested in advancing the topics of diversity and equity and has developed program at VHS. She now hopes to be part of advancing those same topics within the community at large.</p> <p>John reported we have three members who will have term expirations at the end of the year. If a current member that is due to expire, yet wishes to be re-appointed, John encourages that contact with the mayor's office be made.</p> <p>Hannah reported that there have been some incidences of bias, racism, homophobic in nature and encouraged a public conversation surrounding this issue. Hannah requested that a public statement of denouncement by the City be issued. Discussion ensued.</p>	<p>John requested that Hannah draft her request in writing to be shared with the other members in advance of the next AHRC meeting. Members were encouraged to contact Hannah with questions.</p> <p>John will contact the mayor's office to see if he would like for us to move up our next meeting to discuss this topic.</p>
Adjournment		With no further business to come before the AHRC, the meeting was adjourned.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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