

Athens Community Relations Commission Meeting Notes  
March 6, 2025 | 1:00pm (Rescheduled from February 27, 2025)  
Athens Library Small Meeting Room

Members present in bold: **Juli Goodman, Natalie Johnson, Raymie McKerrow, Abigail Otchill, Rebecca Robison-Miller, John Schmieding, Rachel Siegel, Gavin Thompson**

City Council liaison: **Micah Carey**

City of Athens DEI & A Coordinator: **Lacey Rogers**

1. Reading of land acknowledgement: Micah
2. Review January notes: Juli made a motion, John seconded, all approved.
3. Old business:
  - a. Senate Bill 1 updates and impacts: Is the commission interested in making recommendations and taking on more responsibility around DEI programming? Members do not feel they have capacity to take on making recommendations but will consider taking action on specific topics when needed. Members are interested in supporting programming. Rebecca will send updated mission and bylaws.
  - b. DEI programming updates: University DEI programming will likely be terminated before the end of the academic year. This has prompted discussions about possible community partners that would be willing to coordinate programming. There are donors and other alumni who might be interested in donating and coordinating. Abigail received information about how student orgs can be involved with DEI programming. Micah reviewed the by-laws. The commission discussed creating a committee to host programming, create materials, listening sessions, support groups, work with other people/organizations doing DEI work, how to build on strengths and leverage our current resources. There needs to be an acknowledgment that personal capacity based on identity is going to impact the work. The Center for Community Engagement will be taking on some programming responsibilities for the university. The ACRC discussed trying to find ways to learn what programs help people feel most supported and engaged. Lacey has met with students and university administrators about their priorities and is trying to gather contact lists. Are there other states that have pulled back DEI  
Plan of action: Recruit for a committee, coordinate listening sessions and strength based programming rooted in what the community needs.
  - c. Membership recruitment – Gavin Thompson is now an official commission member. Abigail is transitioning off of the commission. Micah will be transitioning to City Council president and the ACRC will receive a new council liaison. Commission members need portal access.
  - d. AMS/AHS work – this was not discussed.
  - e. 2025 event prioritization: International Street Fair, Juneteenth – this was not discussed.
4. New business:
  - a. Bias and discrimination report review – No reports to review. There was follow up correspondence about the media request from The Independent.
  - b. 2040 Plan alignment - not discussed.
  - c. Member engagement and sustainability -not discussed.
  - d. Succession planning -not discussed.
5. Next meeting: March 27th at 1pm, Athens Library small meeting room

