

Athens Community Relations Commission Meeting Notes
May 1, 2025 | 1:00pm (Rescheduled from April 24th)
Athens Library Small Meeting Room

Members present in bold: **Mizan Ali (not confirmed by council), Juli Goodman, Natalie Johnson, Raymie McKerrow, Rebecca Robison-Miller, John Schmieding, Rachel Siegel, Gavin Thompson**
City Council liaison: **Micah Carey**
City of Athens DEI & A Coordinator: **Lacey Rogers**
Guest: Tara Griffiths

1. Reading of land acknowledgement: John read a poem by Joy Harjo.
2. Review March notes: John made a motion to approve, Gavin seconded, all approved.
3. Old business:
 - a. University programming shift to community: June 20th for Ohio University DEI offices to close; student orgs have taken on leadership roles for some initiatives. The Athens County Foundation has a racial equity and Pride fund that requests can be made to. This Saturday there will be an open house from 12pm-2pm for students and community to attend at the current DEI offices on camps. Their book collection is going to UCM and clothing is going to SEORA.
 - b. Black Alumni Weekend and other updates: Lacey said there is a debrief meeting this weekend to discuss how BAW went and the schedule moving forward.
 - c. Food for Thought Conversations: Lacey organized a planning meeting and it was decided that there will be three over the summer: June 29th, July 27th, and August 24th – Sundays afternoons at the Community Center from 2pm-4pm. These will be roundtable discussion style and are targeting 40-50 people for each conversation. The focus will be on processing and future progress; what programming is needed by the community and identify people/organizations that would be interested in forming ancillary affinity groups. An RSVP will be required. The commission can help promote and Juli will do a flyer; Natalie offered to start a RSVP doc. ACRC will request to support funding for the conversations. Micah offered to hold a fourth meeting online. The next planning meeting is May 8th at 10am at the Berry meeting room at the City Building. Natalie, John, Micah, Julie and Gavin are working on this with Lacey.

Micah will send a comprehensive list of DEI programming for the commission members to review.
 - d. Juneteenth tabling: Gavin, John, maybe Tara and Raymie are interested in creating programming and tabling. Rebecca will reserve a table and follow up to further organize.
 - e.
4. AMS/AHS work: Bystander training is still allowed, the anti-racism class will have to happen after school. Discussion is ongoing about how to navigate the administrative barriers. The organizers are applying to be a club so they can meet after school and will need an adviser.
5. New business:
 - a. Bias and discrimination report review-no new reports as of 4/29/25.
 - b. 2040 Plan alignment

- c. Member engagement and sustainability: Rachel has resigned from the commission. Mizan has committed to being on the commission; Tara is interested in working with the bias and discrimination reporting.
 - d. Succession planning
- 6. Next meeting: May 29th at 1pm, Athens Library, large meeting room. Natalie will run the meeting.