

# VILLAGE OF FLOSSMOOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION

May 24, 2021

7pm

Village Hall and via Zoom

## MINUTES

- I. Call to Order  
Chairperson Graham called the meeting to order at 7:04pm
- II. Roll Call  
Present: Chairperson Graham, Commissioners Mustafa, Leon-Thompson, O'Shea, Harris, Riffice (abbreviated Cmr) and youth liaison Zoe Hubbard  
Absent: Commissioners Al-Amin, Gordon  
Staff: Commander Taylor, Assistant Village Manager Allison Matson (abbreviated AVM)
- III. Residents Present Wishing to Address the Commission  
Molly Deugaw: invited to observe; resident for around 2 years; looking forward to doing more in the community  
Stephen Ramsey: invited to observe; resident for 6 years; would like to become more active in the community
- IV. Approval of April 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes  
Chairperson Graham called for a motion to approve the minutes of April 26, 2021. Motion: Cmr Riffice. Second: Cmr Leon-Thomas. Motion passed by a voice vote.
- V. FY21 CRC Budget/FY22 Budget  
AVM Matson purchased gift cards for trivia winners but did not use all the available funds. There remains \$3000 in the budget. A surplus of about 100 mugs is in inventory and can be used for gifts going forward.
- VI. CRC Guidance/Bylaws  
Cmrs Riffice and Mustafa will collaborate on a draft to define the role of a community relations commissioner and critical success factors for an effective board. It will be ready for commission review at the next meeting. Chairperson Graham suggested inviting Mayor Nelson and Trustee Hoag to learn of her vision and his history of why the CRC was created.

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### VII. Village Strategic Plan – Survey Question Themes

- AVM Matson stated that there are many projects underway and she would like CRC to prioritize what we want to plan and deliver within the next 12-18 months. It is likely that the Village will conduct a formal strategic planning process and input from the CRC will likely be requested.
- There will likely be a community survey and AVM Matson asked what questions we want included in the survey to get a better feel for what residents want. Cmr Riffice suggested that AVM Matson might have more insight to community concerns based on other information sources and suggested that she compile some questions that may capture if/how residents feel connected.
- Cmr Leon-Thomas noted that it is difficult to measure how effective we are in reaching all of our residents and to measure how successful we are in bridging the gaps between neighborhood involvement.
- Cmr Harris noted that the previous survey captured the top complaint that property taxes were too high. Several ideas were suggested to educate and inform residents of the property tax formula. AVM Matson will include a question in the Community Survey to determine how many citizens understand the tax formula.

### VIII. 2021 Events

- Juneteenth update: The celebration is on June 19. The Village will make a donation to the event. The CRC will share a table with the combined police departments should there be a need to share information and/or distribute free items (mugs, etc.). The CRC is willing to place signage throughout the community. Cmr Mustafa will ask YouMatter2 if signs are available to distribute. Yard signs can be purchased from the website: YouMatter2.org.
- One Book One Flossmoor: Three books were suggested. They include *In the Time of Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez, *Divided Soul* by David Ritz, and *Yellow Bird* by Sierra Crane Murdoch. Cmr Riffice will read and report on *Yellow Bird*; other CRC members were asked to consider reading the other books and report back. Commander Taylor followed up stating that *Divided Soul* may not be a book for the entire community given the subject matter.
- New Resident Event Evaluation: tabled until the next meeting

IX. New resident packet: Cmr O'Shea presented a packet of information for new residents, compiled in partnership with Amy Kent. He will continue to edit the document and asked for the CRC to provide 'missing' information that new residents should know. He provided several ways the document could be made available on paper and digitally.

X. Community Conversations Follow-Up: No new events are underway from Matt Epperson and Stephanie Byrd at this time. Mayor Nelson mentioned the idea of bystander intervention training to Bridget Wachtel; AVM Matson suggested that the idea is worth exploring. She provided 2 agencies and Cmr Riffice will follow up.

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### **XI. Resident Reminders and Communication – Hot Topics**

- Commander Taylor stated that vehicles are speeding eastbound on Flossmoor Road near Braeburn and Brassie. There is a temporary radar speed sign to gather data for analysis and it will continue for at least 2 weeks.
- Planning is underway for National Night Out on August 8.
- Applications for block parties are available.
- Cmr Harris noted that downtown traffic should be better monitored as traffic increases to pre-Covid volumes

### **XII. New Business**

- Cmr O'Shea asked the CRC to consider sending a gift to Amy Kent as she and her wife welcome a new baby. He will organize a collection for personal donations.
- Cmr O'Shea asked for CRC contact information – phone and email. AVM Matson will provide.
- Chairperson Graham said that Mayor Nelson suggested that the CRC conduct a village-wide beautification award program as well as a home improvement award program. This will be addressed when the CRC has the opportunity to share the CRC's Purpose and Intent document.
- Cmr Mustafa met with representatives of The Victors, a group of young black men at the high school. They are seeking opportunities for civic engagement and volunteerism as well as mentors and advocates. We discussed how the CRC could provide support such as connecting young people to existing volunteer opportunities or introducing them to government via Flossmoor's Public Works, Police and Fire Departments. Cmr Leon-Thomas suggested that AVM Matson contact Trustee Lofton as he is well-versed in mentor opportunities.

### **XIII. Next Meeting Date and Adjournment**

Next Meeting: June 28, 2021

Chairperson Graham called for a motion to adjourn. Motion: Cmr Harris. Second: Cmr O'Shea.

Motion passed by a voice vote. Meeting was adjourned at 8:50.

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### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- Cmr Riffice and Mustafa to complete CRC Guidance/Bylaws before June 28 meeting.
- AVM Matson to invite Trustee Hoag and Mayor Nelson to CRC meeting on June 28.
- AVM Matson to draft additional questions for the proposed community survey that would help clarify the issues that citizens may have about community concerns that have yet to be articulated before the next meeting on June 28.
- Commander Taylor to explore the need for traffic management in downtown Flossmoor as traffic increases to pre-pandemic volume.
- Cmr Mustafa will ask YouMatter2 if signs are available to distribute.
- Volunteer is needed to read *In the Time of Butterflies* by Julia Alvarez and report back.
- Cmr O'Shea asked for the CRC to provide 'missing' information that new residents should know for the New Resident packet in time for the June 28 meeting.
- Cmr Riffice contacted the organization that sponsors Bystander Intervention for more information.
- Cmr O'Shea will contact the commission members should they want to donate to a baby gift for Amy Kent and her wife.
- AVM Matson will provide contact information for all members.
- AVM Matson will contact Trustee Lofton as he is well-versed in mentor opportunities in an effort to support The Victors, a young group of HF black men who are seeking ways to be more engaged in our community.