

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (CRAB) MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2021 VIA ZOOM

The meeting began at 7:30pm.

Members participating were: Rick Ransom, Kevin Hammett, Dan Hamlin, Sudhanshu Sinha, Dea Zugby and Tim George, Staff Liaison.

Also participating were: Layla, Mayor Byrd, Michael H, Kyla H, and Bill O.

Welcome and Introductions

There were introductions. Rick opened the meeting with general introductions and asked Dan Hamlin to read the Community Pledge. Rick explained the Jamie was away on work and excused.

Opening Comments

Rick invited CRAB members and attending guests if they had any general opening comments. Several residents indicated they had comments but related to the two agenda items. The meeting moved on to the discussion topics.

Approval of Minutes

Dan moved that the minutes of the Sept 23 meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by Kevin. Rick asked for any discussion or changes to the minutes as submitted. Hearing none, Rick called for the vote. Approval of the minutes passed 5-0.

Discussion of the Winter Lights Festival Recommendations

Rick opened the discussion on the Festival of Lights / Winter Lights Festival by summarizing the discussions from previous meetings. He then proceeded to skip forward and read through the recommendations in the Oct 6 draft memo.

Sudhanshu – asked about costs and if additional activities were recommended where the funds would come from.

Rick – noted that the recommendations are for Council to consider and any that require additional funding would need to be appropriated by Council.

Kevin – reiterated that CRAB's role is to review the issue and make recommendations. It is the Council's role to accept and implement the recommendations they choose.

Michael H* - Commented it would have been nice to have had the draft document ahead of time to review and prepare comments. Also provided background that this issue has come up before Council a few times before, in 2019 and 2020. He also referenced Lynch vs. Donnelly, a supreme court case that

could provide guidance. Finally noted he hoped this issue would come to the City Council in a work session for public input before it is decided upon.

Bill O* - reiterated the preference to have had this posted sooner. Inquired as to which minutes had just been approved.

Rick – asked Sudhanshu to restate his thoughts on additional activities

Sudhanshu – two potential activities were: 1) a brief program with each religious group afforded 10 minutes to put on a program to showcase their culture/traditions; and, 2) add a fireworks display, to be held at a different location, to celebrate the event.

Michael H* - voiced strong opposition to additional fireworks displays

Rick – Noted that the logistics/cost for fireworks made it very difficult to include and that that City did not want to sponsor/run the religious programming, suggesting that an outside entity, GILA perhaps, would be more appropriate.

Colin B* - Thanked everyone (CRAB) for their hard work on drafting the recommendations and appreciates the thoughtful consideration. He corrected the comment that it is the Outstanding Citizen Award and supports the recommendation that they light the tree. He also supports and embraces geographic diversity in the City. While he is a Christian, he supports a secular event and feels it is in keeping with the City's ethos. He assured the residents on the call that the Winter Lights Festival issue would come before Council in a work session in November (provided he is still on Council). He closed by saying that Advisory Boards play an important role for the city providing guidance and recommendations for Council consideration.

Rick – Agreed with Mayor Byrd and reiterated that everything CRAB does is in an effort to give Council information and guidance, as a strawman poll, for their consideration.

Dan – moved that the CRAB Winter Lights Festival Recommendations document be forwarded to Council. Motion was seconded by Kevin. Motion passed 5-0.

Rick – closed the discussion by saying that they encourage individuals to celebrate their traditions and cultures any way they want. He also encouraged citizens to form a group, similar to the Labor Day Committee, to pursue including religious elements into a program.

Recap of the Community Forums on Policing

Rick – Briefly recapped the survey results and the forum participation. Asked CRAB member where they would like to go from here.

Dan – he has been focused on completing the Winter Lights Festival task and would like some time to review his notes and the PSAC report.

Kevin – agreed with Dan that CRAB should push this issue to the next meeting.

Dea – circled back to the previous discussion point and said she supports the Outstanding Citizen being given the honor of lighting the tree.

Bill O* - Feels there is still tension in the community with the police and is disappointed that the Forums didn't alleviate that as we had all hoped. Feels CRAB should continue this conversation with additional community meetings.

Tim (staff liaison) – reminded CRAB that the next meeting of CRAB is scheduled for 11/11, which is also Veterans Day. He also offered to send along to CRAB the PSAC/Bowers memo and any information that comes out of the scheduled 11/15 work session on Mayor Byrds policing act.

Rick – asked CRAB if moving the meeting to the 18th was ok. All in attendance indicated that was ok.

Sudhanshu – offered to send the County's Police Reform Recommendations (sent to all members 10/14)

Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm