

Council of the City of York, PA  
Session 2020  
Resolution No. 74

INTRODUCED BY: **Lou Rivera**

DATE: **July 21, 2020**

**A RESOLUTION**

Supporting open dialogue with the County of York in discussing the impact a countywide human relations commission would have on local government and its residents, as well as its authority, responsibilities, and composition.

WHEREAS, the mission of human relations is to promote ways in which people in communities learn to get along and to safeguard equal opportunity for all and helps communities become more harmonious, respectful, and cohesive; and

WHEREAS, human relations uses the tools of fact finding, staff training, information sharing, community education, mediation, cultural literacy, hate crime response and conflict management; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to help communities resolve disputes and conflict based on racial discrimination and denial of equal rights, the establishment of a countywide human relations commission may play a vital role in promoting community understanding and open communication, as well as help to resolve conflict, settle complaints of discrimination, and promote cooperation within the community; and

WHEREAS, the County of York is made up of a people from varied backgrounds, races, cultures, faiths, experiences and traditions with different interests, fears, and lifestyles; and

WHEREAS, the County of York has a history that houses examples of difficult challenges regarding differences of race, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, language, and other important aspects of our diversity; and

WHEREAS, for people of different backgrounds and interests to get along, it is useful for local government to set up places and programs that have the responsibility to help people develop a better understanding of each other and to solve differences that might arise; and

WHEREAS, human relations commissions are the most common organization created to help manage relationships between people; and

WHEREAS, illustrating the importance of a countywide human relations commission through studies of discrimination complaints, the impact of demographic changes, and incidences of hate crime, public controversies, and disturbances is a crucial first step; and

WHEREAS, the active support of governmental officials is essential for the establishment of a countywide human relations commission and local elected officials will expect a clear explanation of the responsibilities and powers of a countywide commission, and how it will help address specific human relations needs; and

WHEREAS, The County ordinance promulgating such a commission should include at least the same types of protected classes as the City of York's human relations ordinance; and

WHEREAS, a countywide human relations commission's responsibilities and authority should address the following:

- It should prohibit discrimination in specific areas (i.e., employment, housing) and identify the groups that will be protected.
- It should establish a policy of equal opportunity in the civic, economic, political, and social aspects of the community.
- It should charge the commission to study and recommend to the local government programs and policies that enhance communication and understanding among all residents of the community.

- It should charge the commission to develop and maintain programs that build positive relations among communities and enhance problem-solving skills among residents throughout the community.
- It should promote policies and practices by all units of local government that support inclusiveness and civility among residents.
- It should outline the specific authorities of the commission, including areas of enforcement, subpoena power, hiring, and acceptance of public and private grants and contributions.
- It should define how each commissioner will be appointed, detail their authority and length of service, and outline the commission's jurisdiction and relationship with other governmental units and advisory bodies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the City of York, Pennsylvania, that Council hereby supports and encourages open dialogue with the County of York and will participate in robust public dialogue on establishing a countywide human relations commission and the impact a countywide human relations commission would have on local government and its residents, as well as its authority, responsibilities, and composition.

PASSED FINALLY: July 21, 2020

BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

YEAS: Rivera, Washington, Ritter-Dickson, Walker, Nixon – 5

NAYS: None.

  
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 Henry Hay Nixon, Vice President of Council

ATTEST:

  
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 Dianna L. Thompson-Mitchell, City Clerk