

7/24/2025 | 4:00 PM

**Municipal Services Center, Lower Level Meeting Room
3600 Tremont Road**

The Community Relations Committee welcomes comments from the public at the close of each meeting. For remote attendees: the Chair will ask them to raise their hand if they wish to speak and the meeting organizer will admit them as a meeting participant. Please note – any comments added to the chat feature will not be incorporated into the meeting minutes.

[Join the Meeting:](#)

Meeting ID: 269 095 317 248 7

Passcode: 2Ce7ep9f

1. Welcome

- a. New and Existing Member Introductions

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Approve May 22, 2025 Community Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

3. City Updates

- a. 2025 Community Survey Update
- b. Accessibility in UA Working Group

4. New Member Orientation/Strategic Plan Six-Month Check-In

- a. Formation of CRC/Purpose
- b. Public Records and Open Meetings
- c. CRC Elevator Pitch
- d. Draft Bylaws
- e. Decision-making Check List
- f. CRC Welcome Series
- g. CRC Innovation Small Grant Program

h. CRC Liaisons

5. Unfinished Business

a. Organization of Officers – draft recommendation for Council consideration

6. 2025 Programs and Events

a. Review of Schedule

b. Equal UA Porch Parties

c. Diwali Event

7. Liaison Updates

8. Community Questions/Public Comment

9. August 28, 2025 Agenda Items

a. 2025 Programs & Events Schedule

b. 2025 Community Survey (tentative date for presentation)

c. Preparations for City Council's Five-Year Review of CRC

10. Adjournment

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

May 22, 2025 | 4 pm

Members Present

Jason Sayat, Co-Chair	Elaine Alicea	Brent Theaker
Farida El-Hennawy, Co-Chair	Deborah Carvalho	Monica Lee
Sumia Mohamed (remote)		

Members Not Present

Hana Abdelbaki		
----------------	--	--

City Staff & Others Present

Steve Schoeny, City Manager	Emma Speight, Community Affairs Director	April Gregory, Human Resources Administrator
Jen Faure, UA Library	Kathy Adams, UA City Council	Krystal Gonchar, City Clerk
Darren Shulman, City Attorney		

1. Welcome

2. Approval of January 23, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Elaine Alicea

Second: Deborah Carvalho

Minutes Approved

3. City Updates

- Bob Crane Community Center Updates:** The opening of the Bob Crane Community Center has exceeded hopes, with approximately 1,600 people attending the opening event. Membership sales are double initial projections, with @ 1/6 of residents having a membership at this point. The facility is being used widely by all ages. Parking has not been an issue, however, high attendance by the community’s youth is creating high demand for the bike racks. Some unanticipated items have been noted that are being addressed, such as adding more automatic doors to increase accessibility. Thirty residents have secured a membership discount through the PLAY UA Program. Staff continues to monitor how well everything is going and are making adjustments and looking for opportunities to improve.
- Board and Commission Appointment Process Update:** The level of interest in the CRC remains strong, with nine qualified residents applying to serve on the CRC. Council Leadership is interviewing five of them, for the three seats. Council is expected to vote on all Board and Commission appointments at the June 16 Council Meeting. With the terms for Farida and Hana ending effective with this meeting, Farida shared some reflections on her time with the Committee, and how it’s been a rewarding and enlightening experience. She shared that she hopes the CRC members set the example for community building by strengthening their personal connections, and the group agreed they would like to gather for a dinner following the July CRC meeting, with both outgoing, current and new CRC members.

- **2025 Community Survey:** Letters inviting residents to participate in the survey have been mailed to 1,500 randomly selected homes. After a week-10 days, hard copies of the survey will be mailed to households that have not completed the survey online. In about mid June, an online version of the survey will be made available to all community members. The consultant, Ori Kristel will be invited to share the findings with the CRC as the process concludes. Members are eager to see the results relative to community belonging, in the hopes that the Committee's and City's efforts are helping to improve resident perceptions.

4. 2025 Programs & Events

- **Past Events/Programs Review:**
 - **Black History Month Event** – the event was a success, thanks to the UA Library and the City's Cultural Arts teams. The CRC hosted a Welcome/Refreshment Table, with support from the UA Community Foundation.
 - **Iftar Dinner** – the transition to ticket sales proved successful, with the event selling out. Farida, Hana, Sumia and Deborah are to be thanked for their planning efforts. Farida and Hana plan to stay involved with planning the 2026 dinner.
 - **UA Quest** – approximately 100 families/groups registered for this year's quiz, including several new families. The UA Historical Society continues to do a great job preparing the questions to get families out searching in the community.
 - **Cherry Blossom Celebration** – this third annual event was another success with good attendance and participation. The team agreed advance planning/coordination between all the planning parties for next year's event will be beneficial.
 - **UA Culture & Artisans Fair** – the Rev Vicki Zust attended the meeting and shared how pleased they were with the event. The weather was cold and rainy all day, but residents/families made a point of coming to the event despite the weather to show their support for the participating artisans.
- **CRC Welcome Series/City Events:**
 - **Pride Month Flag Raising – 6 pm, Monday, June 2:** Letha Pugh of Bake Me Happy and Core Cafe will be the keynote speaker. Bonnie Erwin from Rainbow UA is providing assistance, and the UA Library will be present with activities.
 - **UA Pride – 4-7 pm, Sunday, June 8:** Volunteer availability was very limited, so members decided to not have a table at this year's event.
 - **Arts on Arlington – 6-9 pm, Thursday, June 12:** The CRC will have a Welcome Booth, the volunteer sign-up schedule was shared with members.
 - **Juneteenth Flag Raising – 6 pm, Monday, June 16:** The keynote speaker is still to be finalized. Details will be shared as more is known.
 - **UA Farmers Market Community Booth – 3-6:30 pm, Wednesday, July 9:** The Market has been expanded and enhanced for 2025, and the UA Community Booth presents a good opportunity for community engagement and awareness. The volunteer sign-up schedule was shared.
 - **Party on the Plaza – 6-9 pm, Thursday, July 17:** The CRC will have a Welcome Booth, the volunteer sign-up schedule was shared with members.
 - **UA Labor Day Arts Festival – 10 am-5 pm, Monday, September 1:** More details on CRC plans for this event will be shared in July.
 - **Equal UA Porch Parties:** Equal UA's goal is to pass out 100 Porch Party packets this year. There may be opportunities to assist with preparing the packets. The City will help promote this event to the community on the CRC's behalf.



- **Potential Additions:**
 - a. **Proposed Diwali Dinner – Evening of Saturday, October 18:** Members used the Decision Making Checklist to consider partnering on the Diwali Dinner, which has been held on a smaller scale the past three years. The CRC will be involved, and several members volunteered to participate in the planning committee. *Decision Checklist Attached.*
 - b. **UA Historical Society “UA Early Years” presentation:** The Historical Society already has a presentation prepared and is at the ready to present at the appropriate time. Members agreed that November would be a good timeframe to host this event. Further discussions will take place this summer.

5. **Five-Year Council Review**

When City Council formed the CRC, it was determined that there should be a review after five years to determine if the Committee is fulfilling its charge. That review will occur at the close of 2025, likely as the CRC makes its annual update to Council.

6. **Draft CRC Bylaws** (draft/outline attached)

- City Clerk, Krystal Gonchar, and City Attorney, Darren Shulman, shared a presentation about managing public comment at public meetings (attached). This included best practices for providing an open and transparent environment for meetings, while maintaining an equitable and respectful environment. Some key recommendations included:
 - Set clear meeting rules in advance and share them publicly
 - Have speakers fill out speaker slips
 - Set time limits
 - Don’t engage in debate and separate board discussion from public comments
 They also recommended limiting topics to agenda items, and members discussed the merits of maintaining an “open mic” approach – and what that might look like (ie, should there be a limit on the number of speakers, and should there be time limits?) or how to make sure the process for asking to place an item on the agenda is publicly known and accessible in the event that the CRC decides to limit discussions to agenda items only. Members will reflect on this over the next two months and hope to reach resolution on their preferred approach at the July meeting.
- Members discussed the organization of officers. The City Clerk shared that the standard practice is for Boards to select their Chair and Vice Chair. Members are in favor of moving to this approach. This change will need to be brought to City Council for their approval. A draft Resolution will be prepared for review at the July CRC Meeting, with the goal of bringing this item to City Council after the summer recess. Once this detail has been finalized, it will be possible for the CRC to formalize its Bylaws. The logical step forward for CRC leadership is to have Jason assume the role of Chair for the next year, since Farida’s term is ending, and for the CRC to select a Vice Chair once the Bylaws are finalized.
- The City Clerk also shared that the transition of members for the CRC is moving to every even year, following the recent transition in approach by City Council. The logical approach for leadership would be to select a Chair and Vice Chair for a two-year period, timed to coincide with the transition in terms/members.

7. **Liaison Updates**

- **Rainbow UA** – Elaine shared that plans for Pride Month are being approached a little differently this year, with smaller, ticketed events for families and youth.

8. **Community Questions/Public Comment**

None



9. July Agenda Items

- Approve May 22, Minutes
- Incoming CRC members/orientation
 - a. Review of draft CRC Bylaws
 - b. Liaison roles and assignments
- Strategic Plan six-month check in
- City Updates
- Old Business
- 2025 Programs & Events Schedule
- August Meeting Agenda Items

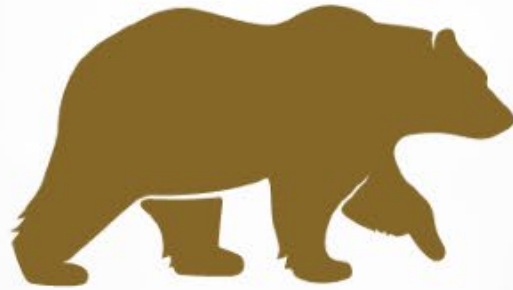
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 pm



DECISION-MAKING CHECKLIST

EVENT/PROGRAM NAME	Diwali Dinner – Saturday, October 18, 2025	
LEVEL A CRITERIA		
Does it meet our mission/vision?	YES	NO (end review)
If yes, is there a need?	YES	NO
What is the goal/intended outcome?	Community outreach, gathering, celebration, welcoming	
Who is it for and why?	Everyone, anyone, building community, connections	
Do CRC members support it? (simple quorum)	YES	NO (end review)
LEVEL A+ CRITERIA		
Is this a need/issue the CRC is equipped to handle?	YES	NO (end review)
What is its community impact?	Building a sense of belonging, a place to learn about a new culture	
Are there other/external resources or groups better equipped to address?	YES / MAYBE	NO
If yes, who?	Partnership opportunity, bringing in support from Foundation, Library, etc., bring in UA High School students?	
LEVEL B CRITERIA		
Are there the necessary resources?	Potentially yes?	
What else is going on? Do we have capacity?	Fall is good time for us	
What are the event/program details (location, logistics, etc.)?	Community Center, other details tbd	
LEVEL B+ CRITERIA		
Is something like this being done already	YES	NO
If yes, does this mean we don't need to do it?	(end review if we don't need to do it)	
Can we help enhance it, and if yes, how?	Publicity, planning support, financial coordination (Foundation)	
LEVEL C: IMPLEMENTATION		
Who will do the work?	Monica, Jason, Elaine, Deborah	
What should we measure?	Attendance, feedback, desire for annual event, areas for improvement	
What constitutes success?	TBD	
What's our review process?	Attendance, survey, financial assessment	
Is it sustainable? One time or annual?	Potential to be annual/sustainable	
What's the timeframe?	Start planning in June	
Should we let go of something else to do this?		
LEVEL D:		
After all these steps, do we still support this?	YES	NO (proposal not pursued)



City of **Upper Arlington**[®]

Public Comment Without the Chaos:

Exploring Public Participation in Board & Commission Meetings



Ohio Open Meetings Act

- Public access to most meetings*
- Right to hear but not be heard
- Disruptive behavior is grounds for removal
- Body Rules of Procedure may outline public participation

**R.C. 121.22 (C)*

Benefits of Public Comment

- **Transparency & Accountability**
- **Civic Engagement & Diversity**
- **Inclusivity & Representation**
- **Identifying Community Issues**

Considerations for Limiting Public Comment

Limit Topics to Agenda Items Only

- Improves meeting efficiency
- Maintains focus on agenda
- Helps maintain respectful environment

Limit Speaker Time

- Prevents misuse of time
- Discourages repetitive & frivolous comments
- Encourages thoughtful, concise remarks
- Equitable



Practical Tips

- Set clear rules in advance
- Post public comment rules on website
- Have speakers fill out speaker slip
- Enforce time limits
- Don't engage in debate
- Separate public comment from board discussion
- Chair sets the tone

Questions?



Krystal Gonchar, City Clerk
kgonchar@uaoh.net
614.583.5031



Darren Shulman, City Attorney
dshulman@uaoh.net
614.583.5020