MISSION STATEMENT:
To identify and recommend public remedies to increase, broaden and improve the economic, educational, social and professional status of the African-American male locally.

CALL TO ORDER:
The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:01 pm by Commissioner Arthur Payne, Jr.

ROLL CALL:
Commissioner Gerry Jones called the roll - Minutes reflect attendance and absences. We had a quorum of 11 present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
Minutes were reviewed. Commissioner Moore made a correction that the NAACP’s monthly meeting is on the fourth Thursday of the month. Motion made by Commissioner Carroll to accept minutes, with the correction, and seconded by Commissioner Fitzpatrick. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:
1. Commissioner Corley was not present at beginning of meeting and Commissioner Payne asked the secretary to read the financial balance from the February meeting. That amount was $16,399.03, with two pending transactions of $600.00, leaving a balance of $15,799.03.
2. Commissioner Payne said he received a call from Michigan City First Lady, Agnes Meer. She asked if the Commission could support the Lake Hills School with a donation of $300 to help the school take students to see the movie Hidden Figures. 

   **Commissioner Norvell made a motion to approve the $300 request, seconded by Commissioner Bietry. Motion carried.**

3. Commissioner Corley arrived during Commissioner Payne’s financial report and made his report. He submitted the March 2017 Treasurer’s Report. He referenced a $500.00 donation check from Blue Chip for the Black History Month program. The check was made out to the Commission, but should have been made out to Essence Rare, the fiduciary agency for the Black History Month Committee. He requested a motion be made to authorize the Controller’s Office to reissue the $500 check, made payable to Essence Rare. 

   **A motion was made by Commissioner Norvell to reissue a $500.00, made payable to Essence Rare; seconded by Commissioner Moore. Motion carried.**

4. Commissioner Corley informed the Commission that we had received $600.00 in donations for the Bill Ashley Scholarship.

   **A motion was made by Commissioner Ganschow to accept the Treasurer’s Report, seconded by Commissioner Bietry. Motion carried.**

**GUEST SPEAKER:**  Mr. Alonzo Rupert, Executive Director  
House of Hope

Mr. Rupert explained the purpose of House of Hope. It is a program in which former addicts support current addicts in their recovery efforts. He emphasized that there is no parallel help to compare with one addict helping another addict. He said that the criminal justice system can only refer for services – but House of Hope can understand and help better. 

Then Herb Newkirk gave comments of support for the program. House of Hope is currently a resource center, but the goal is to become a residential program. The biggest challenge is zoning.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**  Mr. Jeff Deuitch, Executive Director  
MC Human Rights Department

Mr. Deuitch gave comments on the Indiana Plan. He wanted to respond to comments made at the February Commission meeting by Commissioner Payne that the Indiana Plan was not for blacks, in that we still do not see blacks being hired on city jobs. He gave stats on hiring practices. Some minorities are working, but not on the streets; therefore they are not seen. There is a need for drivers, but they must have a CDL (chauffer’s driving license). 

Commissioner Payne gave reasons why he made those comments and said he stands behind them.

Commissioner Carnes gave comments also. He stressed there has to be an acknowledgement of wrong doing and a real desire to correct those problems. And there has not been any effort by the city to do either.

Commissioner Rosa stressed we don’t let past obstacles prevent us from moving forward.
ROUNDTABLE and/or COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Commissioner Joan Ganschow
1. The LaPorte County Drug-free Partnership hired its first ever Executive Director. Jim Musial, for executive director of Sand Castle Homeless Shelter, became the Drug-free Partnership ED on March 6, 2017.
2. The Partnership meets on the first Wednesday of the month at noon, alternating between Michigan City and LaPorte.

Commissioner Sean Fitzpatrick
1. The 2nd Annual Heroin Awareness Walk will be held on April 22, 2017 in LaPorte on Lincolnway.
2. The organization is accepting sponsorships.

Commissioner Lester Norvell
1. Things are quiet in Eastport.
2. Commented on the Roland Martin Show, on channels TV1 172 and 289 at 6am. Said it’s a good show to listen to.

Commissioner Faye Moore
1. Will have four students going to Indianapolis in April to be Pages in the Capital.
2. The NAACP Youth Meeting is March 18th at the Michigan City Public Library at 2-3pm. Call NAACP office to confirm attendance. The number is (219) 221-3173.
3. The NAACP Meeting is held monthly on the 4th Thursday of the month at the Smrt Neighborhood Center.

Commissioner Tim Bietry
1. Commented on the concerns expressed earlier in the meeting about the Indiana Plan. He agreed that the Plan is not targeted to Michigan City. Blacks have been hired by Contractors, but they are assigned wherever contracts are; not necessarily in Michigan City.
2. He explained more about the Hiring Ordinance.

Commissioner Damon Carnes
1. The Ministerial Association is preparing to meet with the Mayor and he’s excited about the growth and development of the city.
2. He quoted Craig Phillips as saying “Michigan City is now playing catch up – physically, economically, spiritually, etc.”

Commissioner Marty Corley
1. The MC Police Department’s Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be Saturday, April 8th in Fetter’s Alley.
2. They are looking for volunteers to fill 50,000 eggs on April 5th.
3. On April 12th, the Commission will be sponsoring the annual trip to the State House with young black males from all over the state. This is an event sponsored by the State Commission on the Social Status of Black Males. 20-30 males will be going from Michigan City High School.
4. The Give Back Foundation will be hosting its annual Uniform Give Away on Saturday, March 18\textsuperscript{th} from 8am-noon at the Housing Authority Main Office, 621 E. Michigan Blvd. Parents/Guardians must have ID and children must be present.

5. The Black Barber Shop Initiative is scheduled for April 29\textsuperscript{th}. 4 barber shops are participating. We will need financial sponsorships of $350.00

\textbf{Commissioner Ganschow made a motion to provide the $350 sponsorship, payable to The Minority Health Coalition, for the Black Barber Shop Initiative, seconded by Commissioner Carroll. Motion carried.}

\textbf{Commissioner Mario Rosa}
1. The Minority Health Coalition’s Family Fun Night in February was successful.
2. The Minority Health Coalition did health presentations at the AKS Center.

\textbf{Commissioner Dennis Carroll}

Said he is enjoying and honored being on the Commission. He wants to work on projects.

\textbf{Commissioner Gerry Jones}
1. The HOPE Resource Center will begin on March 22\textsuperscript{nd}, from 5:30pm-8:00pm.
2. The Annual Report is completed by March. Copies are being emailed to all Commissioners for review before distribution.
3. The African Garden Committee met by conference call and at the office of Chair, Commissioner Nila Williams.
4. The Scholarship Committee will also be meeting in March.

\textbf{OLD BUSINESS} - None

\textbf{NEW BUSINESS} – None

\textbf{ANNOUNCEMENTS}

The entire meeting can be seen on \url{www.accesslaporte} – Meetings-M. C. Social Status of African-American Males – March 8, 2017.

\textbf{Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Corley, seconded by Commissioner Ganschow. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 1:40 pm.}

Minutes submitted by:

Gerry Jones, Secretary

\textbf{NEXT MEETING: April 12, 2017}