

## Asheville City Council April 27, 2021 Voicemail Comments

Comment Date	Comment	Tags
4/26/2021 5:56 PM	<p>Hi, my name is Jordan Grove and I'm a resident of Asheville. The item on which I am commenting is the new business item, a the ordinance prohibiting discriminatory practices and private employment and public accommodation. And I want to strongly urge you the elected representative of our city of Asheville to adopt the non-discrimination ordinance for both private businesses and for all public accommodations. It's been long time to start protecting our LGBTQ plus siblings and community. And this is one small, but significant step in establishing basic human rights and protections. No human Dan should be turned away from patronizing a business or using public accommodations on the basis of their sexual or gender identity. While we cannot guarantee your control for the safety of our trans non-binary and gender diverse community members in any business, establishment and Republic. Danielle, the very least we can do is ensure that they have the right to choose which businesses they pay trends. Where are they gathering community? We use public accommodations as is there a reasonable civil, civil Liberty as human beings is a queer bisexual woman with chosen family and friends who are gay, lesbian, trans. And non-binary the idea that myself or someone I love might be rejected or removed from an establishment solely on the basis of gender or sexual identity or expression is despicable absurd and inhumane. There is not one bit of research that says people in the queer community posts any more risk to any business or public accommodation than anybody else. Myself and my loved ones are professionals in the community leaders, loving parents and respectful human beings. And we ask that you offer the same reasonable, right? And non-discrimination protections to our community as you would anyone else. Thanks for your consideration.</p>	New business A

4/26/2021 6:00 PM	<p>Good evening. And thank you for the opportunity to comment. My name is April Burgess Johnson, and I'm the executive director for helpmate. Helpmate has provided safety shelter and support to survivors of domestic violence in the Asheville community for well over 40 years, many survivors of domestic abuse live in unpredictable and terrifying situations. We know that victims of domestic violence must overcome many barriers to reach out for help, including fear of reprisal at the hands of their abuser, fear for their children, fear of public humiliation, and many also fear law enforcement. It takes a specialized set of training skills and experience to create a trauma informed response in these situations, Asheville police department, special victims unit officers that are based out of the family justice center must demonstrate understanding of a, an abuse survivors experience and the common signs of traumatic response. They have to work hand in glove with helpmate and other victim services providers to make sure that the needs of crime victims are met and that their rights are addressed. These skill sets can take years to develop. I'm grateful that APD has maintained consistent staffing at the family justice center despite a year in which they've seen an unprecedented amount of turnover. I hope that we're taking the steps needed to bolster employee morale to promote longevity, especially as it relates to these specialized positions. Helpmate remains committed to our partnerships with Asheville police department, including the lethality assessment protocol, which is a co response model in which officers connect survivors directly with help mates hotline for immediate support, right from the crime scene. This dual service service approach is widely supported. It provides officers within the moment on the ground support and helps prevent domestic violence related homicides by creating a venue in which safety planning with the survivor can happen. Um, with the assistance of an advocate right in the moment of crisis, we're also committed to our partnership at the family justice center, help mates, advocates, and case managers appreciate the multiple opportunities. We have to work with officers to discuss solutions that really address the needs of families to share resources and strategies with one another, to develop a mutual understanding about the rigors of each other's work and to participate in training together so that we can grow and improve our community's response to domestic violence. Thank you for continuing to support these important initiatives. I look forward to learning more about the work underway in our city to bolster morale and officer retention, especially among these specialized and vital positions. Thank you for your work and the operation.</p>	Open comment
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4/27/2021 8:11 AM

Good morning. My name is <inaudible>. I live in Asheville, North Carolina for the area I'm calling to urge low markers in our loving city of Asheville to pass LGBTQ non discrimination protection. Because I believe that all of us have the right to follow our hearts and embrace it, who they, we are when each of us respected people's individuality and specifically ways to be the whole world. It will be a peaceful place to leave. I want every LGBTQ person to feel included, welcomed, and free from discrimination in every area of life. The sexual orientation of individual is very particular in unique. And I believe that that every human being are worthy of the dignity and respect behind our appearance, our brilliant minds with novel ideas that enhances our progress in many ways, why people bother so much with the way that we look or who we love the humanity need this more through love, respect, harmony, and justice, to be a better world. Non-discrimination protections reminded us of equal protection under the law. I believe in equality in the right separate one habit to be who they are. I support all LGBTQ people with love and compassion in my heart. I'm looking for a world where they, we are socially equal humanity, different and totally free. Thank you. Love you. Find a way. Love you. Find a way.

New business A

4/27/2021 8:44 AM

My name is Jessica West and I live in the West Asheville expansion limits. Um, and I am calling in regards to consent. See, um, on the agenda and it's regarding the Cigna, um, employee health insurance transition, um, that is to be approved this evening. And I am requesting pleading, hoping that this can be postponed delayed, um, until the members of the community have a chance to actually speak to you all about this. Um, no one was pulled on this to my knowledge, and this is going to have a huge, detrimental impact on the people in the community who are actually using these, um, health insurance policies we currently are while all health insurance policies have issues. And all of them, um, are not the ideal. We currently have five providers for one of our children and three of those we will have to no longer continue to see because they do not accept Cigna and are not willing to. Um, and while that's just me and our experience, it's a pretty significant impact. And after speaking to their providers, I know now we are not alone. There are multiple people who use this, um, city of Asheville plan, blue cross blue shield, and use those same providers who are now in the same position that we are. Um, and for whatever reason, my assumption is that Cigna is not willing to cover the costs in the same way that blue cross blue shield does to providers. They're not willing to become in network with Cigna. So while this may seem like it's one person with one issue, it brings up a broader issue, which is that the employees that are using these health insurance plans and their families are going to be negatively effected. That's 1100 people or more within the city alone, who now no longer have blue cross blue shield. And on top of that, the providers that accept all of those people as clients who do not accept Cigna are now going to be out the income that they would have otherwise received. So it's not just the city's administration costs bottom line that we have to think about at the entire community as a whole. And it seems like this plan was rushed from January 11th until now without much consideration for the broader impact to this entire community. And I highly encourage you please, to stop for a second and think about the consequences of this choice, because it's not as easy as a city budget bottom line, especially for employees who after this latest market research have been proven.

Consent