



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
City Hall Willamette Room
Tuesday, September 22, 2009
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Commissioners present: Jodi Nelson, Nancy Greenman, Margaret Martinez, Kim Whitley, Michael Thomson (arrived at 7:10 p.m.)

Commissioners absent: None.

Staff present: Wes Hare, City Manager; Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer

Others present: None.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Jodi Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 28, 2009

MOTION: Nancy Greenman moved to approve the minutes; Margaret Martinez seconded. Approved 4-0.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

Martin Luther King, Jr., 2010 Celebration

Jodi Nelson, Marilyn Smith, and Toni Cloak from LBCC met to discuss plans for this year's event. They came up with an idea to sponsor a professional development workshop with the topic focusing on cross-cultural communication and connecting to the community. Smith has asked Stefanie Coons, Recreation Program Specialist, if she would be available to speak at the event. Coons is a University of Oregon graduate and an Olympic-class athlete. Dr. Larry Roper will also be a speaker at this event. Nelson said that they will be meeting on November 10 to work on the details. The workshop will be at the Library from 9:00 a.m. to noon on a Friday in January. Marilyn asked if January 22 might work for the workshop. Nelson said that she would have to check Dr. Roper's schedule. Wes Hare said that Dr. Roper was a presenter at the MLK event two years ago and was a great presenter. Greenman asked if this will be just for City of Albany employees. Smith said that they will include employees from LBCC, GAPS, and Linn County. Greenman said that some state of Oregon employees might want to attend if it happens to be a furlough day. Smith said that registration will be required, and there will be a limit of 35-40 attendees.

Nelson said that maybe we can have January be Connecting to Community Month. We could have a story in *City Bridges* and ask the Mayor to recognize this possibly in a proclamation. Nelson said that the idea can be discussed later on, and it will depend on the date of the workshop.

2010 National Night Out/Everybody's Neighborhood Day

Nelson said that Mayor Konopa read a proclamation declaring August 31 Everybody's Neighborhood Day in Albany. A suggestion was made to combine National Night Out and Everybody's Neighborhood Day into one event. Lynn Hinrichs, Community Service Officer, is interested in combining them next year and is willing to help with this. Greenman said that we should go forward with this. Nelson requested that this item be added to the agenda in February and to invite Hinrichs to attend the meeting. Smith will contact Hinrichs and ask her to attend the February 2010 HRC Meeting.

Debrief of August 25 Community Conversation Session

Greenman said that she collected the surveys from the community conversation meeting. Greenman distributed and discussed a report she prepared relating to the measure outcomes. [Report attached to the end of minutes.] Thirteen people attended the meeting and were from throughout the city. All of the participants were in the 55-75+ age group.

Kim Whitley discussed the logistical lessons learned from this meeting. Michael Thomson was surprised how many people showed up to the meeting. Greenman thinks that if we are trying to reach particular groups of people, we may want to choose a different location. Greenman suggested going from one person to the next instead of having people raise their hands to speak. Whitley suggested having rules in place and make sure everyone is on the same page. Whitley thought the seating arrangements made it uncomfortable for some people and that one person ended up leaving. Nelson suggested using tables next time. Hare wondered if these meetings should be focused on a particular group of citizens or if the HRC wanted to have them for whoever shows up. Hare suggested having the meeting be a focus group and arranging your audience in advance. It may be difficult to do and mean contacting leaders from the community to find people who would be able to attend. Greenman said that her understanding was that in the beginning they wanted to first see who would attend. She said that we have learned that we can do it and we can get the word out and that now we have that experience. Martinez thinks that we would get a lot of people to attend if the meeting was held at a school.

Whitley said that we need to work on the comfort of the space. Nelson said that it was a little distracting with the shoppers and the folks coming in for sewing, but it was a good first try. Nelson said that Hare makes a good point and that we need to be intentional about the people we want to reach at the next meeting. November 4 is the Annual Community Homelessness Summit in Albany, and Smith will add the HRC members to the mailing list.

Nelson suggested having just the community conversations item on the agenda when we are holding these particular meetings. Whitley agreed and said that it can be confusing to people when there are other items being discussed besides what they have shown up for.

Greenman suggested adjusting the time of the meetings to accommodate the availability of the people we are trying to reach. Nelson said that we need to make a time limit on the meeting and stick to it. Jodi suggested having the meeting go no longer than two hours. Greenman said that it seemed like everyone had an opportunity to speak and overall it was a positive experience.

Whitley asked what everyone thought about the questions. Greenman said that it seemed like the answers given were similar to one another but it was good information. Nelson said that she is not sure about the questions but may know more after the next meeting. Martinez thought that we got some good information from the transportation question. It was decided to use the same questions at the next meeting. Nelson suggested asking people what two things they like about Albany and what two things they do not like about Albany. Instead of asking people if they have attended a community event, they will ask the question "What events have you attended in the community?"

Whitley asked if anyone else had any general comments about the event. Greenman said that we need to figure out what groups of people we want to focus on for future meetings. Nelson said that we talked about reaching the Hispanic community. Hare said that they are the largest minority group in Albany and suggested contacting the Hispanic Advisory Committee. Martinez said that it would be good to know what their perception is of what is happening in local government. Nelson suggested inviting Tina Dodge Vera to attend the next HRC meeting. Martinez suggested focusing on the college students as they would be another good group to reach. Greenman said that we should also focus on senior citizens. Nelson said that since this group got started we have been talking about the Hispanic community, and it will be good to make some connections to help us focus on this group. Greenman said that we can have a couple of groups in mind to keep going. Nelson will ask Tina if she can attend next month's meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, October 27, 2009, 7:00 p.m., Willamette Room.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file.

Diana Eilers
Administrative Assistant I

Reviewed by,

Signature on file.

Wes Hare
City Manager