



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

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

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - August 25, 2009. [Pages 1-4]
Action: _____
4. SCHEDULED BUSINESS
 - a. Business from the Public
 - b. Martin Luther King, Jr., 2010 celebration. [Verbal] (Nelson)
Action: _____
 - c. 2010 National Night Out/Everybody's Neighborhood Day. [Verbal] (Nelson)
Action: _____
 - d. Debrief of August 25 Community Conversation session. [Verbal] (Greenman/Whitley/Thomson)
Action: _____
5. BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION
6. NEXT MEETING DATE: *Tuesday, October 27, 2009*
7. ADJOURNMENT

City of Albany Web site: www.cityofalbanynet

The location of the meeting/hearing is accessible to the disabled. If you need special accommodations to attend or participate, please notify the Human Resources Department in advance by calling (541) 917-7500.



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
City Hall Willamette Room
Tuesday, August 25, 2009
7:00 p.m.

APPROVED: _____

MINUTES

Commissioners present: Jodi Nelson, Nancy Greenman, Margaret Martinez, Michael Thomson, Kim Whitley

Commissioners absent: Marian Anderson (excused)

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

Others present: John Phillips, Margo Coleman, Alice Fitzpatrick, Donna Copeland, Bill Root, June Hemmingson, Larry Eby, Penny Miltenberger, Dan Miltenberger, Phillipa Meehan, Sharon Gisler, Gerald Gisler, Dick Owen

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 said that the word "specialized" should be "outreach" on page two, paragraph four. She also said that the question "Have you attended a City-sponsored event..." should be "Have you attended a community event..." on page two, last sentence. Michael Thomson moved to approve the minutes as amended; Margaret Martinez seconded. Approved 5-0.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

Thomson suggested the HRC members have name badges for the next community meeting.

Nelson said that Marian Anderson will be resigning, but she hasn't submitted her formal resignation yet.

HRC Participation in Observance of Mental Illness Awareness Week

Nelson said that Mental Illness Awareness Week is scheduled for October 4-10, 2009. Nelson said that the Linn County Mental Health office will be sponsoring another poster this year and asked if the HRC wanted to participate in some form. The HRC members agreed to participate this year by adding its name to the poster as a sponsor.

2010 MLK Day Celebration Participation

Nelson said that the HRC members have helped with MLK Day events in 2008 and 2009 and asked if the group would like to do something for the 2010 event. The HRC members agreed to participate in 2010.

Business from the Public

None.

Community Conversation

Kim Whitley gave an overview regarding why the HRC is sponsoring community meetings and what the HRC is working to accomplish. She discussed the tasks that the HRC have been given by the City Council which includes recommending

programs, activities, ordinances, expenditures, and other government-related items. Whitley gave an overview of the evening's agenda and the purpose of the survey that had been handed out.

Question #1 – Would you recommend Albany as a good place to live? Why or why not?

Margo Coleman said that she loves Albany. She thinks there is an issue with transients and homelessness.

Martinez said that she believes there is a group called HEART that is working on the homelessness issue.

John Phillips said that he is a veteran and knows that there are veterans in this community that are homeless. He said that it would be great to have a local organization that specializes in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). He said that he is an advocate for veterans.

Phillipa Meehan said that there is a place in Salem that specializes in helping veterans who have PTSD. She also said that there is an organization in Albany called "The Shift," which helps people get trained to work. She said that she likes Albany, but she wants a solution to her raccoon problem. She said that she checked to see if she can put up an electric fence around her pond and garden but was told she couldn't do that by a city employee. Other attendees offered possible solutions to her raccoon problem.

Sharon Gisler said that she likes Albany and the fact that we are free to talk about anything without worry.

Dick Owen said that he's a veteran and Albany cares about their veterans. He said that there are places in the community that can help the veterans.

Dan Miltenberger said that the veterans and other homeless people may not want help. He said that if a person doesn't want to take what's offered, it's not a community issue. Dan said that he wishes that the City would stop people who are taking shopping carts to haul their stuff in. He said that Helping Hands isn't doing a good job because they don't have any requirements for the people staying there. He said that these people need to be given something productive to do.

Bill Root said that homelessness is something he is fully aware of, and he has been a volunteer at St. Mary's Soup Kitchen for a long time. He said that he has noticed more and more people are coming in to eat. There are people that come in that have homes and jobs, but they come in for a free meal and to socialize. There are a lot of programs in Albany for these people. There was a resource fair for homeless and low-income people. Bill said that there is a lot of good in Albany. He said that his wife doesn't like to take a vacation in the summer because there is always something going on in Albany. They enjoy attending RiverRhythms, Mondays@Monteith, Linn County Fair, etc.

June Hemmingson said that the Parks and Recreation Department is outstanding. She is happy we have parks throughout the city. All of the activities that are available are wonderful. She said that she wouldn't recommend Albany, though, because it is getting too big and traffic is a problem.

Sharon Gisler said that she loves Albany but wouldn't recommend Albany to someone who needed public transportation or uses a bike to get around and shop.

Alice Fitzpatrick said that she appreciates the police department and the Citizens' Academy that they have each year.

Dick Owen said that he has lived in Albany for 40 years and loves Albany. He thinks it's a fantastic community. He said that he has had some bad experiences with the local government. He said that he was considered a criminal due to junk and trash on his property. Dick said that the HRC needs to stop the corruption that is going on at City Hall. He said that he wanted to note that it isn't Wes Hare that is the problem. Dick said that if the City Council doesn't take care of the corruption, he is going to file a federal case.

Question #2 – Have you attended a community event?

Listed below are the events that people have attended:

Veteran's Memorial Display at Timber-Linn Memorial Park
Saturday Farmers' Market
RiverRhythms

Mondays@Monteith – One person said that this is a great event for older citizens.

The Loft Tour and wine tasting event. Sharon said that Downtown Albany is looking really wonderful and she hopes it will prosper.

Bill Root said that he is disappointed in the 150th year anniversary events for the state of Oregon. He said that this is not necessarily just Albany, but the state of Oregon.

Bill Root said that he enjoyed the Parks & Recreation community meetings. He said that it is important for people to be involved in local government. If you want to make a change, you have to be willing to get involved.

Larry Eby said that he lives at the Mennonite Village and has been in Albany for ten years. He said that he has been involved in the homeless summits. He is very impressed with the City and the police department and their concern for disadvantaged people in this community. He is the chair of LOVE, INC. It is a clearinghouse for homeless people to go to.

Greenman said that LOVE, INC has made a real difference to a person that she knows who donates. She said that it is important for the donator to feel good about what they are giving.

Veterans' Day Parade

June Hemmingson asked if there will be an Everybody's Neighborhood event. Nelson said that the HRC will be working on recommending an Everybody's Neighborhood event next year to the Council.

Neighborhood Watch

National Night Out

Northwest Art and Air Festival

Question #4 – How easy is it to get around Albany? What if you are in a wheelchair, using a stroller, or using a walker or cane?

Dan Miltenberger said that the curb cuts have been an issue for him because of his back problems.

John Phillips said that he has been in a wheelchair for a few months. He said that the ramps can be difficult because a person can slide right down the ramps if they're not careful and holding onto their wheels.

Sharon Gisler said that public transportation can be difficult. If you have a lot of time, it works out okay; but if you are on a schedule, it would be difficult to rely on public transportation. Grocery stores are difficult to access, as they are not in neighborhoods. It is not safe for kids to walk to school.

Margo Coleman said that Call-A-Ride is available for people who are 60 and over and disabled people. The cost is \$1.00 each way and they do come out to North Albany and Millersburg.

Bill Root said that travelling on Pacific Boulevard is terrible. He said that it was bad before they made the change and is not much better after the change. Bill said that North Albany is becoming more heavily traveled. The round-about works, but it was made too small and larger vehicles often hit the curbs.

The bulb-outs are terrible in Downtown Albany.

Dan Miltenberger said that more work needs to be done at the airport. He said that we need to have 3,500 feet for the airstrip and Timber-Linn Memorial Park was supposed to be used as an extension for the Airport.

One person suggested getting younger people's thoughts in the issues in Albany.

Whitley said that she appreciates everyone coming, and the comments and feedback will be useful.

One person suggested putting meeting notices in the water bill.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, September 22, 2009, 7:00 p.m., Municipal Court Room.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Eilers
Administrative Assistant I

Reviewed by,

Wes Hare
City Manager