



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
City Hall Municipal Court Room
Tuesday, October 26, 2010
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

- Commissioners present: Margaret Martinez, Tina Dodge Vera, Nancy Greenman, Michael Thomson
- Commissioners absent: Linda Hart (excused), Julie Jones (excused), Kim Whitley (unexcused)
- Staff present: Wes Hare, City Manager; Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer
- Others present: Jim Bell, Linn-Benton Community College

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Nancy Greenman called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 28, 2010

MOTION: Margaret Martinez made a motion to approve the minutes; Tina Dodge Vera seconded. Approved 4-0.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

Trafficking of Minor Victims

Greenman asked Wes Hare if there has been any follow-up regarding this. Hare said that he invited Mary Zelinka to speak to the Albany Rotary Club and that she will be presenting that on November 16. He said that he discussed it at the Directors' meeting and asked people to be aware of this issue; he also wrote a blog column regarding the topic.

Greenman said that she believes that the media attention was probably due to the legislative action to fund a shelter in Portland. She asked if the Directors were aware of this prior to Hare discussing it. Hare said that the Police Chief was aware of the situation and that they see about five cases a year and that there are probably more that don't get reported. Martinez said that when she was working with FISH and helping pregnant girls, she had heard from the girls that they had been mistreated and not cared for and that they would run away and get into even worse situations. Hare said that there is a mentoring program sponsored by the YMCA and that he thinks that these types of programs are very beneficial to kids. He said that there are kids on a waiting list for the Y-Mentoring program and that they are in great need of adult mentors.

Setting Calendar of Events for 2011

Greenman said that she suggested starting the calendar with November. Following is a list of events planned so far:

- November 2010 – South Albany High School Community Conversation
- December 2010 – No events scheduled at this time.
- January 2011 – Martin Luther King, Jr., Event
- February 2011 – No events scheduled at this time.
- March 2011 – No events scheduled at this time.
- April 2011 – No events scheduled at this time.

May 2011 – Mental Health month. Greenman said that last year the HRC partnered with Linn County Mental Health as a poster sponsor.

June 2011 – No events scheduled at this time.

July 2011 – No events scheduled at this time.

August 2011 – National Night Out Event – Greenman said that the HRC should start planning for this event in the spring if the group wants to continue with the event. Smith suggested contacting P&R to see about joining in with their community picnics. Smith said that P&R hosts the picnics at different parks each year. Smith said that the picnics are typically held in June. Greenman said that if the HRC is interested in taking part in these picnics, then the group will need to start talking about it in February.

September 2011 – Festival Latino

October 2011 – No events scheduled at this time.

Thomson asked the group if they wanted to schedule a community conversation for 2011. Greenman said that she would like to see this happen. She asked Thomson to prepare a proposal for a community conversation in 2011.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Event

Smith said that staff has scheduled the event for Friday, January 28, 9:00 a.m. to noon, at the Library. She said that it falls on a no-school day for GAPs and that an invitation will go out to teachers of middle school and high school students. She is asking LBCC to recommend students to attend. Smith said that she will also prepare a news release for the event. Larry Roper (OSU), Toni Cloak (LBCC), and Lisa Bennett (City of Albany) are working on the program for the event.

Community Conversation with South Albany High School Students

Greenman said that there are several meeting options available.

1. Meet with groups of 28-35 students during the pride period (10:10 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.).
2. Meet with students in American government classes. (65 minutes)
3. Call a class meeting of 326 students during pride period (10:10 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.).

Greenman said that her choice would be to have the meeting during the American government classes because they would have the most time with the students. The HRC members agreed that this would be the best group to meet with. Greenman said that the plan is to ask the students the following questions:

1. Is Albany a welcoming place?
2. Is it easy to get around in Albany?
3. How do you feel about your treatment as a youth in Albany?

Greenman said that if anyone has other questions they would like to add, please e-mail those questions to her so that they can be included on the list. She is hoping that a couple of HRC members will be willing to talk about why they are a member of the HRC and why it is important to them to serve. Greenman said that she will coordinate this meeting via e-mail with the HRC members.

Hispanic Advisory Council

Dodge Vera said that the HAC met at the GAPS District Office and that it was exciting to learn what the school district is doing to help non-English speaking students. She said that there is an active Spanish-speaking parent teacher organization. Dodge Vera said that there is going to be an opening on the School Board. She said that they talked about the English Language Learner Program (ELL) and how to better serve students. Greenman asked about the percentage of ELL students in GAPS. Dodge Vera said it is around five percent.

P&R will no longer be able to take the lead on Festival Latinos, but they will still help with the event.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

Meeting Schedule for November & December

Greenman said that she was fine with the regular meeting scheduled in November. The other members agreed that this date will work and decided to cancel the meeting scheduled in December. Smith said that they could adjust for January to have a meeting earlier in the month. The HRC members agreed that they may want to do this due to the Martin Luther King, Jr., event.

Greenman said that she has a vision of the city being a safe place for youth. She is concerned with bullying and homophobia among youth. She said that there is a larger population of gay homeless youth than heterosexual youth. She asked if Hare had any information related to this issue. Hare said that he believes that teachers and administrators are not tolerant of bullying. He said that kids can be cruel and that sometimes the teachers aren't there to stop incidents from occurring. Greenman asked how can the HRC be available for children and let them know that we are there for them. Hare said that we do have neighborhood watch and that group may be able to help with this. He suggested Lynn Hinrichs discussing this with the neighborhood watch groups so that they can be aware of bullying and providing sanctuary to a child who is being bullied. Jim Bell said that people are becoming more vocal about criticizing Muslims, homosexuals, Hispanics, etc. He said that he thinks that it may be due to the political race happening. Dodge Vera said that, last year, the school district sponsored a program for parents regarding bullying, what to look for, and what they can do. She said that the school also offered it in Spanish. Greenman said that in the past two years there has been anti-bullying legislation.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, November 23, 2010, 7:00 p.m., Willamette Room.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file.

Diana Eilers
Administrative Assistant I

Reviewed by,

Signature on file.

Wes Hare
City Manager