



APPROVED: February 26, 2008

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
City Hall Willamette Room
Tuesday, January 22, 2008
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Commissioners present: C. Jeffery Evans, Jodi Nelson, Delia Guillen, Marian Anderson, Blanca Ruckert (arrived at 7:04 p.m.), and Anna Anderson (arrived at 7:09 p.m.)

Commissioners absent: Rick Hammel, Jr.

Staff present: Wes Hare, City Manager; Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer; David Shaw, Human Resources Director; Stewart Taylor, Finance Director; Jorge Salinas, Information Technology Director

Others present: Michael Flickroft

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 18, 2007

MOTION: Jodi Nelson moved to approve as submitted; Marian Anderson seconded. Approved 5-0.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Business from the Public

Michael Flickroft would like to help the shelter residents at Albany Helping Hands. He would like to know if there is anything the Commissioners can do to help. Michael said Pastor Bailey is set in his ways and doesn't want to change the way the shelter is being handled. Michael would like to see more programs offered to the homeless staying at the shelter to help them become a more productive part of society. Michael said nobody likes the homelessness problem, but it needs to be fixed. Ruckert suggested contacting Love INC to find referrals and programs for the homeless. Love INC evaluates each person to determine what their needs are and to get them into the necessary programs to help them get out of homelessness. Wes mentioned HEART, which is involved with Love, Inc., to help homeless people. Marilyn said HEART and Love INC work together to connect people with healthcare, employment opportunities, housing, etc. There is a Love INC meeting at 7:00 p.m., Friday, January 25, 2008, at First Assembly of God. For more information regarding Love INC call 924-LOVE.

Department Director Feedback about Diversity Issues

David Shaw, Human Resources Director, distributed a document regarding workforce diversity statistics within Linn County and documents about the gender and ethnicity of City employees. David said the goal is to be representative of Linn County's workforce. The City is generally representative of the labor force in Linn County except for the female and Hispanic/Latino populations. Wes said that barriers have been

breaking down but they still exist. David said the City has been advertising open job recruitments in publications that focus on ethnic communities to increase the diversity of the applicant pool. Some of the technical jobs have a historicalness of the applicant pool being predominately made up of males or vice versa. Evans asked how many police officers are female. David said no more than a handful. Evans asked if female officers are generally accepted. David said that two Corporals are female and two Detectives are female. Wes said he has not received any complaints regarding unfair treatment. Nelson asked if the City goes to career fairs. David replied that the City does attend some career fairs, but it depends on staff resources. The Police Department sends employees for openings in their department. Evans asked if there is data regarding employee ages and disabilities. David recently ran a report regarding people who are eligible to retire within the next few years, and he said it is about ten percent of employees. There is no data regarding employees with disabilities.

Stewart Taylor, Finance Director, said he would like to have more employees with language skills other than English. We do provide translating services in the Municipal Court, but there is not anyone working at the counter who can provide language support. Also, regarding employees who are retiring, Finance has quite a few retiring within the next few years and Stewart wants to represent the Linn County workforce when hiring. There is a growing participation of females in the finance workforce, which wasn't the case in past years. Nelson asked if the City can provide any extra incentives when hiring. Wes said that there are incentive options such as a graduated vacation and sick leave bank. Evans asked what thought has been given to give current employees more opportunities to learn other languages. David said that a Spanish class had been offered a few times in the past and reimbursement is available for employees wishing to continue their education. Marilyn said the Spanish class was quite popular among employees and a second session was added so more employees could attend.

Jorge Salinas, Information Technology Director, mentioned that a roster is kept of employees who speak different languages in case someone needs a translator. Jorge said his department has a hard time recruiting females and people of other races. He has noticed that generally to be the case in the information technology field. Jorge said he is from Puerto Rico and feels City employees are inclusive of all people. He is going to be attending the "Dimensions of Diversity" training. David said this type of diversity training is done on a yearly basis for all supervisors. Evans asked Jorge if he handles the Web site. Jorge said no.

Guillen suggested giving presentations to high school students to reach a more diverse population who will be entering the workforce. Anna Anderson said that high school students have the opportunity to attend career fairs once or twice a year. Evans said his observation is that public employers are also struggling against a small pool of applicants because of the private industries who can offer bigger salaries. David agreed this is a challenge. Wes said about ten years ago he was competing against 100 other applicants and when he applied for the City of Albany, the applicant pool was more like 30. David said that bilingual skills are in high demand. Nelson said the City should be encouraging and promoting continued learning. It would be good to offer incentives. Ruckert said that when she worked for Multnomah County they had a program for training students in a position and then the student may be offered the position after graduation. Wes said he has had interns over the years and he always has projects for them to work on.

Evans wondered if there should be bilingual Web pages for the Hispanic population. Marilyn said certain documents are printed in Spanish; also, some signs in City Hall are in two languages. Nelson suggested the PROMISE internship program which is a ten-week project for students. The students complete a specific project, which has to be professional quality, while earning pay and job experience. The program is \$4,000 and there are matching funds available for OSU only.

Marilyn said the Police and Fire Chiefs will be attending next month's meeting.

Continued Discussion Regarding Community Survey

Marilyn said the survey is still being pursued, but the quotes came back \$1,000 to \$23,000 above budget and they were for telephone surveys only. The City is going back out for quotes specifically for mail surveys. The deadline for quotes is February 8, 2008, by 5:00 p.m.; so Marilyn needs the survey questions by February 15, 2008.

Debrief about the Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Kickoff Breakfast

Nelson commented that the breakfast went well. Wes said Larry Roper was a great speaker and his only regret is he wished the crowd would have been bigger. Wes said the feedback he received from the Council was very good. Nelson said Larry is a great resource and the City may want to have him back for a professional development session. Marian Anderson commented that she really enjoyed the breakfast and listening to Larry.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

Evans was not at the breakfast due to physical reasons, and he apologized. Guillen gave an update on the Latino festival. There will be dancers from Woodburn coming, and there will be a soccer demonstration. Guillen would like to get students involved in the event and may have an essay writing contest titled "What it means to be a Latino." The festival will take place on September 13, 2008.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, February 26, 2008, 7:00 p.m., in the Willamette Room.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on File

Diana Eilers
Administrative Assistant I

Reviewed by,

Signature on File

Wes Hare
City Manager