

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

City Hall Willamette Room

Tuesday, May 27, 2008

7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
 - February 26, 2008. [Pages 1-3]
Action: _____
 - April 22, 2008. [Pages 4-6]
Action: _____
4. SCHEDULED BUSINESS
 - a. Business from the Public
 - b. Department Director feedback about diversity issues. [Verbal]
(Diane Taniguchi-Dennis & Don Donovan/Melanie Adams)
Action: _____
 - c. Continued discussion of how the public perceives mental illness. (Delia Guillen/Shawn Wells)
Action: _____
 - d. Discussion of racial profiling. [Pages 7-9] (C. Jeffery Evans/Ed Boyd)
Action: _____
 - e. Accessibility concerns. [Verbal] (C. Jeffery Evans)
Action: _____
5. BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION
6. NEXT MEETING DATE: *Tuesday, June 24, 2008*
7. ADJOURNMENT

City of Albany Web site: www.cityofalbany.net

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.



APPROVED:

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
City Hall Willamette Room
Tuesday, February 26, 2008
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Commissioners present: C. Jeffery Evans, Jodi Nelson, Delia Guillen, Anna Anderson, Rick Hammel, Jr.

Commissioners absent: Marian Anderson, Blanca Ruckert

Staff present: Wes Hare, City Manager; Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer; Ed Boyd, Police Chief; Kevin Kreitman, Fire Chief; Wanda Omdahl, Deputy Fire Marshal II

Others present: None.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 18, 2007

MOTION: Hammel moved to approve with one correction; Nelson seconded. Approved 5-0.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Business from the Public

None.

Department Director Feedback about Diversity Issues

City Manager Wes Hare introduced Police Chief Ed Boyd, Fire Chief Kevin Kreitman, and Deputy Fire Marshall II Wanda Omdahl.

Police Chief Boyd said that he worked for the City of Salem and they have a Human Rights Commission and he was the liaison from the Police Department. He said the biggest challenge is for the department to reflect the city that is being served. The department works to recruit the highest qualified person and try to reach out to as many segments of the population as possible. It is harder to recruit minority applicants because they are in high demand. Bilingual employees play an important role as serving as a translator when needed. The Police Department has seven bilingual employees, and five of those employees are fluent in the Spanish language. There are other resources including the AT&T Language Line. A current need is for employees who know sign language. Most documents are produced in English and Spanish and also some are in Russian and German. Hammel asked if any training is offered to employees. Boyd said that training is available for employees who request it. There is a three to five percent pay incentive for employees that are bilingual. Guillen asked if there are any bicultural employees working for the Police Department. Boyd said

that basic officer training includes cultural training to help handle cultural issues. Also, periodic cultural diversity training is available to employees. Evans asked how people from other countries are educated on our laws and rules. Boyd said the department works to bridge the communication gap and they will provide educational trainings for other cultures if it is needed. Hare mentioned to the Commission that they can do a ride along with the Police Department. This is a great way to learn more about what is happening in the community. Boyd encouraged the Commissioners to do a ride along. Nelson asked if Police Officers receive training to handle citizens that have mental health issues and if our police force has been accused of profiling. Boyd said staff recently had a full day of training to learn how to handle citizens with mental illness. Mental health training is completed during basic academy, and the Police Department works with Linn County Mental Health to help people get the services they need. Boyd said there has been one profiling complaint in the last two years, and it was found to be unsubstantiated. Hare said when he has done ride alongs, he asks officers if they notice any certain races they come in contact with more and they have said no.

Guillen asked if they have broken down crimes by different races. Boyd said no, but they could do that if the Commissioners would like that. Guillen said there is profiling done to the Latino population, but they don't speak out. Boyd said people are stopped when there is a violation and most violations happen at night. In the middle of the night, people may be contacted by a police officer because it is odd to be out and about during that time. He expects all of the police officers to do this. Nelson asked if there is anything the Commission can do to be helpful to the Police Department. Boyd said he wants to develop a partnership with the Commission. Hare said that out of this meeting we may want to come up with some type of event to have folks get together to have a mutual understanding of one another. Nelson said some citizens may feel they have been treated a certain way, and whether or not it's true in fact, it is true to them.

Fire Chief Kreitman said applicants applying for firefighter/EMT positions need to be paramedic certified. There are three bilingual employees in the Fire Department (FD). There is a Hispanic language medical service line they utilize, and there are resources available at Albany General Hospital. Language and cultural diversity training is available to employees. There is a large homeless population that is being served. Public education is provided to address issues early. EMTs have a language medical handbook that they carry. The FD strives for excellent customer service for the entire population. All people need to be treated with respect and equality. All FD employees have a card they carry regarding customer service. AFCAF was developed to help people in need. Most forms are available in English and Spanish. Evans asked if they get calls from people on life sustaining machines during outages and in general. Kreitman said they are pretty rare; and if they do get a call, it is because a person is worried that their oxygen tank is getting low.

Omdahl said that the at-risk population includes low-income families, elderly, and children. Omdahl gave examples of how they have served Latino families. Children in these families often see a presentation at school and tell their parents about what is offered. The children also help translate for their families. The FD works with people who have physical and mental impairments to make sure they are in a safe environment. The FD will install strobe light fire alarms for people with hearing impairments. Evans asked if there has been resistance with landlords and the installation of the strobe fire alarms. Omdahl said that there hasn't been much resistance from landlords. Evans said there are tax credits available for these types of installations. The FD visits elderly people to test and change batteries in fire alarms. Children attending Head Start received 19 helmets for all of the kids. Kreitman said the main focus isn't on ethnicity, but instead working to make sure all citizens in the community have a safe living environment. Omdahl said they collaborate with other agencies to provide services and to get the word out about the resources available. Guillen said she worries about the Latino citizens because most Latinos don't know that they need fire alarms. Omdahl said the Latino population has been participating in the child safety seat check clinics. Ninety percent of seats are not put in properly, and it is great to see so many people coming to get the seats checked. Kreitman said safety camp is held twice a year for children and many of the kids come back and want to be camp counselors. Guillen said her fourth grader enjoys the presentations at school and has been making home safety escape plans every year since the first grade. Hare said there is diversity training for all

supervisors on Thursday, February 28. Evans said he would like to help with disability training for City employees if needed. Hare said he would pass that information on to David Shaw, Human Resources Director. Nelson said she likes the new sirens of the Fire Engines.

Continued Discussion Regarding Community Survey

No new information.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

The Commissioners decided to cancel the meeting in March due to spring break.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, April 22, 2008, 7:00 p.m., in the Willamette Room.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Eilers
Administrative Assistant I

Reviewed by,

Wes Hare
City Manager



APPROVED:

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

MINUTES

Commissioners present: Blanca Ruckert, Jodi Nelson, Delia Guillen
Commissioners absent: C. Jeffery Evans, Anna Anderson, Rick Hammel, Jr., Marian Anderson
Staff present: Dan Bedore, Mayor; Wes Hare, City Manager; Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer; Ed Gallagher, Library Director; Ed Hodney, Parks & Recreation Director; Katie Nooshazar, Recreation Programs Manager; Joy Gilliland, Recreation Coordinator
Others present: None.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Ruckert called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 26, 2008

A motion could not be made due to the lack of a quorum.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Business from the Public

None.

Discussion of How the Public Perceives the Mentally Ill

Mayor Dan Bedore attended a meeting regarding a home for mentally ill people on Del Rio Avenue SE. It was originally going to be a group home for forensic patients, but the use has been changed to a group home for semi-independent mentally ill people. Dan said that he noticed a lack of tolerance of mentally ill people and thought that it was driven by fear and ignorance. Mentally ill people are being discriminated against because of their mental illness. He would like to see if the HRC would undertake a public educational process to eliminate the stigma that goes along with mental illness and to help educate citizens with preconceptions of people with mental illness. Dan suggested contacting advocacy groups to gather educational materials and for ideas. DHS or National Alliance for Mentally Ill may be some good resources to check out. Jodi said that she has a display outlining the history of mental illness in Oregon which was created for mental illness awareness month at OSU, and she suggested displaying them in City Hall. She went on to say that the display traces the history of mental illness, where we are today, and how we got where we are. Dan wondered if it could also be displayed at Heritage Mall where more people

will see it. Jodi said that the stigma is huge and very few people talk about mental illness. Wes said that untreated mental illness is a danger because people are not receiving treatment and help. It is important to get the information out to the public to let them know the difference. Jodi said that she also has a display that lists famous people who have mental illnesses. Blanca suggested having discussions during the lunch hour to address the issue. Marilyn said that National Mental Illness Awareness month is in October. Delia said that her church had events in October regarding mental illness. Jodi said that they had a three-part series last year at OSU which included video presentations. Jodi described the videos. Jodi said that they also had Dr. David Hart, who is a local physician, speak about his mental illness and the challenges he has faced. Blanca said that a subcommittee could be formed to plan the October event. Jodi said that she will send the group some links on mental illness. Blanca said that the Oxford houses are also being discussed throughout the community and thought the HRC group may want to tackle that issue. Jodi thinks Oxford houses are an issue because they are not being spread out within the community. Oxford houses tend to be big houses with many bedrooms so more people can occupy them. Dan thinks the problem is the tenants of Oxford houses not being good neighbors.

Department Director Feedback about Diversity Issues

Ed Gallagher handed out a document highlighting services and programs offered at the Library. The Library serves around 1,200 people a day. He encourages HRC members to direct people to the Library as it is an information clearinghouse. If the HRC has any suggestions as to what types of programs could be offered, please send them to Ed. Jodi asked what Spanish text items are most in demand. Ed said that there are around 2,000 Spanish publications and that movies and software are in the highest demand followed by nonfiction, children's books, and fiction. Dan asked if there is demand for texts in other languages. Ed said no. Delia said that she knows a lot of kids and families who don't know about the Library or how to obtain a library card. GAPS has a migrant summer program for Spanish speaking children, and they could benefit from the Library. The Library has a bilingual story time. Blanca asked how bilingual story time was started. Ed said that it was because Doris Hicks, a Library employee, had suggested it; and she is bilingual and a master puppeteer. Blanca said that she doesn't think part of the population knows about the services the Library provides and suggested creating brochures to reach this population.

Ed Hodney said that Parks and Recreations has venues for people to recreate in; facilitates opportunities for recreational, educational, and cultural programs; provides a wide variety of special events; and plans new parks. There are parks in virtually every part of the city of Albany. The staff is constantly working to connect with citizens to help them utilize the programs and attend the various events. Events are inclusive so that any person can participate. Katie discussed the various programs and classes offered and how they strive to make them inclusive and some classes are adapted. Ed said that Parks & Recreation works with a variety of partnerships including the YMCA, the Boys & Girls Club, GAPS, etc., to engage a wider scope of the community. The three areas are non-English speakers, individuals with physical disabilities, and individuals with mental illness. Not all of the parks are accessible because many are old and outdated, and there haven't been any resources to bring them up-to-date for accessibility. Jodi asked for examples regarding accessibility issues at the parks. Ed said that parking is an issue; some picnic tables aren't accessible, some playgrounds aren't accessible to children with disabilities, and restrooms aren't accessible. In the next five years, 17 playgrounds will be replaced and will be ADA compliant.

Request for Financial Support for Festival Latinos

Joy said that the third annual Festival Latinos is being planned. Joy applied for a grant from the Linn County Cultural Commission and received \$400, which is half of what Parks & Recreation has received the two previous years. Joy understands that the HRC doesn't have a budget, but wanted to check to see if any HRC members have suggestions for other avenues to get funds. The event is on September 15, 2008, and will be at Monteith Riverpark. Last year, there were over 2,000 people in attendance. Joy said it is more than a one-day event as it brings different cultures together. Wes suggested checking with the

Albany Visitor's Association. Marilyn suggested contacting the Albany Chamber of Commerce to get a list of the minority-owned businesses.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

None.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Tuesday, May 27, 2008, 7:00 p.m., in the Willamette Room.

ADJOURNMENT –

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

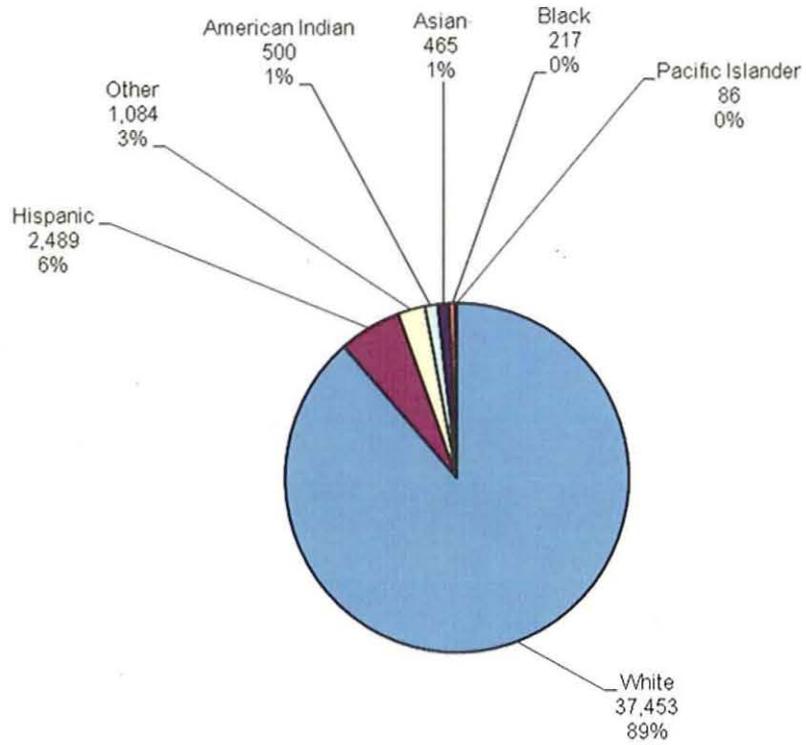
Respectfully submitted,

Diana Eilers
Administrative Assistant I

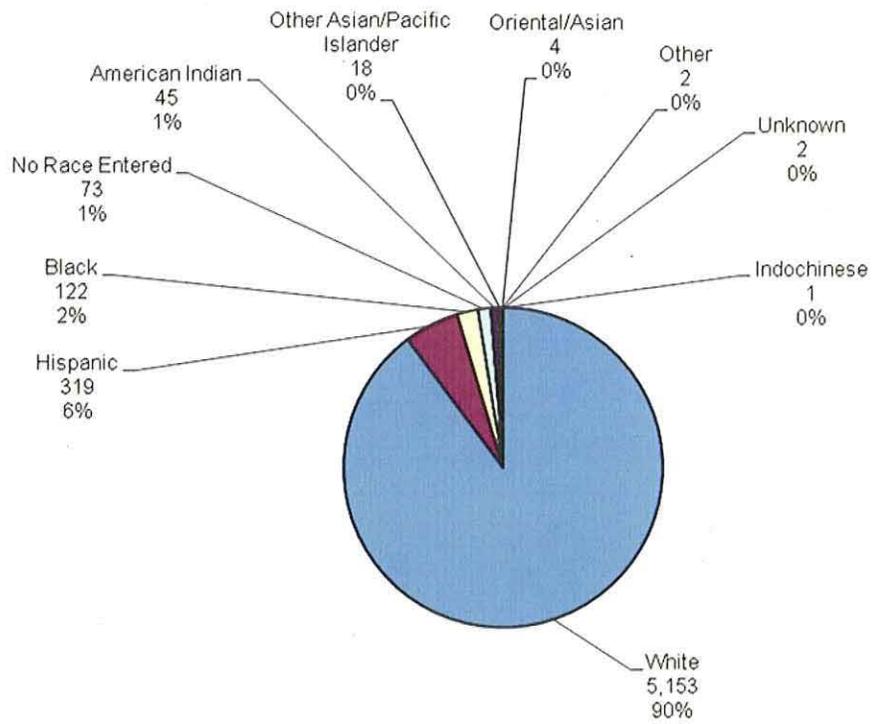
Reviewed by,

Wes Hare
City Manager

City of Albany Demographics 2000



Arrests by Race 2005 through 2007



Citations by Race 2005 through 2007

