



APPROVED: August 26, 2008

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
City Hall Willamette Room
Tuesday, June 24, 2008
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Commissioners present: C. Jeffery Evans, Delia Guillen, Marian Anderson, Jodi Nelson
Commissioners absent: Blanca Ruckert, excused; Jodi Nelson, excused; Anna Anderson, excused; Rick Hammel, Jr., unexcused
Staff present: Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer
Others present: Shawn Wells

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Evans called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 27, 2008

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

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Chair Evans read a thank-you card from Melanie Adams (a copy of the card is attached to the minutes). Evans moved item c to the beginning of the agenda.

Business from the Public

None.

Continued Discussion of How the Public Perceives the Mentally Ill

Shawn discussed information that she found on the Internet regarding mental illness. The information includes the stigma of mental illness, training and resources for law enforcement professionals, educational resources for teachers, child and adolescent mental health, and how to create a program to reduce the stigma of mental illness. These documents are attached to the minutes. Marian said that police officers are sometimes called to long-term care facilities to handle a patient that the staff can't manage. Many of these patients suffer from Alzheimer's or mental illness. The police officers and the staff at the facility don't have the proper training to deal with these situations. Shawn thinks it would be helpful for police officers to receive more training to better understand mental illness. Jeffery said that Police Chief Ed Boyd will be attending the August meeting and he would like to meet with him to discuss the types of training officers receive in regards to mental illness. Jeffery asked Shawn if she had any specific ideas for events the HRC can sponsor. Shawn said that she would like to have some sort of

training for educators. Also, she thought forming a community group to discuss mental illness issues would be helpful. Marilyn suggested contacting Frank Moore at Linn County Mental Health; he would be willing to help. Shawn said that there is a Linn-Benton NAMI group. Marilyn said that when the Mayor attended the HRC meeting, he was interested in having a community education event to help people better understand mental illness. Delia asked Shawn if there are any statistics regarding children with mental illnesses. Shawn didn't know of any statistics, but she had a child in her classroom with bipolar disorder. Many people think that children don't have mental illnesses, but that is not true. Jeffery said that it is difficult to diagnose children because some of the symptoms of mental illness may be common traits of youth and teenagers. Shawn said that it is important not to diagnose a child in school, but it is necessary to educate the teachers so they can address problems with the parents. Jeff said that it may be hard for the HRC to address the school issues because of the bureaucracy. Shawn said that the stigma needs to be broken so teachers can better help children. Marilyn suggested talking to Maria Delapoer as she is the new superintendent. Jeffery asked Marilyn to invite Maria to September's meeting. Shawn said that mental illness falls under the ADA. Jeff said that at the next meeting we will be planning out what the HRC wants to accomplish for the year. One item to plan for will be educating City staff on how to handle citizens with mental illness. Shawn said that she is willing to attend meetings if the group needs her.

Acknowledgement of Members' Nonattendance at Previous Meetings

Jeffery said that he would have attended April's meeting if he would have known there wouldn't be a quorum. Jeffery first raised the attendance requirements at May's meeting because it is becoming an ongoing issue. There is a resolution from 1982 that states a member of a commission forfeits his or her office if they have two consecutive unexcused absences. Jeffery said that there hasn't been consistency regarding attendance or advanced notice of being unable to attend a meeting. If there is not going to be a quorum and there are decisions to be made at the meeting, then there needs to be time to decide if the meeting should be canceled. Jeffery said that we are in a tough position because the HRC is in its first year and that it is important to show that we are committed to the Commission. Marian suggested having more commissioners on the HRC. Marilyn said that the standard is to have the same number of people on the Commission as on the City Council. Jeffery said that changing the times we meet in the summer might help. Jeffery asked Marian and Delia their thoughts on what to do regarding attendance. Marian said that she thinks Jeffery should contact the commissioners to see what their thoughts are. Delia said that summer months can be difficult because of vacations. Jeffery said that in the last nine meetings there have been three people with one absence, one person with two absences, one person with three absences, one person with four absences, and one person with five absences. Jeffery said that he will send out an e-mail to the Commissioners with three or more absences and that if they can't attend 80 percent of the time, they may want to reconsider their position. This is a citizen board where people come to meet with us, and it isn't favorable when there are few members of the HRC present to hear them. Marian said that we can't run these meetings without a quorum and that some current members may be so out of the loop of what is going on because they haven't been attending. Delia said that the bottom line is the work is not going to get done if people don't attend. It is reasonable to miss a meeting, but to consecutively miss meetings is a problem. Jeffery will contact the members that have missed three or more meetings.

Agenda Items for July Meeting

Jeffery said that July's meeting will be a work session to discuss previous information we have received and what the goals are for the year. Jeffery will send out an e-mail to the Commissioners for items for July's meeting. The deadline for items will be July 10. Jeffery said that he may add accessibility issues as an item to July's agenda. Delia asked if we need to report anything to the Council. Marilyn said that yes, all commissions and boards give a yearly report and there is not a specific date set to do this. Jeffery said that it would probably be good to do this in January. Marilyn said that most commissions and boards

provide a written report and that they attend the City Council Work Session to provide comments and answer questions.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

Jeffery would like everyone to bring their copies of minutes containing Directors' reports with them to the next meeting. Jeffery said that he will check with the other Commissioners to see what minutes they have and will let Laura know what previous minutes need to be included in the agenda packet. The roster needs to be included in the agenda packet as well.

NEXT MEETING DATE

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

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Diana Eilers
Administrative Assistant I

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Wes Hare
City Manager