



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)
City Hall, Municipal Court Room
Tuesday, January 24, 2012

MINUTES

Commissioners present: Kim Whitley, Michael Thomson, Linda Hart, Leonor Rodriguez, and Nancy Greenman
Commissioners absent: Julie Jones (excused), Tina Dodge Vera (excused)
Staff present: Wes Hare, City Manager; Marilyn Smith, Public Information Officer/Management Assistant
Others present: None

CALL TO ORDER

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

WELCOME NEW COMMISSION MEMBER

Whitley, along with the rest of the group, welcomed Leonor Rodriguez to the commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 29, 2011

Greenman noted there were (3) corrections to the minutes: the spelling of Jeanette Emerson's name, the name for the Diversity Achievement Center, and the name for the Freedom Riders.

MOTION: Michael Thomson made a motion to approve the minutes (as amended); Nancy Greenman seconded. Approved 5-0.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration

Whitley stated that many of the events had been cancelled due to flooding issues. She also shared that most of the events were scheduled during the middle of the day making it hard for people who work during the day to attend. Whitley suggested that when planning next year's event they consider hosting it in the evening to accommodate more people's work schedules. Greenman attended a film in honor of the celebration on Sunday night that she found beneficial.

Greenman discussed the project called "Continue the Dream." The project is sponsored for the first time by the Albany Peace Seekers along with GAPS and the Boys & Girls Club. Packets are given to teachers that include a statement of the dream and thought provoking questions regarding the dream's relevance for today. Grades three through twelve participate. Students create one-, two-, and three-dimensional works such as poetry and visuals. The students' works could be exhibited at the Boys & Girls Club, the Senior Center, and various places. The Albany Peace Seekers have reserved the Albany Public Library on Wednesday, March 7, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. for the event including an open house and a formal presentation. Greenman proposed the commission participate in the event.

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Greenman read the Statement of the Dream to the group. Thomson said that the statement is a great start to the project. He stated that it really brings the meaning of MLK day into focus. Whitley asked how Greenman proposed the commission participate. Greenman suggested the members attend the event, be formally acknowledged, and possibly speak.

MOTION: Whitley moved that the HRC participate, be formally acknowledged, and say a few words at the event; Greenman seconded. Approved 5-0.

Greenman will share more details of the project at the next meeting, and the commission will decide who will speak.

Whitley added that she is reading the book *The Help* and suggested that the commission possibly sponsor a showing of the movie next year.

Human Relations Award

Thomson asked how the City Council would want to handle the presentation and whether the Mayor would like to present the award. Hare said that the Mayor would be happy to present the award or to introduce a commission member to do the presenting. The award would be presented at the beginning of the council meeting. Greenman said that Sharon Gisler's family is planning to come. Since Rodriguez is new to the commission, Thomson explained the award and the process behind it. Rodriguez asked about the nominee. Thomson described her community involvement with Habitat for Humanity and her involvement with the creation of the HRC. Smith revealed the actual award to the group. Everyone expressed their approval. Thomson explained the company that created the award. Aurora Glass Awards hand makes their awards with recycled glass, and they are connected to our community through their sister company, St. Vincent de Paul. Whitley expressed that she would be willing to present the award but would like to see Thomson perform the presentation since he was the motivating force behind the award. Thomson agreed to present the award. Greenman expressed appreciation for Thomson's development of the award process.

Rodriguez asked how the award was funded. Hare explained that there is a limited amount of money available in the city budget to support the boards and commissions.

Whitley asked that the award be put on the calendar for next year. She asked the group if they would like to keep the same schedule with submission in October, selection in November, and presentation in January. Whitley said that she liked that the presentation coincided with the Martin Luther King holiday. The group agreed and expressed their desire to keep the same schedule.

Annual Report

Whitley asked for a summary of the commission's activity for the next meeting. Greenman asked for last year's report to use as a template. Smith recommended using past minutes as a source of information for the summary.

Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC)

No update at this time.

Calendar of Events: 2012

Greenman asked to include the event, "Continue the Dream," on March 7.

Whitley said the next event was the Mental Health Month in May. Smith shared that Linn County usually sponsors a poster and offered to contact Frank Moore for this year's details. Whitley asked who usually sponsors the movie. Smith said that would be NAMI and that Mental Illness Awareness month is in October. Wes asked if there was interest in meeting with advocates or with Frank Moore at the next meeting. The group was receptive of the idea. Wes said that he and Marilyn would invite Frank Moore and look into other connections. Greenman and Thomson were supportive of sponsoring the poster.

Whitley wondered about the “Hands Across the Bridge” event. Smith volunteered to look into it.

Hart asked about the Homeless Resource Fair. Smith said that it is being held on Thursday, May 17, at the Boys & Girls Club. Whitley said that last year’s fair was a great success, and Greenman suggested participating again. Greenman said that there was great participation in the survey they issued at the event. Whitley asked for the event to be added to the calendar.

Rodriguez shared that the health department is performing a survey right now regarding health in the community. Rodriguez also shared about a fund-raiser for senior citizens where they will be selling enchiladas. The fund-raiser will be Monday, May 7, following Cinco de Mayo. The enchiladas will be made at the Senior Center and sold in the plaza outside City Hall. Rodriguez will be helping to make the enchiladas.

Greenman reminded the group of Festival Latino coming up in September.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

None.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, February 28, 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file.

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by,

Signature on file.

Wes Hare
City Manager

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file.

Diana Eilers
Administrative Assistant I