



APPROVED: October 25, 2012

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)

City Hall, Municipal Court Room

Tuesday, September 25, 2012

MINUTES

Commissioners present: Tina Dodge Vera, Kim Whitley, Leonor Rodriguez, and Javier Cervantes

Commissioners absent: Linda Hart (unexcused), Nancy Greenman (excused); Michael Thomson (unexcused)

Staff present: Wes Hare, City Manager; Marilyn Smith, Public Information Officer/Management Assistant

Others present: Dede Burns-McLay, Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kim Whitley called the meeting to order at 7:28 p.m. after reaching a quorum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 24, 2012

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

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

Dede Burns-McLay introduced herself and described her work as a community advocate with CARDV, based in Linn County. She outlined her work, which focuses largely on supporting pregnant teens, parenting teens, and survivors of intimate-partner violence; CARDV's services in general; and grant-funded permanent supportive housing in Corvallis. Dodge Vera said she sees a need for supportive housing and transitional housing so that domestic violence survivors need not return to unsafe situations. She asked Burns-McLay if CARDV works with anyone on transitional housing. Burns-McLay said they are in communication with landlords and other housing officials.

Burns-McLay said the typical stay in the emergency shelter is 30-45 days. The "typical" client varies – they see a lot of single women and women with children but also help male survivors. Rodriguez asked what happens to a family with children who cannot go back home and have no income. Burns-McLay said CARDV tries to connect them with resources such as funds available through the Department of Human Services, but recipients need to be able to sustain rent. CARDV is there mostly for support. Money is definitely a barrier. Dodge Vera asked if nonprofits or others in the community help out. Burns-McLay said the Community Services Consortium is a primary referral, and Fish of Albany and Corvallis also help. Commissioners commented on the need for permanent solutions and self-sufficiency. Rodriguez said she had recently referred a family. They could not be sheltered in Corvallis and were sent to Salem, felt trapped in a motel room there, so went back home after three days.

Cervantes asked what kind of shelter is available in Albany; Burns-McLay said none, basically due to lack of funding. They had a grant for a few years from the Linn County Domestic Violence Council to have more of a presence in Albany, but the grant was not reinstated last year. Cervantes asked for a client breakdown for Albany and Corvallis. Burns-McLay was unsure but thought it was split evenly between the two.

Hare said there is a potential source of new revenue with Albany's recent designation as a federal entitlement community. The City expects to receive about \$350,000 a year in Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant funds to be used for housing purposes. Corvallis has been receiving HUD CDBG funds for many years. The Mayor has put together a task force to study current resources and needs. Hare said it would be helpful to touch base with Anne Catlin. Dodge Vera noted that Willamette Neighborhood Housing encompasses Albany; she hopes they will collaborate and share knowledge with the task force.

Burns-McLay concluded her presentation saying it has always been a CARDV goal to have more of a presence in Albany, including a shelter here. She said she works with Community Outreach Inc. in Corvallis; they have a transitional housing program. Dodge Vera added that COI has a separate family unit and child care. Burns-McLay works in Albany four days a week, with Wednesdays in Corvallis. Part of the grant that supports her position is for public health. She is one of eight advocates.

Preparation for Second Human Relations Award Competition

Deferred to October agenda.

DEBRIEF

Festival Latino (Saturday, September 15, noon-4:00 p.m.)

Dodge Vera reported a great turnout, maybe because the event was on a Sunday this year. Thomson and Hart attended as greeters and helped with the door prize drawing. It was nice to have their support. Organizers are thinking about doing a passport next year and will keep the event on Sunday. They have already reserved Monteith Riverpark and are thinking of expanded hours, noon-6:00 p.m. Rodriguez said people were still coming for food at 4:00 p.m. when some were taking down booths. Four hours isn't enough.

UPDATES

Mental Illness Awareness Month (October)

Plans are coming together for the dinner at First Christian Church. Mayor Konopa is not available on October 30; Whitley will follow up with the planning group.

Joint Meeting with Hispanic Advisory Council

Scheduled for 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 30, with Commission meeting following at 5:00 p.m. Dodge Vera will send the notes from last year's joint meeting to Laura Hyde for distribution to the full Commission.

Annual Summit on Homelessness (Wednesday, November 7, 9:00 a.m.-noon, City Hall)

Smith spoke briefly about pending changes at Albany Helping Hands: Executive Director Paul Barnes has resigned effective September 30, 2012.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

Whitley said she had received notice of a breakfast meeting sponsored by HEART September 28, 2012, at Signs of Victory's church, 1100 Jackson Street SE. Smith spoke about the history of the breakfast meetings. They are an extension of the monthly HEART board meetings, open to anyone who works with the homeless population, and are intended as informal information-sharing sessions. Whitley said she planned to attend. Commissioners asked if anyone maintains a list of service providers. Smith said the Chamber of Commerce has a directory, as does Love INC and 2-1-1.

Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC)

Dodge Vera reported that HAC had met earlier today with staff from Albany Parks & Recreation Department. They thanked Parks staff for providing space for Festival Latino, were good to work with about the date change, and HAC is looking forward to the City doing more targeted outreach to Latinos.

Calendar of Events: 2012

Cervantes asked if the Commission would like to have a list of events happening at Linn-Benton Community College. Hare said it would be good especially to have those that pertain to the Commission's mission. Rodriguez noted that she is teaching a Chinese cooking class this Saturday.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

Cervantes asked about protocol for the Commission to take a road trip to explore services in other communities. Specifically, he would like to visit the Cornelius Cultural Center. It is Latino-focused and designed to bring people together. Cornelius faced the same kinds of issues when he was growing up there as Albany is going through now. They have made a welcoming cultural center in the spirit of creating a more-harmonious community. It is across the street from a health center. Hare said the cultural center may be managed by Washington County rather than the city. He suggested Woodburn as a city to explore. Cervantes said Albany's population is growing in such a way that this would be forward-thinking, a way of saying that the City is part of the equation in serving the community. Dodge Vera recommended visiting South Shore Elementary School, Albany's Spanish immersion school, now in its fourth year. She said she is from Woodburn. Their Parks activity guide is in Spanish and English equally. Cervantes said Woodburn schools play the music of different cultures between classes, featuring a different culture every day.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, October 30, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on File

Marilyn Smith
Management Assistant/PIO

Reviewed by,

Signature on File

Wes Hare
City Manager