



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION & HISPANIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

City Hall, Municipal Court Room

Tuesday, October 30, 2012

4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Human Relations Commissioners present: Kim Whitley; Nancy Greenman; Tina Dodge Vera (arrived at 4:11 p.m.); Linda Hart; Javier Cervantes; Leonor Rodriguez; Michael Thomson (arrived at 5:02 p.m.)

Human Relations Commissioners absent: None

Hispanic Advisory Councilors present: Mary Daly-Piehl; Tammy Skubinna; Dania Samudio; Javier Cervantes; Leonor Rodriguez; Tina Dodge Vera

Hispanic Advisory Councilors absent: None

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

Others present: None

CALL TO ORDER

Human Relations Commission (HRC) Chair Kim Whitley called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Introductions

Whitley welcomed the Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC) to this joint meeting with the HRC. The HAC and HRC members introduced themselves.

Discussion with Hispanic Advisory Council

Whitley invited the HAC to share what they have been working on. Tammy Skubinna reported on the success of the Festival Latino event and how a significant amount of time was spent on it. Mary Daly-Piehl explained the HAC's focus on the discipline gap in the public school system and how they, with other organizations, were able to talk with the Oregon Department of Education and convince them to change the way they display the discipline data on their website. Skubinna said that now you are able to look up information by the school district and clearly see where the gaps lie.

Tina Dodge Vera reported that on behalf of the HAC, she was able to acquire some internal funding from OSU for leadership classes with Spanish speakers at Sunrise Elementary School, which is also being extended to South Shore Elementary. They use a curriculum that invites parent involvement. There are stipends for parents to help with logistics of learning community programming. It helps pay for the families' time as they help with such activities as Festival Latino. In turn, this helps to take some of the burden off the HAC members.

Nancy Greenman commented that it is nice when two communities talk to each other. Skubinna said that, because the HAC meets in different locations and with different organizations, good exchanges of information are made. Greenman asked what the HAC has learned about Albany. Dodge Vera conveyed that they appreciate the City's

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efforts to communicate to the Latino population. The City of Albany's website was updated a year ago to include the Google Translate feature. The programming directors whom the Council met with are open to distributing information in Spanish. Dodge-Vera said that the City of Albany has really good intentions, but the tasks can be hard to fulfill.

Javier Cervantes said that from his perspective of coming from the Midwest he sees a couple of gaps that exist between our cities and counties. There are gulfs in terms of what is available in bilingual services. He brought up the example of the education component for the Childhood Arrival Process. He has heard stories of racial profiling and where Hispanics live in fear of being pulled over by police and not being able to prove citizenship. He expressed the need to close the gaps of simple justices that protect the people. Cervantes suggested the groups take field trips to learn who does what between the county and city. Dodge Vera said that in the past the HAC had taken field trips to different law enforcement organizations and found that statistics for racial profiling were not available. Cervantes offered to do a presentation on demographics of the Latino population for our community.

Dodge Vera expressed that she would like to see events that reflect our population. She would like music in the event lineups that include Latino bands and to see the events advertised in Spanish so the Hispanics know they are welcome at the event. Wes Hare asked if Dodge Vera had met with the P&R Department about the advertising issue. Dodge Vera said that she had but had not been able to follow up on the conversation. It was asked what percentage of the population is required before an agency is required to communicate in that population's language. Greenman explained that such communication is only required for vital services. Whitley said that she sees it as an obligation to have all citizens be informed of their community's happenings. Greenman said that by not being inclusive a group can feel unwelcome. Cervantes asked if the group could have the census data for the city. Hare obtained and passed out a QuickFacts sheet from the US Census Bureau for the city of Albany, Oregon. Whitley requested that the P&R Department be invited to the November HRC meeting along with the census information to discuss the topic further.

Hart asked if the City of Albany pays supplemental income for employees who speak Spanish. Hare said that they do. Hart asked if the P&R Department has a Spanish-speaking employee. Smith said that the City maintains a list of all the bilingual employees and the languages they speak. Hare shared that most of the Spanish-speaking employees are in the Police Department. He also said that the Library just hired a native Spanish-speaking person. The Library has had a Spanish-speaking employee, but this is the first native speaker of Spanish.

Hart offered, as an employee of the Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department, to share with the Albany P&R Department what Corvallis does for people who need Spanish translation. Cervantes asked about a city-to-city partnership and said that maybe it could be a model for the state. A partnership would make it a lot easier to share policies. Whitley asked Smith if there is anyone that could talk to the group about that possibility. Smith would look into it and explained how the City Council partners with different agencies.

Skubinna asked about the projects the HRC were working on. Whitley reported about how Michael Thomson was working on preparations for the Commission's second Human Relations Award. She asked the HAC to help spread the word to obtain nominations. Whitley also reported about working with the County for the Mental Illness Awareness Week. Cervantes talked about research related to the mental health risk associated with racism. He will distribute the information to the group.

Skubinna asked the HRC for ideas of Albany agencies the HAC could meet with. Greenman suggested connecting with Samaritan Health Services and visiting the Samaritan Albany General Hospital.

Whitley thanked the HAC for coming and Skubinna thanked the HRC for having them.

Business from the Public

None.

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Wes Hare
City Manager