



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)

City Hall, Willamette Room

Tuesday, May 28, 2013

MINUTES

Commissioners present: Michael Thomson, Jay Sluiter, Kim Whitley, Nancy Greenman, Tina Dodge Vera, and Javier Cervantes

Commissioners absent: Leonor Rodriguez (unexcused)

Staff present: Wes Hare, City Manager

Others present: None

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kim Whitley called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 23, 2013

MOTION: Michael Thomson made a motion to approve the minutes; Jay Sluiter seconded. Approved 6-0.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

Participation at River Rhythms concerts

Nancy Greenman reviewed Marilyn Smith's memo for the group. Whitley asked the group for their thoughts on participation and what dates worked for them. Javier Cervantes responded that he cannot do July 4. Greenman responded that she felt taking parking money was the choice least fitting of their purpose. She added that creating a multicultural craft would align with their purpose but could be the most challenging. Wes Hare interjected that the Parks & Recreation Department most likely could provide a pre-created craft that the group could implement. He said that he could check with Katie Nooshazar if the group was interested. Whitley said that soliciting donations at the August 1 event might be a fitting venue for the group since that requires greeters who are outgoing, warm, and welcoming. Greenman noted that the group could take on a couple of the activities if they split up. Sluiter said that he liked the idea of helping with a craft at the Northwest Art & Air Festival. He suggested having toy gliders for the children to assemble. It has been his experience that the kids love them.

After polling the group, it was discovered that only two could attend the July 4 event, whereas everyone was available for the August 1 event. The group decided they would participate in the August 1 event from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. where they would serve as greeters soliciting donations. Whitley said they could rotate between two-hour shifts. Greenman and Thomson volunteered to pass the basket at the July 4 event.

Discussion ensued over the T-shirts that Smith's memo referenced. The group wondered how they would obtain these T-shirts. Hare said that he thought that the Parks & Recreation Department had a supply of shirts and he would ask the department about them.

Greenman and Thomson asked what time they should arrive at the July 4 event to pass the baskets. Hare said he would have Smith contact them with the details.

Whitley requested that discussion of the group's participation in the Northwest Art & Air Festival be added to the next agenda.

Event(s)/activity(ies) for 4th and/or 5th graders to find out what they would like to see in Albany

Whitley reviewed the Mayor's request for this event. She advised everyone that the group's ideas for the event steer clear of artwork since this could conflict with the Arts Commission's activities. Tina Dodge Vera described an activity the Linn Benton Health Equity Alliance sponsored as something the group could model for this event. The group could frame a question that the students would answer in an essay format.

Dodge Vera assumed that the activity would originate through the schools. Hare commented how that would make sense and be easier for the group. Sluiter advised that they ask the teachers if they would have time to implement such an activity. Greenman suggested checking into the students' curriculum to see if this project would fit into one of their class units. Sluiter pointed out that, although there is not a rush on this project, they should announce it to teachers before the end of the school year to allow them plenty of time to think about it. Whitley agreed with Greenman that this should coordinate with the school's curriculum and asked if the school superintendent is who they would contact about that. Greenman noted that the MLK event was implemented through the superintendent. Hare revealed that he meets with the school superintendent monthly and would be happy to broach the idea with her. The group agreed they would like Hare to do that.

Cervantes asked about having the students write an essay describing a civil rights' activist such as Cesar Chavez. Whitley said that would be good as long as it checked out with the superintendent in regards to the student's curriculum and that it fit into the theme for the event as to what the students would like to see in Albany.

Human Relation Award

Whitley summarized the Mayor's wishes on expanding the award program. Greenman asked why it was designated that the organization or business be a nonprofit. Thomson explained how the Chamber of Commerce already gives an award out to one of their business members which would not include many deserving nonprofits.

Discussion ensued about obtaining enough participation. Greenman suggested obtaining contacts from the *Albany Democrat-Herald's* section where people offer thanks. She said that if someone is willing to take the time to submit a thank-you to the paper, they most likely would be open to nominating someone for the award. Whitley suggested sending announcements to the 211 agencies. Cervantes also suggested including an announcement in the LBCC catalog. Whitley thought that the United Way could be a valuable resource for possible contacts and asked if the group would like to meet with the United Way director. The group supported the idea, and it was decided that they would invite Greg Roe to the next meeting. Hare volunteered to have Smith extend the invitation since she is involved in the United Way.

Dodge Vera suggested adding "lunch with the Mayor or City Manager" as part of the award. The group applauded this idea. Hare was willing to participate and said that he was sure the Mayor would be open to the idea as she enjoys meeting with people. Hare said that he would talk to the Mayor about the idea. Greenman expressed that this would be a good idea (having lunch with the Mayor or City Manager) for the 4th and 5th grade student event as well.

Visit to Cornelius – Centro Cultural

Cervantes reported that he contacted the center and that they are open to hosting the group. Cervantes expressed his concern of implementing the visitation as a public meeting. Hare advised that there may be some exceptions to the requirement of it being a public meeting. Hare will ask City Attorney Jim Delapoer about the meeting requirements.

Cervantes said that he will see about some possible dates and e-mail the group with the choices.

DEBRIEFS

Diversity Day at LBCC (May 3)

Cervantes reported that LBCC's president said this was the best Diversity Day he had experienced at the college. Cervantes expressed that the students did an amazing job preparing for the event. He described the different participants such as the Native American dancers, Chinese dancers, and the African drummers. Students for Equity for Gay Marriage preformed a mock gay marriage ceremony that was well received by the crowd but had later received some negative feedback from the community including comments on Facebook. Cervantes reported that several local businesses came to the event and that they had a great turnout.

Cervantes informed the group that next year's event will be held on May 2, 2014, and asked them to consider hosting a booth.

HEART to Heart Resource Fair (May 16)

Greenman passed out a handout of the Heart Survey Results (see agenda file) and read the question that had introduced the survey. Greenman reported that the survey was well received and that people liked being asked for their opinion. She commented that conducting the survey was very interactive. It required her to have a conversation with just about each individual that filled one out. Greenman stated that the survey needs revamping as she noticed that it was hard for participants to navigate through the spreadsheet. Also, Greenman concluded that chairs should have been provided for the participants since the survey took some time to complete.

Discussion ensued over the results. Greenman noted that there were a high percentage of people who didn't know the InReach agency and thought that maybe people think of it under a different name. She said that the Parks & Recreation Department wasn't recognized until she pointed out their programs such as River Rhythms. Greenman explained that a lot of the "Don't Knows" were from citizens that are new to the area.

Cervantes requested that the agency survey be translated into Spanish for the Festival Latino event. He predicted that the data would be very useful to the agencies. He noted, though, that the question introducing the survey would need to be modified. The group decided that was a good idea, and Dodge Vera volunteered to translate the survey. It was suggested that the Greater Albany Public School District be added to the survey, and it was noted that the addition would be relevant for use with the Festival Latino event but not with the HEART to Heart event.

There was additional discussion about the results from the Heart survey and how they should be shared since it could be useful information for the agencies on the survey. Greenman asked if the results would be posted with the minutes. Hare said that they could be if that's what the group wanted. Whitley advised that, if they were, they include some sort of disclaimer stating that the survey was unofficial or something to that effect. Greenman suggested that it say it was a "convenience copy." Whitley requested that the discussion be added to the next agenda where Marilyn Smith could advise the group to the appropriate action and give input on adding agencies such as the school district to the list. Greenman is going to add the introductory question to the top of the Survey Result Chart so the results can be viewed in light of the question that was asked of the participants. She will send the updated chart to Laura Hyde and requested that she e-mail it to the group.

Diversity training @ Albany Police Department (April 25)

Cervantes reported that the training went well. He said the department was receptive to the undocumented experience, although, he did receive a question about where the data for the training was acquired.

During the training, the Police Department defined to Cervantes that it is their procedure to take someone into custody when they cannot identify themselves. Cervantes communicated that the new bill allowing illegal immigrants a restricted driver's license should help reduce the amount of people taken into custody.

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UPDATES

Other Volunteer Opportunities

NONE

Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC)

Dodge Vera stated that she was unable to attend the meeting, so there was no update.

Calendar of Events: 2013

The group concurred to have the May 2, 2014, Diversity Day added to the calendar

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

None

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, June 25, 2013, 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Whitley adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Wes Hare
City Manager