APPROVED: August 27, 2013

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)

City Hall, Willamette Room
Tuesday, July 23, 2013
MINUTES

Commissioners present: Kim Whitley, Nancy Greenman, Javier Cervantes, and Tina Dodge Vera

Commissioners absent: Michael Thomson (excused), Leonor Rodriguez (excused), Jay Sluiter (unexcused)

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

Others present: Katie Nooshazar, Recreation Programs Manager; Debbi Richards, Recreation Programs Supervisor; Rose Lacey, Recreation Programs Specialist; Anne Catlin, Planner III

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kim Whitley called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

June 25, 2013

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

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

RIVER RHYTHMS

Debrief (Thursday, July 4)

Nancy Greenman reported that she had a good time serving as a greeter. She served along with the South Albany Dance Team, who helped people carry their lawn chairs and other items to their seating places. Greenman said that the experience was valuable in bringing awareness of the HRC. She explained that she had a lot more interaction with people compared to when she passed the basket at previous events.

Katie Nooshazar was pleased that Greenman enjoyed being a greeter. She said that it is harder to fill the position of greeter than that of basket passing. Nooshazar explained that there is a wide range of opportunities to serve but only specific ones that would fulfill the purpose that the group seeks. She encouraged the group to look to something other than hosting a booth at the event. It has been her experience that the booths don't work in that people don't pay a lot of attention to them. Nooshazar explained that, for a booth to work at all, it needs to be very interactive such as playing games or giving out prizes; something other than just conducting a survey.

Greenman shared with Nooshazar about the positive feedback she has received about River Rhythms. When Greenman conducted a survey at the HEART to Heart Resource Fair, minorities and new citizens were unsure of the identity of the Parks & Recreation Department until she mentioned River Rhythms, and then they knew exactly which department she was speaking of and spoke favorably of it.

Greenman reported about an incident at the event where a couple lost their chairs. They had placed their chairs as markers to hold their spot; but when they returned to the spot, the chairs were gone. People nearby volunteered to help the couple look for their chairs and found them. The couple expressed to Greenman what a welcoming place Albany is.

Greeman expressed her concern over the problem people can have crossing the railroad tracks to access the event. She witnessed people on bikes or using walkers have difficulty getting over the rails. Nooshazar explained that they are aware

of the problem and have tried to resolve it, but any work done on the rails has to be done by the railroad company. Placing things over the rails is not an option because trains frequently travel through during the concert. There was discussion over another option involving a nearby parking lot and the park's foot bridge that would require a considerable amount of funds. Anne Catlin gave some input, and she and Nooshazar were going to discuss it at a later time.

Update (Thursday, August 1)

Greenman plans on greeting at this event. Tina Dodge Vera volunteered to help her. They agreed to be at the event ready to greet at 5:00 p.m.

Participation at the Northwest Art & Air Festival (August 23-25)

Nooshazar said that the Festival can be very busy and other times rather peaceful, depending on the time of day. She informed the group that, if they are strategic in when and how they volunteer, they could interact with a large group of people. Volunteering earlier in the day could bring more meaningful interactions; later in the day would bring greater diversity. Nooshazar suggested volunteering as a greeter or as an attendant in the Family Zone. Another suggestion was working in the Information Booth, which is managed by the Albany Visitors Association. Debbi Richards passed out Northwest Art & Air Festival Volunteer Sign-up forms (see agenda file). Whoever signs up receives an event T-shirt.

Greenman asked if the promotional material for the event is available in Spanish. Nooshazar said that everything on the Parks & Recreation website is translatable. A summer promotional flyer, which included this event, was sent out in both English and Spanish. Whitley asked if the Parks & Recreation Department has noticed an increased participation from the Latino population since the Spanish version of the flyer. Richards answered that she has not noticed any difference at Fun in the Park or the different camp activities but noted that this is the first year of the promotion in Spanish and it might take awhile to catch on. Dodge Vera relayed that she has noticed that some of the pdfs on the Park & Recreation website are not included in the Spanish translation. Javier Cervantes shared that LBCC now has a translator, Kathy Zarate. He gave her contact information to Nooshazar.

Whitley asked the group for their thoughts on participating in the event. The group agreed that the positions of greeter and volunteers at the Information Booth would best fit their purpose. Greenman responded that she liked the idea of volunteering in pairs. Whitley requested that City staff e-mail the Northwest Art & Air Festival Volunteer Sign-up Form to the group to solicit their area of interest and availability. As the responses come in, they can then determine if pairs can be coordinated.

Cervantes asked Nooshazar if her department had any way to make buttons or badges that could distinguish Spanish speaking volunteers. Nooshazar responded that they did and committed to making some brightly colored badges.

HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and process update

Catlin introduced herself. She expressed her appreciation of Dodge Vera's early participation in the preliminary stages of this process which included attending an open house and being a source of communication for the Latino population regarding the program.

Catlin explained that she is addressing the Commission to highlight the program which could profit from the Commission's input since they have a pulse on the needs of the people that could benefit from this program. The City of Albany will receive federal funding in fiscal year 2013-14 as a new entitlement grantee of the CDBG program. CDBG funds come from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD awards grants to entitlement community grantees to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed towards affordable housing, addressing homelessness, revitalizing blighted and low-income areas, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services. Catlin passed out a document that gave a broad description of the plan and one that listed goals, objectives, identified needs, recommended programs, funding, and implementation (see agenda file).

A Community Development Commission will be formed, and the Mayor will appoint members that will include a representative from the HRC. In the following years, people will apply for membership just like the other City commissions and committees. Catlin said if any of the group was interested in serving on the newly formed commission,

they should let her know. The commission would oversee policies and launching of programs. They want to make sure all the program activities are accessible to the minority population. Catlin said that since housing is such a big part of the program, they are also thinking about forming a Fair Housing Subcommittee.

Catlin explained that during the first year of the program, they will be balancing between existing programs and new programs. She pointed out that there is a great need of shelters for families with children and for youth on their own. The plan recommends providing support for new shelters in this area. Catlin revealed that Sunrise Park, which is frequented by the Hispanic community, is in the plan to receive a facelift.

It was Catlin's desire that the group review the needs listed on the plan and bring to her attention any additional needs they know of through their experience serving on the HRC. She stated the City Council will be holding a public hearing regarding the program tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. In addition, oral and written comments will be received through August 13, then summarized and brought before the City Council on August 14.

Greenman questioned the amount listed for Program Administration. Catlin responded that when considering the amount, they sought advice from the City of Corvallis. At the end of the first year, the process will be reviewed and they will decide if they need to scale back on the projects. Also, the Action Plan can be amended before then if needed. Catlin will be receiving training on managing the program.

Greenman asked about a shelter for those suffering from domestic violence. CARDVA has a shelter in Corvallis but only an office in Albany. Catlin related that the $32,000 proposed for providing safe emergency housing would not be enough to create a new shelter but could supply support for one. Catlin explained that if all the money is spent in this initial year, we will receive more the next year.

Dodge Vera asked Catlin how people could be involved beyond the comment period. Catlin explained that they are only identifying the funding right now; later there will be an outreach process where they will be incorporating volunteers.

There was discussion about the timeline of the program and the year it starts. Catlin explained that the City received an extension and it will run on our fiscal year.

Catlin concluded her presentation, and the group gave her their appreciation for sharing.

Greeters at Festival Latino (September 15, 2013)

The group was informed that the festival is from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and the actual greeting will be from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

HEART to Heart Resource Fair Survey Results

Greenman handed out a document (see agenda file) showing the survey results along with the survey question to the group. The group felt the results had been sufficiently posted by being included in the agenda packet online but wanted to share them specifically with the City Council and the HEART Board. Hare said that the Council received them with their minutes, and Smith reported that she had distributed them to the HEART Board. Whitley asked Smith if she had received any feedback from the Board. Smith responded that she hadn't.

Dodge Vera specified that she would like to see GAPS added to the list of agencies on the survey. Everyone agreed.

UPDATES

Visit to Cornelius — Centro Cultural

Cervantes is waiting to hear back from the leadership at the cultural center but asked the group if scheduling a visit in late August or early September would work for them. It was decided that August would be too busy. Cervantes suggested observing an upcoming board meeting of the cultural center. The group approved of the idea. Whitley suggested choosing a scheduled board meeting far enough in advance to allow the group to save the date on their calendars. The group agreed.

National Night Out (Tuesday, August 6)

The group decided members will decide on their own which event they will attend and then give a report of their experience at the next meeting.

Joint Meeting Date with Hispanic Advisory Council

Dodge Vera informed the group that the HAC's October meeting is in Corvallis and the November meeting would be in Albany. She asked the group if November would be open for them. Greenman asked about meeting in September. Dodge Vera explained that the HAC would be meeting September 24 at the Albany Chamber of Commerce from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Cervantes suggested having the joint meeting at the Chamber of Commerce from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The group approved. Whitley asked if the group wanted to hold the regular HRC meeting afterwards. Greenman suggested having a short meeting from 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and the group liked the idea. Smith will check with the Chamber about whether the joint meeting and the HRC meeting can be held there on September 24 at the specified times.

Dodge Vera will check with the HAC about possible agenda items.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

None

Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC)

Dodge Vera said that the Council did not meet this month.

Calendar of Events: 2013

Cervantes invited the group to two LBCC events:

- A community forum, August 22 at 6:00 p.m., regarding the differences between Oregon driver cards and Oregon driver licenses
- A presentation by Dr Shakti Butler, October 9 at 3:00 p.m., regarding racial inequity.

Cervantes asked that the group extend the invitation to their networks. He will have a flyer soon announcing the events.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

Council policy regarding meeting attendance

Whitely reminded the group that there is a policy regarding meeting attendance. She requested that City staff send the policy out to the group for them to read.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, August 27, 2013, 7:00 p.m. Greenman announced that she will not be able to attend this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Whitley adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Wes Hare
City Manager