APPROVED: September 24, 2013

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)

City Hall, Willamette Room
Tuesday, August 27, 2013
MINUTES

Commissioners present: Kim Whitley, Jay Sluiter, Javier Cervantes, Michael Thomson, Leonor Rodriguez (arrived at 7:06), and Tina Dodge Vera (arrived at 7:04)

Commissioners absent: Nancy Greenman (excused)

Staff present: Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer; Mario Lattanzio, Police Chief

Others present: None

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 23, 2013

MOTION: Jay Sluiter made a motion to approve the minutes; Javier Cervantes seconded. Approved 4-0 (Tina Dodge Vera and Leonor Rodriguez joined the meeting after the minutes had been approved).

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

Introduction of City's new Police Chief – Mario Lattanzio

Kim Whitley welcomed Mario Lattanzio to the meeting. Lattanzio introduced himself to the group. Lattanzio began summarizing areas of focus as the new Police Chief.

Lattanzio is eager to have a greater presence in the community. He reported that the replacement for the vacant Community Education Specialist position, Sandy Roberts, will be starting on September 16. Once Roberts gets on board, Lattanzio plans on establishing a Community Policing Advisory Board and to have regular meetings with the Neighborhood Watch block captains. Whitley asked what the difference would be between the Community Policing Advisory Board and the Public Safety Commission. Lattanzio explained that the Advisory Board would be an avenue of communication between the community and the Police Department, whereas the Public Safety Commission advises the City Council on matters pertaining to the Fire and Police Departments. Whitley asked how the members would be chosen. Lattanzio responded that it will depend on the feedback. It has been his experience that it can be left open to all who want to be involved. A group of 15 to 20 people is manageable; if the response becomes greater than that, they can determine how they would narrow the pool. Whitley asked how the openings would be advertised. Lattanzio answered that when Roberts starts, she will be communicating with the block captains. Whitley asked if that would only involve those neighborhoods that participate in National Night Out. Marilyn Smith explained that not all registered neighborhoods host an event. There are over 40 neighborhood watch groups; and, this year, 34 participated in National Night Out. Whitley expressed concern of high crime neighborhoods being left out of the process. Lattanzio related that Roberts will work on outreach to unregistered neighborhoods to get them involved.

Lattanzio shared that he is focusing on more data-driven policing. He is instituting a CompStat model. The department had a pre-Compstat meeting last week and will have its first official meeting in a couple of weeks. The staff will try to meet every other day, Monday through Friday, to look at the crime trends of the past couple of days, make adjustments, and establish missions for the patrols. In the past, they have done a good job of gathering data from the programs they have, but he would like to see the data retrieved more in "real time" with the crimes. The programs they are using now are over 20 years old and outdated. The biggest problem is that the programs don't work digitally; they have to scan information into Word documents before it can be shared. Lattanzio is looking for funding to upgrade the department's equipment.

Whitley asked the group if they had any questions for Lattanzio. Thomson commented that the ideas Lattanzio had relayed were good. Whitley agreed, calling them progressive. Sluiter asked if data-sharing equipment in the vehicles worked digitally. Lattanzio answered that the vehicles don't communicate with the record management system. He explained that the records are secure within the Police Department. Cervantes asked how many officers patrol at peak times. Lattanzio responded that there are seven officers patrolling at a time within a 12-hour shift. Cervantes then asked about whether the department offered Spanish program training for the officers. Lattanzio said that he would have to ask about that. He went on to explain that any training is hard to implement with the Department's limited staff. In order to send a group of officers to training and still maintain sufficient patrol, the Department has to pay overtime.

Dodge Vera commented that there has been a perceived problem with racial profiling of Hispanics by the law enforcement agencies in the area. In the past, when trying to research the problem, she was told that the agencies do not collect "stop" data or demographics. She asked Lattanzio if this was correct. Lattanzio responded that, for the most part, that was correct and that it depended on the type of stop. A citation or ticket is not going to have the data that a crime report would have. They always record the name, date of birth, and address but not always a narrative. Lattanzio stated that he is thinking about reinstituting the use of the Field Interview Card in appropriate situations. Cervantes asked if there were any opportunities to see the Department create a monthly report summarizing the number of contacts or other data regarding particular communities. Lattanzio responded that they can pull the information regarding the people contacted for them to review. Cervantes inquired if there was access to the information online, something like the Dashboard, instead of having to request it. Lattanzio said that, at this time, there is not; that is something they would have to develop. Eventually, they will have the CompStat information posted online.

Dodge Vera asked when someone is pulled over and their license is run, if it is automatically connected to immigration. Lattanzio said that he is not familiar yet with Oregon's process, but in Arizona that was not the case. When someone's license is run, it is only checking their driving record and any holds attached to the license plate. If immigration has a hold on a plate, that will come up. Dodge Vera asked if undocumented citizens are taken into custody. Lattanzio replied that only if there is a warrant out for them.

Whitley recognized the challenge before Lattanzio where he has much to do and less to do it with. Lattanzio comes from a force of 1,200, whereas Albany has 87. She told Lattanzio that she was glad he was here. Sluiter, along with the group, welcomed him to the community. Lattanzio thanked the group for their time and told Dodge Vera that if she had more questions that he would be happy to speak with her further. Dodge Vera thanked him and acknowledged that he would be coming to speak at the next HAC meeting.

Human Relations Award competition

Whitley summarized the process for the group, stating that the applications would be launched in October. Whitley asked the group if they would like to form a subcommittee to handle the details of the competition. The group agreed. Thomson and Dodge Vera volunteered to be a part of the committee. Thomson said that he would contact Nancy Greenman to invite her participation on the committee, as well. If Greenman declines, Whitley will send an e-mail out to the group to solicit another member for the committee.

Thomson shared that he is uncomfortable using the wording of "winner" and "runners-up" to define the three finalists in each category. He said that he foresees the choice being a hard one with all the finalists being winners in their own right. Dodge Vera suggested using the word "recipient" instead of "winner." Cervantes recommended using the format from the Olympics, where gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded. The group was pleased with the Olympic format.

DEBRIEFS

River Rhythms concert (Thursday, August 1)

Dodge Vera reported that she and Greenman welcomed people to the event and collected donations. She said that it was a great experience. Whitley asked if they had received feedback as commissioners. Dodge Vera responded that even though they wore their commission name tags, she didn't feel people really noticed that they were from the HRC.

National Night Out (Tuesday, August 6)

Sluiter reported that he attended his complex's event, where there were six people in attendance. He explained that the low numbers could have been because there is not a lot of stability at the complex; people come and go. Sluiter described it as a positive experience where he got to know his neighbors better. No one else had anything to report.

Northwest Art & Air Festival (August 23-25)

Sluiter worked at the event doing air traffic control and did not have a lot of contact with the public. He reported that 200 youngsters (100 each day), between the ages of 8 and 17, received airplane rides. He said that youth involvement is encouraged.

Sluiter also attended the Saturday night VIP dinner and Foreigner concert. He commented that it was a beautiful evening that had been organized well and ran smoothly.

Smith gave some statistics for the event, stating that it was well attended with about 38 percent coming from out of town. Sluiter asked how much money was collected in donations at the event. Smith apologized that she did not have that amount as of yet.

UPDATES

Joint meeting date change with Hispanic Advisory Council from September 24 to October 22

Whitley informed the group that holding the meeting September 24 would not work logistically and asked if they would like to hold the meeting on October 22. The group agreed on October 22 as the date for the joint meeting. Whitley said that she would e-mail the group with the details of time and place.

Visit to Cornelius — Centro Cultural

Cervantes has set up a tentative date of September 18 to take the tour. Whitley suggested, instead of trying to fit everyone's schedule, to just plan it for that day and those available could go. She doesn't want this opportunity missed. The group agreed. Cervantes reminded the group that this would not be an official meeting where they discussed business, but an opportunity to learn. He told the group that he was thinking of leaving Albany at around 1:00 p.m. and returning around 5:00 p.m. He will e-mail everyone when it is set.

Council policy regarding meeting attendance

Whitley informed the group that the policy had been sent out by staff member Laura Hyde and there had been a response asking for clarification on a particular point. Whitley asked Smith if that had been resolved. Smith responded that Hyde had answered the question in a reply e-mail. Gina Burrese read the e-mail to the group regarding the clarification of what constituted an excused absence: An absence is excused by the presiding officer when the member has communicated that they will not be present, and is unexcused when the member does not communicate beforehand that they won't be there.

Leonor Rodriguez asked about the allowed amount of absences and the reasoning behind it. Smith answered that a member is allowed no more than two consecutive unexcused absences, explaining that the City follows the standards set by the state for board and commission meetings. Rodriguez stated that she had not been aware of the policy. She suggested holding some sort of orientation for newly appointed members that would explain procedures and expectations. The group agreed that that was a good idea.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

None

Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC)

Dodge Vera reported that they had a nice meeting in which the council met with Benton County District Attorney John Haroldson. They learned about his rich bicultural background. In addition to meeting Haroldson, the HAC discussed their prior meeting with the Albany Chamber of Commerce and their concern that the Chamber is not connecting to the increasing number of Latino businesses in the area. Cervantes said that there is a gap in developing the business community for the economic benefit of the entire city. He expressed that the vitality of our community and the downtown area depends on Hispanic business. He sees the HRC helping to bring community understanding and bridging the breech that exists. Smith recommended that the HAC bring their concerns to Kate Porsche, the Economic Development and Urban Renewal Director at the City. Cervantes took down her contact information. Dodge Vera said that the District Attorney shared with the HAC that last year the national Latino population had $1.3 trillion in buying power. Cervantes said that he has information that he will bring to the group regarding the economic contributions from the Latino community.

Calendar of Events: 2013

Cervantes reminded the group of a presentation at LBCC on October 9, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., where Dr. Shakti Butler will speak on racial inequity. He relayed that the event is free and open to the public. Dr. Butler is a nationally renowned speaker and will also be speaking at OSU the next day. Cervantes will be distributing posters for the LBCC event.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

Greeters at Festival Latino from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Sunday, September 15, 2013; Monteith Riverpark

Whitley will greet from 11:00 to noon and Thomson will greet from noon to 1:00 p.m. Cervantes and Dodge Vera will be there throughout the event. Greenman had previously expressed her desire to attend but was not present to verify. Dodge Vera conveyed to the group that there were lots of activities planned that they would not want to miss out on. She will bring a poster to the group showcasing the event.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, September 24, 2013; 7:00 p.m. at City Hall, Willamette Room

ADJOURNMENT

Whitley adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Wes Hare
City Manager