



APPROVED: 10/22/2013

## HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)

City Hall, Willamette Room

Tuesday, September 24, 2013

### MINUTES

Commissioners present: Kim Whitley, Jay Sluiter, Javier Cervantes (arrived at 7:07 p.m.), Nancy Greenman, and Michael Thomson

Commissioners absent: Tina Dodge Vera (excused)

Staff present: Stewart Taylor, Finance Director; Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer

Others present: Robert Duncan

#### CALL TO ORDER

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

Marilyn Smith introduced Robert Duncan, appointee nominee to the HRC. Duncan shared a little about himself with the group. He is an Oregon native but lived in Spain for several years. Duncan's wife is Peruvian Spanish and his children are all Spanish. He has a journalist background and has worked as a consultant. His work has carried him to such places as the Middle East and India. Duncan has also worked in the oil industry and as a bull fighting photographer.

The group welcomed Duncan and introduced themselves, describing briefly about their backgrounds.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 23, 2013

**MOTION:** Michael Thomson made a motion to approve the minutes; Jay Sluiter seconded. Approved 5-0

#### SCHEDULED BUSINESS

#### BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

#### Preparation of 2013 HRC Annual Report

Kim Whitley informed the group that it was time to be thinking about the annual report. She described last year's model and asked if the group wanted to keep that model or to change. Greenman said that, if the group wanted the same model, she would work up a draft report to review at the next meeting. The group approved.

#### Human Relations Award

Michael Thomson passed out a document (see agenda file) summarizing the decisions of the subcommittee. The subcommittee is comprised of Thomson, Nancy Greenman, and Tina Dodge Vera. The name for the award will be staying the same. The subcommittee will select the recipients for both categories. In each category, three finalists will be announced; an award will be presented to one and a certificate to the other two. Thomson said that the timeline begins next month and that the group needs to be getting the word out.

Greenman asked if the application materials existed in both Spanish and English. Smith answered that they did. Greenman expressed that she foresees it being a challenge to obtain enough nominees. Whitley explained that that was why they were working with Greg Roe of the United Way. Whitley asked that Smith contact Roe to begin promoting the award. Whitley also requested that the award be placed on the joint meeting agenda next month so that they can communicate the process to the HAC. Greenman inquired if Smith could inform HEART of the award. Smith agreed to do that, saying that HEART is connected to several local organizations that could spread the word. Javier Cervantes asked if the City had contacts with the *Albany Democrat-Herald* to publicize the award. Smith said that the City does and explained that, in the past, the ADH did articles featuring the winner of the award.

Whitley reviewed the time schedule with the group, stating that they should probably move the selection date to the first week in January. Smith asked about the turnaround time for making the award. Thomson answered that, since Aurora Glass already has our logo, it should only be a couple of weeks. Whitley asked if the HRC would have money to provide two awards. Stewart Taylor responded that they would. Thomson reported that he had checked with the Mayor about the possibility of having lunch with the individual chosen and that Konopa was happy to do that. Jay Sluiter suggested that the HRC provide a certificate for each nominee to recognize them. Smith shared that the Albany Chamber of Commerce prints a list of all the nominees for their annual award. Greenman said that the subcommittee could take the suggestion under consideration based on the number of nominees submitted. Whitley said that, if they were able to list ten or more nominees, it would be a good idea. Sluiter expressed that the group should be able to come up with at least ten nominees from their human relations dealings.

## DEBRIEFS

### Festival Latino (Sunday, September 15)

Whitley asked if there was an attendance total. Thomson was the last one using the counter at 1:30 p.m. and it read 250. Cervantes reported that they approximated that 750 people had attended the event through 6:00 p.m. He conveyed that the event went too long and that a couple of hours need to be eliminated from next year's event. There were a lot of performances causing it to be somewhat cost prohibitive and taxing on the volunteers. Cervantes said that the activities were well received and performed really well. Greenman shared that the youth who volunteered were great. Cervantes said that those in attendance were appreciative of the outreach. Thomson stated that, perhaps, the HRC needs to be more than just greeters next year. Cervantes commented that there were three key people who organized the event and that they are always looking for more volunteers. Whitley expressed that the event was well put together and that she enjoyed herself. Cervantes announced that next year's event will be on Sunday, September 14, from noon to 5:00 p.m.

Whitley commented that the event needs more advertising and to have an online presence. She shared that, when she searched online to confirm the time of the event, it did not come up. She searched the City's website and could not find anything there either. Smith said that next year they could post the event on the City's website. The group approved. Cervantes explained that the promotion of the event was driven all by volunteers. Duncan suggested utilizing the Downtown Association by contacting the director, Oscar Hult. Cervantes said that the assistance would be greatly appreciated. The event is mainly broadcast through church connections and such. The day after the event there was an article in the ADH with three pictures of different booths. Smith volunteered to take any other pictures from the event and create a brief commercial to air on the City's TV channel. The group affirmed the suggestion, and it was suggested to contact Tina Dodge Vera to obtain photographs of the event.

Whitley made a motion to recognize the work of Tina Dodge Vera, Iris Carasco, and Rosa Plasencia in supporting the HRC's mission by coordinating Festival Latino; Greenman seconded. Approved 5-0.

### Visit to Cornelius – Centro Cultural (Wednesday, September 18)

Cervantes reported that, once the Center got back to him, they offered to host the group on October 14, 21, or 22. It was decided that Cervantes and Greenman will go on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Greenman would like for Cervantes and herself to formulate some questions beforehand. Cervantes will do a PowerPoint presentation detailing the visit at the joint meeting with the HAC next month. He requested the use of the City's projector.

Greenman shared that she would like to see the group supporting the community as they adjust to the change with the General Educational Development (GED). She informed the group that the GED curriculum was being sold to a private entity. Greenman suggested that the group visit the Multicultural Literacy Center in Corvallis. She said that the HRC is already multiculturally focused but she envisions the group broadening to become literacy-focused as well. Duncan interjected that Chemeketa has a very good GED program. Sluiter expressed his surprise that the GED was not being run federally. Cervantes responded that it was consistent with the education trend.

#### UPDATES

##### Other volunteer opportunities

None.

##### Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC)

Cervantes reported that the HAC had met with the Albany Chamber of Commerce earlier that day. He said that the members left the meeting frustrated. They felt that their questions regarding diversity in business had not been adequately addressed and that responses from the Chamber's president, Janet Steele, had come across as defensive and resistant. Whitley asked if the Chamber had any plans to reach out to the Hispanic businesses. Cervantes responded that they didn't. Smith asked how many of the Chamber's board attended the meeting. Cervantes answered that the president was the only one there and that she did a presentation for the Council. Cervantes said that it would have been nice to have had participation from the board.

Cervantes expressed that he would like to see the Chamber's focus to be inclusive. Cervantes conveyed that the HAC was not trying to force through anything; they would just like the Chamber to recognize the need with there being such an explosion in the Spanish population. He said that Steele relayed that she felt that the group wanted the Chamber to highlight or target an outreach to a specialized group, which they don't do. It was argued, though, that the Chamber does do outreach for specialized business groups such as woman and youth.

Cervantes reported that the Police Chief's contributions to the meeting were very impressive. Mario Lattanzio provided answers to the questions that he was not able to answer at the last HRC meeting. The HAC was pleased that Lattanzio communicated that the percentage of diversity on the police force should match that of the community. Cervantes expressed that the City did a good job in hiring Lattanzio.

Cervantes voiced that, in light of the outcome of the meeting with the Chamber, he will be contacting the head of the Chamber's board and the general manager of the ADH with his concerns.

Greenman expressed her appreciation that US Bank makes a concerted effort to be accessible to the Hispanic community.

##### Calendar of Events: 2013

Whitley pointed out that Mental Illness Awareness week is October 6 - 12. Greenman asked Whitley how the transition to the Coordinated Care Organizations was going. Whitley responded that she felt the community is feeling better about it. Whitley asked the group if they want to participate in the Community Meal again this year since the HRC was so well received at the event last year. The First Christian Church hosts the meal every Tuesday evening, and it will fall on October 8 during the Mental Illness Awareness week. The group was in favor of the meal but recognized that last year's event had been in conjunction with the Linn County Department of Health. The Health Department has not contacted the group with any plans for this year, so Smith volunteered to contact Frank Moore, Director. The group is interested in attending the movie that is annually featured during this time by the Mental Health Advisory Board and asked if Smith could find out when it was being held. Smith committed to acquiring the details and e-mailing it to the group. Since there is not a lot of time to plan an activity in honor of the week, Whitley suggested that the group attend Dr. Shakti Butler's presentation at LBCC on October 9. Greenman responded that she would not be able to attend as it is during her work hours. Whitley requested that Mental Illness Awareness Week be added to the next agenda so that the group could brainstorm ideas for next year.

Cervantes passed out posters for the October 9 presentation at LBCC by Dr. Shakti Butler. He asked if the poster could be posted at City Hall. Smith responded that if the HRC was endorsing the event, it would be fine.

Greenman moved that the HRC endorse Dr. Shakti Butler's presentation on racial inequity at LBCC on October 9, 2013; Thomson seconded. Approved 5-0. Smith will hang the poster at City Hall.

This year's Homelessness Summit will be Wednesday, November 6 at City Hall from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Smith relayed that this year's focus is on chronic homelessness. They will discuss the panhandling issue, which has received a lot of attention, and the issue of people not feeling comfortable about staying at the shelters. Smith shared that the recent ordinances prohibiting open containers of alcohol and depositing of human waste have brought about changes in behavior. She reported that the results of a survey conducted last month on homelessness will be discussed at the summit. In past years, the summit has been mainly comprised of service providers, but they are hoping this year to solicit involvement from the community.

Sluiter made a motion to cancel the December meeting; Cervantes seconded. Approved 5-0.

Whitley expressed her appreciation to Cervantes for keeping the group informed about LBCC happenings.

Whitley requested that the MLK event be added to the next agenda. Greenman conveyed that the Reading of the Letter from the Birmingham Jail was the highlight for her last year. Cervantes said that he would like to do it again but make it unique. He suggested holding it at City Hall, thus bringing LBCC out to the community. Cervantes would like to look into what OSU does in honor of the holiday. It was suggested to incorporate the event with the First Christian Church Community meal. Cervantes suggested tying the event in with the ending of the Afghanistan War.

**BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION**

None.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Tuesday, October 22, 2013; 4:00 p.m. at City Hall, Municipal Court Room  
3:00 p.m. joint meeting with Hispanic Advisory Council  
4:00 p.m. regular HRC meeting

Whitley stated that she will need to leave the meeting around 4:20 and asked if Greenman could take over the rest of the meeting for her. Greenman agreed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Whitley adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Signature on file*

Gina Burrese  
Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by,

*Signature on file*

Stewart Taylor  
Finance Director