APPROVED: February, 24, 2015

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)

City Hall, Municipal Court Room
Tuesday, January 20, 2015
MINUTES

Commissioners present: Kim Whitley, Graham Kislingbury, Tina Dodge Vera, Javier Cervantes

Commissioners absent: Jay Sluiter (excused), Debbie Berg (excused), Chris Equinoa (excused)

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

Others present: Peter Goodman

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kim Whitley called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER

Whitley introduced Graham Kislingbury. Kislingbury explained that he has lived in Albany since 1984 and Corvallis before that. In 2006, Kislingbury helped to start this Commission and gave a short history behind the desire to see it created. Javier Cervantes asked if this history was documented. Marilyn Smith explained that the history is detailed in the early minutes of the Commission. Kislingbury shared that in 1990, while working at the *Albany Democrat Herald*, a Neo-Nazi group had come to Albany and wanted to conduct a march. He wrote an editorial in the paper expressing his concern over the matter.

The Commissioners introduced themselves and told how long they have been serving.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 25, 2014

MOTION: Cervantes made a motion to approve the minutes; Kislingbury seconded. Approved 4-0.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Whitley requested that the election be postponed until the next meeting when more members may be present. Also, Whitley announced that she will not be seeking nomination for the position of Chair.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Business from the Public

None

Draft Limited English Proficiency Plan

Management Assistant/Public Information Officer Marilyn Smith displayed a copy of the newly created Language Identification Flashcards. Graphics and Web Specialist Matt Harrington created both a regular and pocket size for employees to utilize. The pocket size lists only the most common languages and will be laminated. A supply of the cards will be produced and kept at the front counters. Whitley requested that the format of the cards be made available to area agencies.

Cervantes commented that normally Spanish is a second language for Hispanics and that most speak a regional language. He stated that it might be worthwhile to examine those languages as an addition to the card. Cervantes volunteered to research translation contacts for regional languages of Mexico.

The Commission expressed their approval of the Limited English Proficiency Plan. Tina Dodge Vera asked how often the plan would be reviewed or updated. City Manager Wes Hare said that they hadn't set a schedule, but imagined they would revisit it as the need dictates. Kislingbury suggested creating a news release regarding the plan. Smith volunteered to create one.

MOTION: Whitley made a motion to recommend the Limited English Proficiency Plan with the stipulation that it be reviewed at least every two years; Cervantes seconded. Approved 4-0

The group agreed that they will wait before giving their recommendation to the City Council until after the news release to allow time for feedback from the public.

Signage/literature/HRC's mission statement: Distribution at City-sponsored events

The group approved of the signage. They expressed their appreciation of Graphics and Web Specialist Matt Harrington for creating it.

Immigrant economic impact study

Cervantes explained that it would be beneficial to the community to have a study conducted that would evaluate the impact minority business have on our community and the business owner's experiences. He suggested soliciting a non-paid intern who could canvass the city to collect the data needed. Hare said that the Employment Department could potentially provide some of that data. He will contact Labor Economist Will Summers of the Employment Department to see what information is available. Whitley commented that it is important to make a welcoming environment for businesses as well as individuals.

Preparation of 2014 HRC Annual Report

Whitley requested that City staff provide a list of the Commission's activities for the past year to aid in preparation of the report.

Ballot Measure 88 discussion: outcome and how group could address positional fall out

Cervantes explained that the measure was overwhelmingly voted down in Linn County. He asked staff if the breakdown was available yet on how Albany voted compared to the whole of Linn County. Smith answered that it should be and that she would retrieve it for the group. Cervantes expressed that having the information might assist them in educating the community regarding the matter and to move forward in making Albany more welcoming. Kislingbury shared that a forum he attended regarding the measure had a speaker make the point that he would rather employ people who have some form of a license. Whitley noted that knowing the percentage of undocumented people in Albany might help with educating the community. Cervantes said that it would be reasonable to assume it would be the same as the state demographic which is about 4 to 5 percent.

DEBRIEFS

Martin Luther King, Jr. event

The event had good coverage in the newspaper; both Whitley and Cervantes were pictured on the front page of the *Albany Democrat Herald*. Whitley reported that she had emailed a copy of the speech they were to read to the employees at Good Samaritan and she received a lot of positive feedback. Whitley read one comment she received stating the speech reminded the person that we all have a part in this together.

Cervantes thanked City staff for the posters created to advertise the event. He also expressed his appreciation to Kislingbury for reading his portion of the speech with such raw emotion.

The group agreed that they would like some form of this event to remain as a yearly occasion on the HRC calendar. Discussion followed on what next year's event could look like. Kislingbury suggested hosting a showing of a movie such as *Selma*. In order to obtain a bigger audience, Smith suggested reading the speech at other events such as those hosted by the Albany Chamber of Commerce. Whitley added sending the speech to the Chamber employees. Cervantes reported that a school teacher told him she would like to bring her class if there was a reading next year. In light of this report, it was suggested to read a Martin Luther King, Jr. speech at school assemblies. Cervantes recommended having a reception with light refreshments along with the reading at City Hall again. Smith suggested including pecan pie seeing how it was a favorite of Martin Luther King, Jr.

UPDATES

2014 Human Relation Award

Whitley gave an update from Executive Assistant to the City Manager Laura Hyde: two applications have been submitted; one for individual and one for a business, with the expectation of one more individual submission.

The award was announced through six different news releases, on the City website, at the Annual Summit on Homelessness, and to the HEART board. With ten days left before the submittal deadline, Smith will tweet one last announcement. Cervantes asked for the website link for him to share with LBCC's campus. Kislingbury suggested each commission member announce it on their own Facebook pages. Dodge Vera asked about announcing it on the City's cable channel. Hare explained that not many watch the channel.

Other volunteer opportunities

None.

Hispanic Advisory Council (HAC)

Dodge Vera said that they won't be meeting until next week.

Calendar of Events: 2015

Whitley will contact Linn County regarding the status of their plans for Mental Health month and beyond.

Cervantes asked whether or not the Sunrise Park renovation would be ready to host a National Night Out event. Dodge Vera said that they have not received any updates on the project from the P&R Department. Smith is going to check in with Parks Director Ed Hodney. Hare suggested having a "Fun in the Park" event in connection with National Night Out and a grand opening. The group liked the idea and Cervantes said that LBCC would be happy to participate. Whitley requested that the status of Sunrise Park's renovation be on the next agenda.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

Cervantes reported that he had watched the video of the last City Council meeting and was appalled by two testimonies given. He said that HRC members would be well served to review the testimonies to learn what some people are thinking about human relations and how they perceive the Commission. One of the testimonies referenced Kislingbury's commission application where he used the words "social justice". The person's testimony shared their negative concept of the wording.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Tuesday, February 24, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

Whitley adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Wes Hare
City Manager