



APPROVED: June 28, 2016

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)

City Hall, Municipal Court Room

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

MINUTES

Commissioners present: Javier Cervantes, Graham Kislingbury, Tina Dodge Vera, Kim Whitley, Denise Hughes-Tafen

Commissioners absent: Chris Equinoa (excused)

Staff present: Jorge Salinas, Assistant City Manager/Chief Information Officer

Others present: None

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Javier Cervantes called the meeting to order at 4:12 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 23, 2016

MOTION: Tina Dodge Vera made a motion to approve the minutes; Kim Whitley seconded. Approved 5-0.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Business from the Public

None.

River Rhythms concert dates

Graham Kislingbury said that he will pass the basket at most of the concerts. He will get back to the group with the ones he will not be able to do.

National Night Out event

Cervantes asked the group what they wanted to do for an event since the renovations at Sunrise Park will not be complete. Kislingbury suggested hosting the event there anyway. Tina Dodge Vera said that it would be a good way to update the community on the status of the renovations. Denise Hughes-Tafen asked if the park would be useable. Assistant City Manager/Chief Information Officer Jorge Salinas explained that wetland mitigation studies still need to be conducted before anything can be built, but the park is still available to use. Cervantes said that hosting an event there would be a nice gesture to show the community that they are not forgotten. The group agreed. Dodge Vera asked if it would be under construction. Cervantes replied that, if that was the case, they could still use a corner of the park. Kislingbury noted that the park would be a nice venue to host the informational forum that they discussed in the joint meeting with the Hispanic Advisory Committee (HAC). Kim Whitley said that, if construction was a concern, they could block off the street and hold the event in the street. She requested that City staff look into the feasibility of having the event in the street.

The group decided to host an event at Sunrise Park and advertise it by putting leaflets on neighborhood doorknobs. They are considering doing a BBQ/potluck where they would provide the meet and guests would bring side dishes. The group decided to invite the Mayor and Deputy Fire Marshal Alfred Mendez to host the event with them. Cervantes suggested providing bike helmet certificates at the event to those that needed them. There was discussion on having the Parks & Recreation Department and/or the Fire Department help with barbecuing the meat.

Cervantes recommended forming a planning committee for the event and asked who would be willing to be a point person. Hughes-Tafen and Kislingbury offered to assist. Dodge Vera commented that she wouldn't mind being the point person but would like to see a City staff person in that role to make a strong connection with the neighborhood.

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It was decided that Cervantes and Dodge Vera would be the point people. Dodge Vera will connect with Management Assistant/Public Information Officer Marilyn Smith and the new Crime Prevention Specialist who would be directing the National Night Out event.

DEBRIEFS

Coffee with a Cop, Thursday, May 5

Salinas attended the event and reported that public participation was very low. Whitley commented that Allann Bros is out of the way. Dodge Vera asked when the next one was, and Salinas offered to check for her.

Dr. Robin DiAngelo, LBCC guest speaker, Monday, May 9

Kislingbury and Dodge Vera attended the event. Dodge Vera said that it was good but felt it was rushed with the amount of information that was being relayed in the time allotted. She appreciated the way the speaker defined things and explained institutional racism as a bird in a cage. Cervantes said that the presentation was recorded and suitable to broadcast on the City's public access channel. He is looking into editing the Tim Wise recording so it can be broadcast as well. Kislingbury commented that he thought the lecture was good and that it was similar to a book he just read, *Pre-Post-Racial America*. Approximately 200 hundred people attended the presentation. Dodge Vera asked if anyone from law enforcement was there, and Cervantes answered that he had not seen anyone.

GAPS Community Forums for Oregon Rising

Dodge Vera asked the group to please take note that the last session will be tomorrow night. She explained that the forums were geared to get feedback to pass on to the state legislator. The forums are more informal than school board meetings. Kislingbury said that one of the forums he went to had a lot of Latino families in attendance. Hughes-Tafen commented that the Latinos were there but didn't speak. She expressed that the majority group at the forum seemed to overshadow the opinion or perspective of the smaller groups with less representation during the event. Hughes-Tafen added that the forum at Clover Ridge had many families with disabilities who attended.

Dodge Vera said that she plans on attending tomorrow night's forum to express her concern with South Albany High School's mascot that is based on slavery and can be viewed as hateful. The dual-immersion program that her children attend is being moved from West Albany High School to South Albany, and she will not send her children to a school that would tolerate a symbol of hate. Conversation ensued regarding the mascot, what it symbolizes, how it is viewed, and why it is allowed.

One Vibe Diversity Day! At LBCC, Wednesday, May 11

Kislingbury attended the event and had about twelve people visit the HRC table.

HEART to Heart Resource Fair, Thursday, May 19

Kislingbury said it was a good event. Dodge Vera reported that the attendance was great. There were a lot of organizations and resources represented.

Joint meeting with the Linn-Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee

No discussion

UPCOMING EVENT

GAPS Community Forum for Oregon Rising @ South Albany High School May 25

This item was discussed under the Debriefs section.

UPDATES

Other volunteer opportunities

The Parks & Recreation's Summer Sounds concerts were suggested.

Linn-Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee

No report was given since the group had just met with the committee, but Dodge Vera reiterated that it would legitimize the "know your rights" forum being planned if the City became involved with it.

Calendar of Events: 2016

Kislingbury said that he did not get a chance to reconnect with the Pix Theater owner. It was discussed to include the owner in the Martin Luther King, Jr., speech readings. Cervantes requested that they discuss plans for this event during the summer meetings.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSON

The group further discussed the mascot issue, asking what their next step should be. It was suggested that they meet with the school superintendent to ask questions and discuss concerns. They would like to know about the high school's curriculum, too. Hughes-Tafen recommended that the group first do an exploration to see if there are already plans in regards to the mascot. Cervantes responded that they could ask the question at tomorrow night's GAPS Community Forums for Oregon Rising. Dodge Vera objected that the question was appropriate as a parent but not as a Commission member. Kislingbury suggested enlisting the CARE group and others to help address the situation. Whitley noted that the group needs to keep their mission in mind of creating harmonious relations. She would support inviting the superintendent to an HRC meeting to discuss the mascot rather than at the public forum. Hughes-Tafen agreed, saying the superintendent would more likely answer their questions here during an HRC meeting than at the forum.

Whitley excused herself from the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

It was decided that Cervantes would send out an invitation to the superintendent and copy Kislingbury. The group discussed including the high school's student body president and someone in charge of the curriculum. Cervantes will not be here for the June HRC meeting, so, as co-chair, Kislingbury will lead the meeting.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Tuesday, June 28, 2016

ADJOURNMENT

Cervantes adjourned the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Signature on file

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant

Jorge Salinas
Assistant City Manager/Chief Information Officer