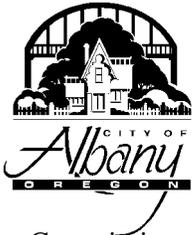


HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION (HRC)

City Hall, Municipal Court Room

Tuesday, November 22, 2016

MINUTES



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

Commissioners absent: Chris Equinoa (excused), Graham Kislingbury (excused)

Staff present: Jorge Salinas, Assistant City Manager/CIO; Wes Hare, City Manager

Others present: Dave Toler, Director of Senior & Disability Services at Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Javier Cervantes called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 25, 2016

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

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Business from the Public

None.

PowerPoint presentation: senior & disability services in your community

Whitley introduced Dave Toler and explained how this topic relates to the HRC mission. Toler shared that Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) has about 160 employees, and that they have a small office in Corvallis and Toledo. The Albany office is their base. Mayor Sharon Konopa is the chair on their board. Toler gave a PowerPoint presentation (*see agenda file*) describing the available senior & disability services. Toler explained how their Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) is different from the local 211 service. The ADRC is helpful when someone doesn't know what they want, and it is more in-depth than the 211 service. Toler said that Oregon leads the nation in helping individuals stay in their homes and that their veterans program could be a model for the state.

OCWCOG assists clients with enrolling in the Oregon Health Plan. They are trying to change the plan to be one that is opted out of rather than one you need to opt into so that more people would be utilizing the service. Toler described that the hardest issue to deal with for him is the issue of elderly abuse. He said that he feels awareness of the problem is 20 to 30 years behind domestic violence. OCWCOG conducts the initial investigations and then passes the cases on to law enforcement. Toler finds the cases difficult because most are caused by the victim's own family members. Cervantes asked if there was a campaign to bring awareness. Toler answered that they work with the District Attorney's Office, but state funding used to teach the community about warning signs was cut. Also, Toler explained that they are so swamped taking care of the present cases that there is no time left over to work on community education.

The PowerPoint listed the office's main programs, but Toler said his presentation just scratched the surface. One of the programs highlighted was Hospital to Home that has greatly reduced readmissions into the hospital. The program is provided through a contract with Samaritan Albany General Hospital. He passed out ADRC brochures (*see agenda file*) and informed the group that the program Oregon Project Independence has a waiting list.

Dodge Vera, as an advertising idea, suggested Toler put the OCWCOG PowerPoint on the City's cable channel. Toler will get back to the group if they decide to do that.

Cervantes asked about services for Spanish-speaking families. Toler explained that they have at least six Spanish-speaking employees that provide great service to those who come in, but he feels they are under serving the larger part of the Hispanic community that do not know to come to them. The organization provides brochures in Spanish, but the outreach is not great. Discussion followed on eligibility for the program. Toler explained that their hands are tied to only provide services to permanent citizens.

OCWCOG coordinates with the Albany Senior Center for their meal site. Toler said that interfacing with a community's Senior Center is more likely to happen when the center is city supported like Albany's rather than privately supported as is the case in some communities. Denise Hughes-Tafen asked when it is recommended for individual with disabilities to get in touch with the resource connection. Toler answered as soon as they are 18 years of age. They should come in if there are any barriers to them getting where they want to be.

Public meeting information and protocols

Assistant City Manager/CIO/Interim Economic Development Director Jorge Salinas went over the public meeting protocols with the group from page 9 of the agenda. In regards to a question asked at the last meeting, he added that the group can invite elected officials to speak at their meetings. The meeting protocols are followed by the City's other commissions, boards, and committees and are important to avoid personal liability issues.

Protection of our most vulnerable communities now that the election is over

Cervantes passed out ORS 181.850 (*see agenda file*). He shared that he has been faced with several students who have anxiety over losing their jobs or not being able to continue school. Cervantes pointed out that some cities are presenting themselves as sanctuary cities or safe havens for those who are vulnerable. The cities set up statements of being welcoming such as the City of Corvallis which is drafting a resolution in response to the issue. Dodge Vera asked what was happening at the city level for Albany. City Manager Wes Hare responded that the City does not enforce immigration laws. He also stated that the City does not know what is going to happen and that they are subject to federal law. Cervantes noted that the City Council passed a resolution a few years back about Albany being welcoming. He does not know if it would be effective to pursue something like that again. Cervantes expressed his concern over the use of local law enforcement resources to enforce federal immigration law. He ended the discussion by explaining that he brought up the topic as a point of clarification and reminder of the law.

DEBRIEFS

"Freedom of Expression When I Agree With It" presentation

Cervantes facilitated the discussion, and Graham Kislingbury was in attendance. Cervantes reported that there was good discussion with several attendees contributing to the conversation.

Annual Summit on Homelessness

Since Kislingbury, who attended the event, was not present, Cervantes requested the update be placed on the next agenda.

Albany Public Library's Day of the Dead/Día de los Muertos program

Dodge Vera reported that it was a fabulous event where attendees enjoyed the activities that provided history of the holiday along with crafts, music, and face painting.

Mid Valley Stand Down for Homeless Veterans

Since no one at the meeting had attended the event, no update was given.

Caregiver Appreciation Day

No update was given.

International Culture Night

Cervantes said that the event was a great success. There was a good-sized crowd of at least 150 people. The international magician who performed for the evening was very good and well worth watching.

UPDATES

Human Relations Award for Calendar Year 2016

Cervantes informed the group that no nominations had been received as of yet. He asked the group to push for nominations. The deadline may need to be extended. Cervantes expressed that OCWCOG would be a good organization to nominate.

Other volunteer opportunities

Hare informed the group that the deadline for applying for openings on the City's boards, commissions, and committees is December 2.

Linn-Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee (HAC)

The HAC did not meet this month. Their next meeting isn't until January.

2016 Calendar of Events

No new events were added.

2017 Calendar of Events

The Unity Celebration at LBCC will be March 1 at 4:30 p.m. Whitley mentioned the MLK event and that the final details will need to be coordinated even if they end up not having a meeting next month.

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSON

Cervantes informed the group that LBCC is going to sponsor screening of *Selma* on the morning of Saturday, January 14, at the Pix Theatre (exact time not set yet). The movie will be free to the public, but there will be a charge for concessions. Plans include meeting afterwards at the nearby restaurant Taqueria Alonzo for discussion on current events related to multicultural and racial issues in light of the recent presidential election and the new administration unfolding. A poster for the MLK event is being created. Kislingbury will get an invoice for LBCC from the theatre.

Dodge Vera made the suggestion to hold an HRC meeting at a different location such as the Albany Public Library. Hare instructed that wherever they decide to hold a meeting it would need to be a venue that is easily accessible and meets all the criteria for a public meeting. Cervantes expressed that he would like to have a meeting at Sunrise Elementary, and Hughes-Tafen suggested South Shore Elementary.

Cervantes brought up the absence of a grocery store in Northwest Albany area. Salinas said he reached out to some supermarket chains with no success, including a Hispanic and Asian one. He said there are packets ready to be sent out to any potential prospects. Hare informed the group that the City has been recruiting for a store since Ray's left the North Albany Village.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

Cervantes said that he would not be available for the December 20 meeting. The others in attendance said December 20 should work for them. It was decided to check on everyone's availability through email. If the group decides to keep with the December 20 meeting date, Vice Chair Kislingbury will need to act as Chair.

ADJOURNMENT

Cervantes adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Jorge Salinas
Assistant City Manager/Chief Information Officer/
Interim Economic Development Director