



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 28, 2020
Municipal Courtroom, City Hall
Approved: February 25, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Stephanie Newton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners present: Stephanie Newton, Chris Equinoa, Jo Rae Perkins, Scott Lawley, Jessi Brenneman, Ray Kopczynski

Commissioners absent: Daniel Ropp (excused)

Staff present: Marilyn Smith, Management Assistant/Communications Officer; Anne Catlin, Planner III

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSION MEMBER

Newton introduced Commissioner Ray Kopczynski and welcomed him. Kopczynski shared about his background and how he is also on the Central Albany Revitalization Area Advisory Board.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

MOTION: Commissioner Chris Equinoa made a motion to re-elect Newton as chair; Commissioner Scott Lawley seconded. Approved 6-0.

MOTION: Commissioner Jo Rae Perkins made a motion to re-elect Equinoa as vice chair; Newton seconded. Approved 6-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 19, 2019

MOTION: Perkins made a motion to approve the minutes; Kopczynski seconded. Approved 6-0

December 17, 2019

MOTION: Equinoa made a motion to approve the minutes; Commissioner Jessi Brenneman seconded. Approved 6-0.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

Business from the Public

7:04 p.m.

Councilor Rich Kellum attended the meeting to give the commission credit for recognizing the homeless issue in this community. He related that someone needs to take the lead of a coordinated effort.

The commission noted their commitment to educate themselves on the issues and the area organizations that offer assistance. Lawley commented that the homeless issue is something that he sees fitting into the commission's mission and something he would like to see the group working on to help alleviate.

Presentation by C.H.A.N.C.E.

7:09 p.m.

Newton introduced C.H.A.N.C.E. Director Jeff Blackford. Blackford shared a PowerPoint presentation (*see agenda file*). He described the organization as peer-run, non-clinical support center that educates and supports individuals to successfully make the life changes that lead them to recovery from mental illness and/or substance abuse. C.H.A.N.C.E. partners with area organizations including the Albany Police Department. In 2019, they responded to 110 calls from the police department. Blackford shared that they had a 10-year goal to have a C.H.A.N.C.E. location everywhere there is a Samaritan hospital, and they achieved that goal in only five years. He went on to list their other accomplishments in 2019 and their plans for 2020 and beyond. They are hoping their new regional headquarters in the old Pizza King building will be complete by this summer, where they will have room for office spaces, classrooms, showers and laundry facilities, and a teaching kitchen.

Perkins asked whether the organization had problems with people loitering in front of their buildings. Blackford explained that they have strict guidelines in order to have a healthy, respectful atmosphere that will have a welcoming look to the community. Newton asked how the commission could help their mission, and it was noted that they could refer people who need help and to suggest organizations that C.H.A.N.C.E. could team up with. Blackford will provide brochures to display at City Hall. Equinoa expressed his appreciation and that he is impressed with the direct services C.H.A.N.C.E. provides and the timely manner in which they are doing it. Blackford invited the group to come to the open house when their new facility is complete. Discussion continued on the financing of the facility.

Community Development Block Grant Funding and Programs Overview

8:13 p.m.

Newton introduced Planner III Anne Catlin. Catlin passed out a document that gave an overview of the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program (*see agenda file*). The City of Albany became eligible for the funds in 2013. Catlin described the program, which is very diverse but also has a lot of regulations. For a neighborhood to receive funds for a project, at least 51 percent of its residents have to have low-to-moderate-incomes. The City develops a five-year plan that outlines goals and objectives and then an annual plan that specifies how CDBG funding will be used for priorities within the five-year plan. Public participation is important in helping the City identify priority needs that could be supported with CDBG funding. The City is continually seeking input from residents and supportive agencies. They want to use the funds in the best way possible and not duplicate services. The Planning Commission meetings are open to the public and are a way to provide input. Catlin described the Sunrise Park project as a great example of the benefits of the program. She also explained that the program is not the best route for helping with the homeless issue but noted a separate project on housing needs and economic opportunities (*see agenda file*). The City will share results and ask for feedback on suggested strategies on Monday, March 9, 2020, at City Hall. Catlin ended her presentation by relaying that the Planning Commission wants to make sure they are serving the underserved populations and that they rely on commissions like the HRC to get the word out.

Human Relations Award for Calendar Year 2019

8:51 p.m.

The group went over the award timeline and approved it.

Scheduling of 2019 Annual Report Presentation

8:54p.m.

Newton asked the commissioners to send her any photos of events they attended in relation to the commission by February 14, 2020. She will send a draft of the report by email to the commission members for their review and approval before presenting it at an upcoming City Council meeting.

EVENT DEBRIEFS

8:53 p.m.

Equinoa attended the Homeless Persons Memorial Service and said that it had a strong turnout and was well done. Perkins attended the March for Life event in Salem.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND OTHER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

8:55 p.m.

Perkins announced the Timber Unity Rally on February 6 in Salem.

Management Assistant/Communications Officer Marilyn Smith gave retirement and director staffing updates. She announced a city manager-led community conversation on Albany's growing pains at The Barn at Hickory Station on February 4; coffee with the city manager events at the senior center on February 6 and May 14; and a consultant-led open house for public input on the Albany Waterfront Project on March 5 at the senior center.

Catlin suggested the Homeless Resource Fair on May 21 as a volunteer opportunity.

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2020 ANNUAL REPORT PREPARATION

9:00 p.m.

The group decided to highlight the new commission member (Kopczynski) joining the HRC and the presentations by C.H.A.N.C.E. and Catlin.

STAFF UPDATES

9:01 p.m.

The updates were discussed under "Upcoming Events."

BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION

9:01 p.m.

Newton announced that the Jackson Street Youth Services will do a presentation at the February 25 HRC meeting, and she asked for input on future presentations. Equinoa suggested inviting Signs of Victory, and Perkins suggested Love, INC of Linn County. Smith suggested inviting the City Solutions Team, and Lawley suggested Helping Hands. The group discussed how to advertise the presentations. *City Bridges* is one option, and Perkins suggested having John Warren advertise on the radio.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regularly scheduled commission meeting is on Tuesday, February 25, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Chair Newton adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

Signature on file

Gina Burrese
Administrative Assistant (Confidential)

Marilyn Smith
Management Assistant/Communications Officer