

**Human Rights Commission
Minutes for May 18, 2005**

Present: Nancy Clark, John Hagen, Gabe Garcia, Stephanie Haedt, Sue Stevenson, Scott Monson, Peter Jacobs, and Tricia Wiechmann (city liaison).

Absent: Liliana Silvestry and Sue Wagner.

Meeting called to order at 6:31 p.m. at the City Administration Conference Room.

Agenda adopted as written with the addition of committee reports.

Minutes adopted with a change to the date.

1. Committee Reports

Ethnic Festival

The Commissioners discussed the Commission's role in this year's Ethnic Festival. In the past, the Commission has done a game or had a table. The HRC is welcome to have a table at the Festival again this year. Last year a financial contribution was also made. The Human Rights Commission's banner will again be displayed. The plans for the festival are in place. One way the HRC could help is with fund raising. Letters are ready to go. The Commissioners could help with follow-up phone calls. This will be discussed further at the June meeting and a list provided. Sue Stevenson will chair a subcommittee for the Ethnic Festival.

Forum Committee

The Forum Committee met. The subcommittee is considering a presentation with a panel of citizens from diverse backgrounds. The committee would like this to occur proximal to the Ethnic Festival. The presentation would be for leaders in the community as well as the general public. The goal is education and a better understanding of others. The subcommittee will meet again to further coordinate this event.

2. Old Business

Regional Meeting

There was a good turnout at the Regional Meeting, approximately 30 individuals. The event was attended by individuals from Austin, Owatonna, Albert Lea, and Blooming Prairie. Kristen was very good and knowledgeable. She spoke about the program in the Rochester schools. It was very enlightening. The Commission hopes enthusiasm will grow from this event. A diversity council in Austin may be a long-term goal.

3. New Business

Newspaper Article

The June deadline is June 10. Tricia Wiechmann provided the Commission with some suggestions on articles from the Morris Human Rights website. Tricia Wiechmann will check into us reprinting some of the articles, possibly “Dispelling Myths about Immigrants” for June. The July article will be about the Ethnic Festival.

Guest Speaker - Dr. Raskin

Dr. Raskin is inclined to attend a HRC meeting. She requested we provide her topics for her presentation. The Commission provided several topic areas including, graduation retention rates, diversity policies and procedures for the District, ESL, recruiting policies, and diversity numbers for students and employees. Tricia will extend an invite for the June meeting.

4. Citizens Addressing the Committee

None.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Next meeting is June 15, 2005, at 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Stephanie Haedt