

**Human Rights Commission
Minutes for May 22, 2007**

Present: Janet Anderson, Peter Jacobs, John Hagen, Sue Stevenson, Nancy Clark, and Bob Vilt, Lilita Silvestry, and Tricia Wiechmann (city liaison),

Absent: Stephanie Haedt and Marcel Edoh

Meeting called to order at 6:40 p.m.

1. Agenda

Agenda was approved as written.

2. Minutes

April 24, 2007 minutes were adopted as written.

3. Certificate of Appreciation presentation

Julie Hale is the recipient for May, due to her efforts with the Diversity Club at the High School, which supports gay and lesbian students, but she did not attend the HRC meeting. Sue will approach her regarding using this as a topic for the newspaper column.

4. Citizens Addressing the Commission

None.

5. Reports and Discussion

A. Certificate of Appreciation – June

Discussed possible recipient for June. Lilita will find out the landlord's name that she mentioned before. Other possibility is Dustin Gillard and Anthony Hernandez, for their work in creating videos. The commissioners will view their latest film (available online) entitled "Our Duty."

B. Human Rights Award

This year's recipient, Bonnie Rietz, would like to have the award at the Cultural Heritage Festival (CHF). Lilita confirmed that this could be added to the schedule. Send out media release and invite certain groups/people. The CHF is August 26, Sunday from 12 to 6 pm. The award will take place around 4 pm. Ask Virginia Larsen if she will present the award. Nancy and Sue will continue to coordinate the HRC's part in this event. Possibly have cake at Welcome Center tent as part of the award, since they have had cake the last few years. Native American storyteller will be final event at Paramount Theatre. Latin American basketball teams will receive their awards as well at the CHF.

C. Follow-up discussion from April Meeting

Rochester diversity council –QTV will do town meeting focusing on changing demographics,

immigration cultural diversity, and economic development. There will be six people on the panel. Taping will occur Tuesday May 29th. Accessible on QTV website. We can get more information on their available workshops, etc., from their website.

Liliana has known Charlie for about 7 years – possible resource for the QTV event – she gave Janet the number to contact her if needed. Global Volunteers project that Cathy talked about is also coming up – Janet will talk to Cathy. Rotary Club will be planting trees at 3:30 pm, July 30 at Rotary Park.

6. New Business

A. Newspaper Articles

Sue will ask Julie Hale about doing an article on the Diversity Club – assume for now this will be the June topic. July article is tentatively on the CNN award-winning film and associated HRC certificate of appreciation for Dustin/Anthony. Preview to cultural heritage festival and award will be the August topic.

7. Other Business

A. Discuss the idea of T-shirts or polo shirts with the HRC logo. Will talk to Jake Vela about a design, pursue with Games People Play. Work with Austin tree logo and children logo from HRC handbook, try to combine.

B. Discussed isolation of some of the Hormel Institute employees of minority ethnicities. Discussed this in the context of the hospital employees – ask Rod Nordeng at AMC - and the young professionals - ask Laura Helle, executive director at Hormel Home group. Bob mentions the tutoring group at Riverland as another population. Also discussed examples of racial ethnic issues, such as how black and Hispanic minorities are treated by businesses – contact would be Vinnie White.

C. Liliana had some other business. Centro Campecino opened here – main focus on social justice and organizing the Latino community. They have been in Willmar and Worthington. They closed the Owatonna office and now they are here – historically they have been involved with mine workers. Department of Immigration may step up enforcement, based experience in these other cities. They have changed board members and started new. The problem is that they may be dividing the community. Maybe we should invite them to speak here – ask Victor Contreras.

D. Liliana proposes that we work on bringing educational programs to Senior Center. Liliana met with an angry resident regarding illegal immigrants – said that she is getting calls in Spanish – maybe someone had her number before? Janet will bring a list of programs that the Rochester Diversity Council offers.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM

The next Human Rights Commission meeting will be held on June 19, 2007.

Submitted by Peter Jacobs