

**Human Rights Commission**  
**August 31, 2011**

Present: Kirsten Lindbloom, Steve Wald, Jake Vela, Ron Langrell, Aaron Stewart, Lysie Moritz, Trish Wiechmann (city liaison).

Absent: Amy Wangen and Kristi Beckman

Meeting was called to order at 6:07pm by Commissioner Lindbloom

1. Agenda

Commissioner Vela moved to adopt the agenda, Commissioner Langrell second, motion passed unanimously.

2. Minutes

Commissioner Langrell moved to approve the May 24, 2011 minutes, Commissioner Wald second, motion passed unanimously.

3. Treasurer's Report

Commissioner Lindbloom reported that there is approximately \$252.83 left of the BCBS grant which will end on September 9, 2011. This money will be used to purchase supplies for the Austin Human Rights Commission. That leaves the AHRC with \$3,000 (non-BCBS), until the end of the fiscal year, for fall activities. Fall activities will be further discussed at the September meeting.

4. BCBS Site Visit

The BCBS site visit for both the HRC and the Welcome Center happened on the same day, both with very positive results. It was mentioned at the site visit (by BCBS) that there will be an upcoming change in the funding stream to focus on the use of technology when working with the immigrant community (i.e. social networking, etc.). We were encouraged to continue our collaboration with the Welcome Center and submit one application to BCBS when this funding becomes available. As of today, there has not been an FRP date or deadline for such application. We will revisit this subject when that becomes available. We still have \$251.83 left of the BCBS grant, which will have to be spent by September 9, 2011. As per the grant, we will spend this on supplies (brochures, give-a-ways such as crayons, etc.). Commissioner Langrell asked that the minutes reflect what an outstanding job Commissioner Lindbloom, as the HRC Chair, and Ms. Wiechmann, community liaison, have done in expertly handling the BCBS funds.

5. Website Update from Commissioner Vela

Commissioner Vela reported that he continues to work on the HRC website ([www.austinfohumanrights.org](http://www.austinfohumanrights.org)), and that it should be up and running before the September meeting. He will contact Commissioner Lindbloom when the site is ready and it will be sent out to the rest of the Commission. This new website will provide easier access to our minutes;

however the City will continue to add the minutes via their personnel so that all AHRC archives will be in one place.

#### 6. Back to School Community Block Parties (Sumner/Woodson)

The Back to School block party for Sumner was so successful that Woodson Kindergarten Center will be hosting one as well. The Block Party provided an opportunity for Sumner families to interact with one another, as well as introduce them to the new 45/15 school year. There were activities for the families, as well as information from multiple community groups. The HRC was represented and many buttons, crayons, and other materials (brochures) were given away.

#### 7. Report – Hormel Grant Request

We will be requesting \$16,500 from the Hormel Foundation. This number was arrived at by taking the BCBS grant activities and events dollar amount, minus the cost of support from Advocates for Human Rights and The Welcome Center, as well as equipment purchases, etc. The request will include funds for school activities, community activities, MLK, and a film festival. The Hormel Foundation Grant will allow us to use funds for a broad range of activities, and not limit us to just the immigrant community.

#### 8. Old Business

Renter's video – Is still in progress, Commissioners Lindbloom and Vela will continue to monitor the progress. It is expected to be done before the October HRC meeting, with the possibility of viewing it at the October meeting.

Carl Wilken – Mr. Wilken presented on his experiences with the genocide in Rwanda. This event was well attended; the large meeting room at the Library was full. There as great audience participation. Peter Hanke, who did the leg work to bring Mr. Wilken to Austin, did the introduction for Mr. Wilken, and gave recognition to the AHRC as well as The Welcome Center. This event also generated social media recognition by the State HRC.

#### 9. Other Business

Commissioner Lindbloom will be presenting our request for funds at the September 19, 2011 City work session. This request will be for \$3,500, and will include highlights from the past year's activities.

The Mexican Consulate made a visit to Austin in August. Commissioner Vela was there and gave away HRC materials. It was suggested that it would be good to have other commissioners at the visit next time, for networking purposes, as they come every August. Commissioner Lindbloom suggested that we add this topic to a future discussion list, so that the AHRC can become more familiar with the Mexican Consulate.

#### 10. Communications

A letter to the editor was suggested, highlighting the HRC's activities of the past year. Commissioner Lindbloom will create a first draft and present it at the next meeting for input/approval. Commissioner Langrell suggested using this letter as a press release, possibly

meeting with the editorial board for further discussion, as well as posting it on our website and Facebook page.

Commissioner Lindbloom will be sending reports out on the listening groups the Parenting Resource Center conducted on human rights, and the welcoming feel of our community. We will look at those responses at the next meeting.

#### 11. Citizens Addressing the Commission

Mr. Matthew Simonson addressed the commission on the rights of 'regular' residents. He also presented the Commission with a letter he wrote to Representative Poppe on MN Law 466 and MN Court of Appeals Rule 109.

#### 12. Next Meeting

Next meeting will be September 27, 2011. We will discuss the AHRC's role in gay marriage rights, and what activities/events we can support in the GLBT community. It has been 3 years since the HRC has sponsored a GLBT activity.

Commissioner Vela moved to adjourn at 6:46pm, meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Lysie Moritz