

MINUTES  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
CITY OF AUSTIN MINNESOTA  
Thursday, January 23, 2003

PRESENT: Gabe Garcia, John Hagen, Liliana Silvestry-Neilon, Nancy Clark, Tricia Wiechmann, Jeanne Poppe, Susan Wagner and Pat MacLean.

ABSENT: Anu Kasturi and Masuka Magambo

The meeting was called to order about 6 PM. We welcomed Susan Wagner, the newest member of the Commission appointed by Mayor Rietz.

Jeanne moved, Liliana seconded approval of the January 6 meeting with one correction: Virginia Larsen's last name is spelled with an e-n.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Martin Luther King celebration: over 60 people attended the event on Monday, January 21<sup>st</sup> and all went smoothly.
2. Officers: Pat nominated Nancy and Gabe as Co-Chairs for another term. John seconded the nomination and they were elected unanimously. Jeanne was proclaimed Secretary unanimously!
3. Essay Contest: Gabe is waiting to hear from Wells Fargo about a donation of a savings bond. He also plans to contact the Hormel Credit Union for a possible donation. After some discussion, Darlys Smith, Betty Benner and Dale Odegaard were nominated as judges for the contest. Nancy will contact them to see if they will agree to accept the responsibility. Tricia will copy the essays and distribute them to the judges. February 20<sup>th</sup> is the entry deadline. The winning essay needs to be submitted to the state contest by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

It was decided to present the awards at the City Council meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

4. Survey Questions: It was decided to table the survey questions to send to community members. Pat will bring a list of community resources and Liliana will bring a list of non-profit agencies to the next meeting.
5. Wilder Foundation Report: Liliana told about the study conducted by the Wilder Foundation in conjunction with Riverland Community College and Apex Austin. There were 3 groups of community residents—Bosnian, Latino, and Sudanese—who met and discussed their experiences in Austin. Liliana is translating the final report into Spanish and the groups are meeting at a later date to discuss the observations and recommendations. Liliana will make it available (in English!) to Commission members. We will discuss it at our next meeting.

6. Other events of note:

- a. February is Black History Month.
- b. August 17<sup>th</sup> is the Ethnic Festival at Todd Park
- c. Fourth of July Parade—the Welcome Center is sponsoring a float with a Viking theme (as in Minnesota Vikings, our beloved football team)
- d. Vietnamese are celebrating the New Year on February 1<sup>st</sup> with local festivities.

The meeting adjourned about 7:30.

**The next meeting is Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM at City Hall. Please call one of the Chairs or Tricia if you cannot attend.**

Respectfully submitted,

Pat MacLean