

Human Rights Commission
June 28, 2004, 7:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Present: Gabe Garcia, Masuka Magambo, Nancy Clark, John Hagen and Liliana Silvestry-Neilon (7:20).

The minutes were approved with the correction of the name of the Welcome Center community educator's name, should be Yuriel Justine. Garcia moved, Magambo seconded.

Ethnic Festival update – Reminder, the festival is Sunday, August 22 from 12:00 noon to 7:00 PM. Tricia updated everybody indicating that the HRC will be purchasing the banner for the festival. Carlos (festival committee) has gotten the amount reduced to \$180. She also indicated that we would be able to get two generators from a city department for use that day.

Liliana asked whether the HRC would be having a table setup at the festival. She indicated that there is a tent setup where community organizations can have their information. She pointed out that the library has had a table in the past. Discussion. We could have our brochures there and other state information.

Regarding staffing, we would have current HRC members and we could ask past members if we felt we needed more people. Decided to break down into three groups – 11:30 – 2:00, 2:30 – 5:00 and 5:00 – 7:30. The first shift includes setup and the last shift includes take down. Everyone will be asked to sign up for a time slot. John Hagen signed up for the first shift and Gabe Garcia signed up for the second shift.

Garcia moved to approve having the HRC have a table at the Ethnic Festival. Magambo seconded, passed unanimously.

Liliana asked HRC members to help with some follow-up telephone calls to local businesses in support of a financial contribution for the festival. Members present each took 10 or so contacts and will make those calls.

Update – June 21 Regional meeting – Gabe provided an overview of the regional meeting recently held in Owatonna. There was good discussion with members from Albert Lea and Owatonna. Jerry Zetah from Owatonna extended an invitation to Christine Baidoo from the Waseca HRC who is also part of the Owatonna Diversity Network and she attended on their behalf.

Albert Lea had indicated that they had gotten a Qwest grant of \$5,000 and were going to be producing two videos – one for employers and one for newcomers to the community. They are not sure when these will be completed, but would let us view them when they are done.

Owatonna indicated that they usually do a training/information session annually – usually in the fall. We talked about when they start planning that, maybe we could do it jointly and have the same presenter come to the other communities while they are in the region.

There was a suggestion to involve the Chamber more, maybe trying to do something in conjunction with a business after hours or something.

The annual Minnesota Human Rights meeting is October 9, 2004 in Roseville. More information will be distributed as it is received, but people could block this date off on their calendar.

The next Regional meeting will be **Monday, August 16** at the Austin Public Library.

Update HRC Code and By-laws – Tricia indicated that the city attorney, David Hoversten has reviewed both the Code and By-laws and found them both to be in order. The next step is to take the Code to a Council work session and then to a Council meeting for their approval. Garcia moved to recommend to the Council the Code for their approval. Silvestry seconded. Unanimous.

Regarding the by-laws, we will provide them to the Council for their information, but they only need to be approved by the Commission whereas the Code needs Council approval.

Liliana, Nancy and John stated that they would attend the July 6 (7:00 PM) work session to present to the Council.

Newspaper column – Nancy indicated that she spoke with the Austin Daily Herald and they are willing to allow the HRC to have a column in the newspaper. It was suggested that we do this quarterly to start, in order to make sure we can generate enough articles and on a timely manner. It was suggested that we start in September. Commission members are asked to put some thoughts down on paper for discussion.

Videos (public showings) – the question was asked whether there was a ‘generic’ type video that could be used as our first one? Gabe indicated that at the regional meeting, Jerry Zetah indicated that the Color of Fear was a good video. We also talked about showing a video with a topic similar to the topic of the essay contest. Tricia indicated that the topic for the essay contest wouldn’t be selected (per LMHRC) until early August. Continue discussion at our July meeting.

Calendars of events – moved to July meeting.

The next HRC meeting will be **Wednesday, July 21 at 7:00 PM at the Austin Public Library (small meeting room). Please note change in location.**

Being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM, upon a motion and second by Garcia and Hagen.

Respectfully submitted by:

Tricia Wiechmann