

Regional Human Rights Commission meeting
March 8, 2004, Riverland Community College – Austin

These were randomly put up on the white boards, but done in different colors, we tried to attribute them to community that offered the comment.

Austin

- ◆ Concerns – minorities, full participation/ownership in the community
- ◆ Work on Austin bylaws, define roles, execute duties/activities
- ◆ How do others do community training, educate, outreach? Money?
- ◆ Want to be more effective – lack of resources
- ◆ How can we work between the three communities – what works? What doesn't? How can we work together?
- ◆ What are other communities doing in the area of children, families? Need to do more in the disabled staff area
- ◆ Want to exchange ideas – learn from each other
- ◆ Do it through – training? Column in the paper? Volunteers?
- ◆ Austin HRC minutes and member listing is on the city web site

Albert Lea

- ◆ CAC – voice of those who don't have voice, network & collaborate
- ◆ How do we move from community of talk to a community of action?
- ◆ Education – organization involvement
- ◆ Medical Center has helped fund events
- ◆ Commission members are appointed for 3 yrs. – members came from many different groups into one about one year ago
- ◆ Need to set goals and develop a rapport with each other
- ◆ Need 'new blood'
- ◆ Had old bylaws – fairly recently revised. No formal complaint procedure, no currently trained people.
- ◆ Main purpose is education
- ◆ MLK Breakfast, poetry contest and theatre component
- ◆ Hard to get beyond the choir
- ◆ Money tight – 'beg'

Owatonna

- ◆ Countywide HRC?
- ◆ Do one major education piece/yr.
- ◆ Not as active as could be
- ◆ How do we respond to negative letters on immigration?
- ◆ Best kept secret in Owatonna
- ◆ No power, no money, no authority
- ◆ Have a city booth at the fair
- ◆ Need to educate, be more visible
- ◆ Revolving door of committee members
- ◆ Hold 'intersections' – open forum at the library

Other Comments/notes:

How can we change from being a Community of talk to a community of action?

- ◆ Education training (Owatonna one per year)
- ◆ Diversity network collaborative
- ◆ Essay contest - poems
- ◆ Presence in the community
- ◆ MLK celebrations (sounds like each community does something for this)
- ◆ Community Circles to educate
- ◆ Web site through City
- ◆ Landlords training – housing
- ◆ Have a column in the paper
- ◆ HRC members with more empowerment
- ◆ Have participation from government representatives
- ◆ Update by-laws from mediation to education
- ◆ Cultural fest – Owatonna
- ◆ Diversity tour
- ◆ Resource center to refer complaints to the state
- ◆ Work with schools
- ◆ Involving all ages in events
- ◆ Theatrical opportunity
- ◆ Educational training – more minorities on boards, commissions, etc.
- ◆ Diversity training – HRC members

Resources –

- ◆ Grant – Qwest application
- ◆ Ready to Lead – Initiative Fund

Other/Misc. thoughts/discussion

- ◆ Phone book in Spanish to add to home phone books
- ◆ Suggested having members from each HRC go to other communities and give presentations, talk, etc.
- ◆ Get Mayor's from the three communities working on this
- ◆ Community Resource Directory
- ◆ Theatrical presentations – combine and have a program put on in each community.
- Controversial issues – bring in a group of people.