

Human Rights Commission

September 27, 2011

Present: Kirsten Lindbloom, Steve Wald, Jake Vela, Amy Wangen, Lysie Moritz, Trish Wiechmann (city liason)

Absent: Kristi Beckman, Ron Langrell, Aaron Stewart, Kathryn Martin

Meeting called to order at 6:04pm by Commissioner Lindbloom

1. Approval of Agenda

(1st Motion/Wald, 2nd motion/Wangen) Motion approved.

2. Approval of August 2011 minutes

(1st Motion/ Vela, 2nd motion/Wald) Motion approved.

3. Treasurer's Report

- Commissioner Lindbloom reported that the BC/BS grant was now over - left with \$15.
- Approximately \$3,000 left for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- Commissioner Lindbloom attended City Council work session - past year accomplishments presented. Meeting went well. We will be budgeting \$3,500 for the next fiscal year.

4. Old Business

A. Tenant/Landlord Video

- Working at getting multicultural talent. Videos will be in English/Spanish to start.
- Commissioner Beckman has done a great job in helping recruit talent.
- Production/Filming will happen within the next 10 days.

B. Hormel Grant

- Request for \$16,500 to Hormel Foundation was submitted in September. Arrived at this number by taking the core piece from BC/BS grant event and activities.
- This will allow us the freedom to use funds on other areas, not just the immigrant community.
- With the addition of the City of Austin request at \$3,500, we are looking at \$20,000 total.

5. New Business

A. Listening group data

- Data is raw/draft form.
- Worked with Parenting Resource Center to organize 5 listening groups at variety of venues to get perceptions from community.
- Commissioner Lindbloom and Moritz volunteered to sort the data and identify trends.
- The idea is to bring recommendations to the commission on what we can do to address these trends.

B. MLK Event

- Looking for a committee to get together and plan the MLK event.
- Awards from last year were great, and looking to continue that.
- Wanting something different/unique.
- Commissioner Wangen volunteered to be in the committee.

C. Fall Event planning

- Human Rights Day is December 10.
- Looking to possibly have a film festival.
- Commissioner Vela will generate list of films and bring to the Oct. meeting. Other commissioners are encouraged to bring ideas as well.

D. Stage Left

- Lots of new energy at Riverland Community College (RCC) partly due to new theater department head.
- Stage Left is theater, music and spoken word that highlights the challenges of the GLBTQ community.
- Mankato State and RCTC have asked for Stage Left to make presentation. This is something the Commission can have a presence in.
- Spring musical will be “Rent” – yet another opportunity for us to be involved in.

E. Billboards

- Feedback has been positive.
- Still have another round to go.

Commissioner Wangen asked if non-commissioners can get involved in planning. Yes – Commissioner Lindbloom said CORE students would like to be involved and will check with them. Commissioner Wangen will connect with RCC and GSA.

6. Other Business

A. Term Limits

- Commissioners Wangen, Langrell and Wald terms are coming to an end in December 2011.
- Can decisions be made by October meeting as to whether or not they will re-enlist?
- This will allow the Commission/Mayor to look/appoint new people by new year.
- 3 year term limits.

B. Vision 2020 Big Night of Ideas

- Commissioner Vela talked about Vision 2020 Big Night of Ideas happening September 28 at 5:30pm at the Holiday Inn.
- 33 applicants have applied for the Idea Selection Committee (ISC) – 32 of those are Caucasian. Try to get more diverse populations to apply for ISC.
- Commissioner Lindbloom will talk to students to get them to apply for ISC.

C. HRC connections

- Nancy Frank Wilson has been connecting with other HRC’s around the state.
- Listening group data, successes, etc., have been forwarded to Ms. Wilson who will have a report ready for us during the October meeting.
- HRC in Crow Wing County contacted us and wanted to know what we were doing. County is cutting their funding and they wanted to know what our successes were so they could use those ideas and make plea so funding won’t get cut.
- Commissioner Weichmann shared variety of reports/data with Crow Wing County HRC.
- No annual conference for Human Rights Day through the Minnesota Department of Human Rights per Mario Hernandez. No reason given.
- Dani Heiny is bringing a traveling American Indian Smithsonian Exhibit to RCC titled: “Why Treaties Matter: Self Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations.”
- The exhibit is comprised of 20 free standing banners and some short video components depicting the history of the treaties between the U.S. government and American Indian communities from the arrival of the Europeans to modern day.

7. Communication

- Commissioner Lindbloom pulled all information together and is working on final report for BC/BS report.
- Will be getting something together (letter to the editor) to send to the local papers so community can stay informed with past year accomplishments.

8. Citizens Addressing the Commission

- Mr. Dan Kane addressed the commission on how unsafe he feels at his neighborhood and presented the commission with a 3-page report that represented a partial list of his unsafe occurrences.
- He mentioned how our billboards read, "A Safe Place To Live" and how he just doesn't feel this to be true.
- He was shocked that the time for citizens addressing the commission had been reduced to 3 minutes per person.
- Mr. Kane also said he had requested information, which includes contracts, grants, documents, etc., from the commission and has not received said information.

Commissioner Lindbloom responded to Mr. Kane's statement stating that the intent of the billboards were to list the Universal Rights and that we may need to do something different if it's not reading that way.

9. Next meeting – will be October 25, 2011 at the small meeting room at the Library.

Commissioner Moritz moved to adjourn at 6:55pm, meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Jake Vela