

Austin Human Rights Commission
Minutes January 25, 2011

Present: Kirsten Lindbloom, Lysie Moritz, Amy Wangen, Ron Langrell, Kristi Beckman, Jake Vela, and Trish Wiechmann (city liaison).

Absent: Aaron Stewart, Steve Wald and Kathryn Martin

Guests: Dan Kane

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:05 p.m. by Commissioner Lindbloom.

1. Agenda

Commissioner Wangen moved to approve the agenda, Commissioner Vela second, motion passed unanimously.

2. Approval of December 14 and January 11 minutes

Commissioner Wangen moved to accept the minutes, commissioner Vela second, motion passed unanimously.

3. Treasurer's report

2010 expenditures since the last meeting were \$6,366.54, including new brochures, flyers, state dues, posters for events. \$5,525 of that expense covers half of the Advocates for Human Rights' fee. 2011 expenditures so far total \$648 and include production for the MLK events, posters, plaques and awards for the Human Rights Award winners.

4. Reports and updates

- Martin Luther King, Jr Celebration—Commissioner Wangen reported that the event went well. The speaker was engaging, and the high school students enjoyed him, especially the CORE youth group. People were touched by the awards and the response of the recipients. Josie Nelsen did a great job reading her essay. The high school is appreciative of our support, and many teachers are following up in their history classes with the book *Letters from Mississippi*.
- Know Your Rights training—Commissioner Lindbloom reported that Advocates have met their quotas and no longer need Austin to host the training, which isn't required but is a good fit for the BCBS grant. Commissioner Lindbloom will connect with Adult Basic Education to inquire about possibly collaborating on offering the training for the adult ELL classes.
- New Conversations about White Privilege will be held Feb. 4 from 12-3 p.m. at the Hormel Historic Home in order to connect community members and leaders once again and offer people an in-depth look at the concept of privilege and talk about ways to reduce the effects of privilege in our community. So far, over 40 have responded with an interest in attending.
- Welcome to Shelbyville—Commissioner Lindbloom explained that the film screening has been rescheduled to Feb. 18, 7:00 p.m., at the Riverland Community College Theater. Commissioner Wangen will provide an introduction and Advocates will facilitate discussion.

- Film Update—Bullied will be shown at Knowlton Auditorium on February 7th at 7:00 p.m. to parents and community members, and then will be shown February 8th to all AHS students. Parents will have an “opt-out” option. The documentary tells the story of Jamie Nabozny, a gay student who was bullied and won a lawsuit against his school district for not taking action against bullies. Jamie will be at both presentations. Commissioner Lindbloom inquired about the willingness of the commission to contribute toward the \$3500 cost of the events. Commissioner Wangen moved to contribute \$500, Commissioner Moritz second, motion passed unanimously.
- Capacity Building/Strategic Planning—Nancy Franke Wilson will once again work with us thanks to a Bremer grant. Commissioner Lindbloom suggested a Saturday work session, perhaps on April 2, and Trish Wiechmann will send out an email to see if other Commissioners could attend that date.

5. Other Business

- Alan Page will speak to AHS students and answer questions on Wednesday, March 23. Commissioner Wangen will check with the foundation to see if he would be willing to stay and speak to community members at a reception/fundraising event. Commissioner Lindbloom discussed offering tickets to the AHS event to community members and preparing CORE students with questions for Mr. Page. She will look into a location for a possible reception.
- Taste of Nations—Cultural festival will be held at Oak Park Mall again this year on Saturday, April 16. There has been talk of combining the Week of the Young Child event with this event. This is a perfect fit for the BCBS grant. Trish Wiechmann will investigate our options for providing financial to support to food demonstrators.
- Immigration 101 will be held at Sumner Elementary for all staff from 1:00-2:30 p.m. on February 16.
- The CORE youth leadership group has decided on T-Shirt logos. Their Angel Tree project went fantastically; they are trying to connect with Habitat to look into a service project. 7-8 new students attended the last meeting. They are working on a diversity day for the high school and Commissioner Beckman is working to connect four students from CORE with the multi-district leadership group sponsored by integration.
- May 20-22 dates have been booked at the Paramount for the film festival. The space is being donated by the Paramount in connection with a grant they have received. Welcome Center staff and CORE students will play a key role in the event. Advocates will help with films and rights. Discussion was held about including live performances/storytelling, as well as choosing films to address some of the other human rights topics we’d like to focus on. Commissioners Vela, Moritz, Wald, and Beckman will help Commissioner Lindbloom with planning for the event. Commissioner Wangen will help during the event.
- Website: Commissioner Vela is going to start over with the website but will avoid creating a new domain name. There have been problems transferring the old site over.

6. Citizens Addressing the Commission:

- Mr. Kane indicated that he has waited ¼ year for information he requested at the October meeting of the Human Rights Commission.

Our next meeting will be February 22 at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Langrell moved to adjourn at 7:05 p.m. (approximately).

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi Beckman