

Human Rights Commission Minutes for January 26, 2015

Present: Richard Lemons, Jake Vela, Lyndsey Waletzke, Darya Gemmel, Christine Stiehm, Lynsie, Moritz, Kathryn Martin, and Tricia Wiechmann (city liaison).

Absent: John Brown Bol and Jason Baskin.

Guest: Dan Kane.

1. Welcome to New Members

New Commission members are not present this evening.

2. Adopt/Amend Agenda

Commissioner Lemons moved to adopt the Agenda as written, Commissioner Stiehm second, motion carried.

3. Approval of October 27, 2014 minutes (no November or December minutes, no quorum).

Commissioner Lemons moved to approve the October 27, 2014 minutes as previously issued, Commissioner Gemmel second, motion carried.

4. Election of Officers

Chair or Co-Chair – Commissioner Lemons was elected as chair with Commissioner Lemons abstaining.

Secretary – Commissioner Martin was elected as secretary.

5. Treasurer's Report

Budget approved by the City for \$4500. MLK expenses have not been processed. Brochures were purchased from the 2014 budget.

6. Reports and Discussions

MLK – Poor attendance. Good video. Fliers could have come out sooner. Ads could be a week before. Perhaps send personal invitations to Department Heads. Event was on City Facebook, but forgot HRC Facebook. Could do an event page, so each person gets an invitation to click on. Handed out Advocates for Human Rights Tool Kit. Develop an invitation list- community leaders, politicians, APEX, Vision 2020. Ask them to bring another person. The years when we've included students in a program, we've had a higher turnout. Maybe include a break out session for kids? Maybe have pizza?

Diversity Council Annual Celebration – Mr. Kane called Commissioner Lemons and they both attended. The Council has a network in Southern Minnesota, we need to find out more about. Commissioner Lemons has begun to talk with some of the people he met there. Topics/Ideas on Promoting Tough Conversations, Serving Your Community With Courage, and What Does It Take to Be Just? Mr. Kane encourages us to invite a local Muslim to speak. He commented on a young black man there who shared his fascination with Selma, Freedom Riders, and registering

people to vote. Life is enriched by hearing other people's stories. Mr. Kane states awards are for people who truly lead in meaningful social change. Commissioner Lemons shared a card encouraging people to pledge online To Show Respect.

Essay Contest – Pacelli is using the essay as an assignment. Ellis is opening up the essay for students who want to write it. Commissioner Gemmel has informed the Horizons program of the essay contest. Several Commissioner volunteered to read essays: Waletzke, Moritz, Gemmel, Lemons, and Martin.

7. Grant from Episcopal Church MN to Christ Church
Grant request was for \$6000. The grant awarded is for \$4000, specifically for community conversations. The Christ Episcopal Church must turn in a report summarizing what the grant was used for. The moneys are disbursed in increments.

8. Strategic Development Update
Commissioners Lemons and Vela met with Kristi Beckman before the holidays. Commissioners Gemmel, Moritz, and Martin have not met. Commissioners Gemmel and Moritz organized the MLK Event with some help from others.

Commissioner Waletzke is now the only person in her group. Commissioner Stiehm volunteered to join that group.

New Commissioners will each join a group to help.

We discussed recommitting and refocusing on our strategy groups. It was decided that our groups would meet before the February meeting. We will select three topics for community conversations. We will discuss how we can involve people such as films, or selecting a certain population such as youth, etc.

9. New Business
Tricia Wiechmann reports that the City has revamped the websites. The Commissions contact information and pictures are on the site. Tricia informed IT that we will need some links and resources added. Also as we have content to add, we need to inform IT.

Commissioner Stiehm reported Kelly Nesvold is preparing for a new fundraiser. In 2016 he will run/kayak/bike 300 miles to promote awareness for Human Trafficking. He would like to come to our February meeting.

Commissioner Lemons reports that Jennifer Lloyd Benson is leading programs on Human Trafficking. She spoke at Zonta. We would like her to come to a meeting also.

Jodi Pfarr is teaching a workshop on "Effectively Living and Working in a Diverse World" from 3:00 to 8:30 PM tomorrow at Riverland in Albert Lea. She will hold a community workshop in February.

Commissioner Moritz states there is a program on PBS tonight regarding Human Trafficking.

Commissioner Lemons will present at Zonta regarding the Human Rights Commission. Commissioner Gemmel reports there is a possibility of presenting at the AHS staff meeting in March or April.

11. Communications

None at this time.

12. Citizens addressing the Commission

Dan Kane addressed the Commission. He encourages someone to try to reach the woman who came to a meeting last year who shared her concerns about human trafficking. He encourages the identification of populations in the Chamber – how many are people of color - he doesn't want to see anyone excluded. He states it was terrific to see Dr. King in person on the video. How about going to the Salvation Army with the food? He states we are kind of reinventing the wheel with community conversations. We were doing something similar 15 yrs. ago. He states the Commission thinks they have to pay to bring in experts, while the Commission members are the experts. Focus on the lack of an integrated community.

Our next Meeting is February 23, 2015 at 6:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Kathryn Martin, Secretary