

Austin Human Rights Commission  
Monthly Meeting Minutes  
July 27, 2020

Members Appearing Electronically: Oballa Oballa, Goutham Putta, Sara Karki, Miguel Garate, Sara Hartman, DeShana Belden and Jenni Braaten.

Present: Tricia Wiechmann, City Liaison

Absent: Dan Mueller

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, this monthly meeting was held via the electronic video conferencing, Zoom. Commissioner Karki called the meeting to order at 6:16 pm.

1. Miguel Garate motioned and Sarah Hartman seconded to approve the meeting minutes from June and adopt the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Currently there is \$3,506.00 in the budget for the remainder of 2020. The billboard for Pride month in June cost \$514 and the expense for the purchasing of the book, “Just Mercy” was \$285. Commissioner Karki plans to ask the city to be granted a request to carryover the unused budget due to the restrictions on activities and organized events due to COVID 19 pandemic. Normally all money must be spent each calendar yet or it is returned to the general operating fund budget. Commissioner Karki also commented on how the city is asking every department and commission for a reduction in budgets across the board due to expected decreased funding from the state due to COVID 19.
3. Masks – Discussion on how AHRC could assist with the distribution of masks to the Austin community. Commissioner Oballa suggested having masks outside of Walmart for those who do not have one before entering the store. Discussion of Walmart is a wealthy company and can afford the masks. Liaison Wiechmann reported the state has provided the City & Human Rights Commission with 2,000 cloth masks for wide distribution. Discussion of offering masks to Mower County Human Services or the Law Enforcement Center or college students at Riverland. Liaison Wiechmann reported the Austin Chamber of Commerce is having a mass distribution day of masks to local businesses on Wednesday, July 29, 2020.
4. Book club “Just Mercy” will take place on Monday, August 10 at 7:00 PM over Zoom. This is an AHRC sponsored event. Books have been distributed and several community members have agreed to sign up. AHRC commissioners planning on attending include: Oballa, Goutham, Garate, Belden and possibly Braaten. Commissioners may be using guiding questions to help promote discussion.
5. Welcoming Week September 12-20, 2020 – Commissioner Karki provided a list of past activities and other options including partnering with Riverland, park clean up, Zoom activities, business tour live on Facebook, showing a video on KSMQ to the public. Discussion of forming a subcommittee was discussed. Commissioner Garate agreed to reach out to KSMQ public television about showing a documentary.

6. Commissioner Ron Schultz has resigned from AHRC. There are a few applications on file to review and to potentially appoint to the commission.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jenni Braaten  
Austin Human Rights Commission