

Austin Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 28, 2024

Present: Vickie Spyhalski, Bryan Davis, Varinh Van Vugt, Denver Ritz, Arkaysia Hampton, Bridget Halvorson, Miguel Garate, An Le, Stephanie Holtorf, and Trish Wiechmann.

Absent: Joyce Poshusta.

Call to Order & Roll Call: Commissioner Spyhalski called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM with a quorum present.

1. *Approve Agenda:* Commissioner Davis motioned to add a request from Paramount under agenda item 5. Commissioner Ritz seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Holtorf motioned to approve the updated agenda. Commissioner Hampton seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. *Approve Meeting Minutes – September 23, 2024:* Commissioner Van Vugt noted to correct “International” on item 6. Commissioner Le motioned to approve the change to the previous minutes. Commissioner Van Vugt seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. *Budget Report:* Trish Wiechmann reported that \$610.00 was spent on adult books for the local library and \$94.77 on refreshments for candidate forums, bringing the remaining budget to \$1,808.62. There is currently an upcoming charge for \$400.00 for Zonta, which will then make the budget \$1,408.62.

4. *Request for Support:*

- a. “Day of the Dead” Celebrations: Commissioner Garate shared a request of \$500 to assist with the two-day “Day of the Dead” event at Riverland College.
- b. Paramount Movie Theatre: Commissioner Le shared a request from Paramount for \$200 to sponsor reduced tickets for a “Day of the Dead” event.
 - i. There was further discussion on making a post to the Facebook page mentioning that the Human Rights Commission is sponsoring tickets with Paramount.

Commissioner Holtorf motioned to approve the request for Riverland’s “Day of the Dead” Celebration. Commissioner Ritz seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously with an abstention from Commissioner Garate.

Commissioner Ritz motioned to approve the request from Paramount. Commissioner Davis seconded this motion. The motion passed unanimously with an abstention from Commissioner Le.

5. *HRC Strategic Planning session*

- a. Commissioner Davis received four responses via the sign-up sheet. Due to low responses, the summit will be rescheduled to Spring of 2025.
 - i. Commissioners Spyhalski, Davis, Garate, and Van Vugt will create the subcommittee.

6. *Collaboration with Planning & Zoning:*

- a. Trish Wiechmann shared the process of becoming a Certified Welcoming Community through Welcoming America.
 - i. Starting at Tier 1 and learning more over time is more ideal with further discussion upon the commissioners.
 - 1. Tier 1 is free; Tiers 2-5 fall within \$9,000.
 - a. Scholarships are available through local government.
 - b. This is something that we can discuss with the City Council and Hormel Foods.
 - c. Applications for 2025 are due by the end of November 2024.
 - ii. Virtual Learning Webinars:
 - 1. November 11th: Commissioner Davis
 - 2. November 14th: Commissioner Spyhalski

7. *Discussion on Minnesota Human Rights Center for International Human Rights Day:*

- a. Since there are no updates at this time, Commissioner Spyhalski will send a follow-up email for an update.

8. *Calendar of Events:*

- a. Commissioner Ritz will continue to own the calendar of events.

9. *Future Events:* With the requests stated during item 3, the remaining budget estimate is \$708.62.

- a. Human Rights Day: December 10
 - i. Potentially a billboard recognizing the day.
 - 1. Begin brainstorming potential wording
 - ii. Highway billboard is estimated to be \$500.
- b. Pre-stock of Human Rights Commission merchandise.
 - i. Potential vendors will be researched.

10. *Old Business:* There is no old business.

11. *New Business:* Going forward, Old and New Business will go at the start of the agenda.

12. *Citizens Addressing the Commission:* There were no citizens in attendance. Commissioner Ritz hopes to bring a few citizens to the next meeting.

13. *For the Good of the Order:* Commissioner Davis shared Good of the Order for Commissioner Spyhalski and Trish Wiechmann.

14. *Commission Roundtable:* Commissioner Davis asked for updates on the “Day of the Dead” Events.

Next Meeting: November 25, 2024, at 5:30 PM.

Adjournment: Commissioner Spyhalski motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Van Vugt seconded this motion. The motion was passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:42 PM.