
**MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, May 11, 2009
5:00 p.m.
Human Resources
Pinnacle Training Room
7575 E. Main Street
Scottsdale, Arizona**



PRESENT: Enid Seiden, Chair
Linda Simmons, Vice Chair
Susan Galpin, Commissioner
Jeff Jameson, Commissioner
Kuros Lamé, Commissioner
Edward Lopez, Commissioner
Joel Martin, Commissioner

STAFF: Linda Walton, Staff Liaison
Velicia McMillan, Assistant General Manager, Human Resources

1. **Call to Order:**

Chair Seiden called the meeting of the Scottsdale Human Relations Commission to order at 5:07 p.m.

2. **Review and Approval of Minutes:**

COMMISSIONER JAMESON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 13, 2009 REGULAR MEETING. VICE CHAIR SIMMONS SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

3. **Review of Old Business from Previous Meeting**

Ms. Walton responded to questions the Commission raised at previous meetings. The first had to do with fair housing complaints received by the Community Services Office. She reported that in the past year, there were only two complaints that fell within the requirements. Both had to do with disability issues and they were referred to the Attorney General's Office. When there are valid complaints, the Community Services Office assists people with the process of filing a report to the Attorney General's Office. The majority of complaints, however, are landlord versus tenant issues that do not fall under the requirements of the Fair Housing Act.

The second question was regarding the sale or rental of private residences based on race, color, religion, sex, familial status or national origin. If an owner does not own more than three

single family houses at one time, or the residence is sold or rented without involving a real estate broker, or sales rental company, the owner does not have to abide by the fair housing requirements. In any case, the owner is prohibited from advertising or posting a sign limiting the sale or rental to particular groups. Religious organizations and private clubs are permitted to restrict sales, rentals and occupancies within certain parameters. There are also certain provisions for retirement communities. In response to an inquiry from Chair Seiden, Ms. Walton said apartment buildings would not qualify, as they would not be considered a private residence.

4. Regional HRC Meeting Initiative

Chair Seiden read a draft of a statement on human relations that would be presented at the next Regional HRC meeting for possible approval. The statement was crafted to recognize that "civil liberties and political freedoms are the rights of all people under the eyes of the law," and supports, "community leaders who are committed to appropriate enforcement of law and who remain committed to civil liberties for all, despite the impulsive nature of intolerant sentiment." Chair Seiden asked whether the Commission preferred to submit the statement to Council prior to the Regional HRC meeting as a courtesy. Ms. Walton suggested the Commission might find it beneficial to know that Council has at least been made aware of the statement.

Vice Chair Simmons noted that Mayor Lane had indicated that he prefers something that would have strength, and not simply be a proclamation. The effort has had to clear several City hurdles already, and she suggested an informational letter would serve to update the Council on where it currently stood. Commissioner Martin suggested reiterating the context of what prompted the statement for the benefit of new Councilmembers. Vice Chair Simmons cautioned that it should not be portrayed as being about one person or instance. The statement is meant to pertain to anyone who abuses power. Commissioner Jameson felt that the informational letter would have more impact if it came from the Chair, rather than from staff.

COMMISSIONER GALPIN MOVED TO DIRECT CHAIR SEIDEN TO FORWARD THE DRAFT STATEMENT SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS AS AN INFORMATIONAL ITEM TO CITY COUNCIL. COMMISSIONER MARTIN SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

Commissioner Lopez suggested forming a subcommittee related to exploring possible courses of action once the Regional HRC statement is finalized. The subcommittee could formulate ideas to bring to the regional meeting, and if they decide not to use them, could apply to Scottsdale.

COMMISSIONER LOPEZ MOVED TO FORM A SUBCOMMITTEE TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONAL HRC STATEMENT, AND TO GENERATE IDEAS AND RECOMMEND ACTIONS TO BRING TO THE REGIONAL HRC MEETING, OR TO ACTUALIZE INDEPENDENTLY IN SCOTTSDALE. COMMISSIONER JAMESON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

5. Cross Cultural Communication Series

Chair Seiden suggested the formation of an ad hoc committee to come up with ideas for future topics in the Series. Vice Chair Simmons observed that throughout this season's events, generally speaking, groups showed up to learn about their own cultural group, but did not attend events about other groups. Chair Seiden encouraged the committee to find ways to inspire people to better themselves by learning about others.

Chair Seiden suggested focusing on émigrés who have made an impact in the State of Arizona or the Valley. Many people have come to this country with nothing; yet have become successful because of the options that are made available to them. Unlike this season, which focused on groups, this series would focus on the stories of individuals.

Commissioner Galpin suggested focusing on what people can find in common with those from a completely different background or group. While the stories of community elders are valuable, more effort should be made to attract young people and provide them with different perspectives, perhaps as part of a school assignment. The ad hoc committee should also discuss what could be done to attract more people to the series.

Ms. Walton summarized the survey comments from event attendees. People suggested panels of representatives from multiple groups to discuss issues that impact them jointly. Also suggested was a series on women from different cultures who have contributed to Scottsdale. She said the meeting could include representatives from the Library and other stakeholders to evaluate the process, and discuss partnership opportunities.

Chair Seiden suggested that tying in to the Anti-Defamation League's movie series could be one way to attract younger people. The films raise important questions that prompt discussion following the screenings. Many students from Scottsdale Community College attend as part of their course work. Ms. Walton suggested one meeting to evaluate the past season, and a second to include various stakeholders to come up with a plan moving forward. These meetings would have to occur within the next month to allow for a September start.

COMMISSIONER LOPEZ MOVED TO FORM A SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGED WITH RESEARCHING TOPICS, VENUES, AND OTHER ISSUES RELATED TO THE CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION SERIES. COMMISSIONER GALPIN SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

6. Hispanic Heritage Community Celebration

The Commission discussed strategies for obtaining sponsors for the Hispanic Heritage Community Celebration. Ms Walton provided information on sponsors that currently support Scottsdale community events, and a list of organizations that might have an interest in sponsoring the Celebration. She provided sponsorship packets to the Commissioners to assist them in their recruiting effort. Since this is a Human Relations Commission event, it would be most appropriate to have the Commissioners lead the fundraising effort.

Commissioner Lamé recommended looking beyond the big corporations to seek out sponsors among mid-size and small companies, especially local businesses that have strong ties to the community. Vice Chair Simmons explained that big corporations have a pool of money set

aside to sponsor events, whereas smaller businesses do not. It takes a lot more effort to do fundraising with smaller entities. She recommended concentrating on adding a few sponsors that would be focused on the Hispanic community.

Commissioner Jameson said since the event is held on the Civic Center Mall and is within easy walking distance of Old Town; it would make sense to create a coupon book consisting of offers from the businesses there. Businesses could be included in the book for a small contribution, and they would have the incentive of reaching out to 5,000 attendees. He noted that since it is a family event, some of the large beverage companies have passed on sponsorships because no alcohol is allowed. Bars and restaurants could offer a drink special after the celebration is over. It might also be possible to invite the beverage companies to serve alcohol in an extremely controlled environment. This might draw more people to the event, and could attract more sponsorship money, but it would require working out several issues. Commissioner Galpin said there are risk management, licensing, and insurance questions to consider.

Each Commissioner identified several entities they would approach with initial sponsorship requests. Commissioner Martin inquired what the sponsorship money is used for. Ms. Walton explained that it is used to defray the costs of the event, including entertainment and logistics. The proceeds go towards scholarships for students that attend Arizona universities.

7. Promoting Unity in the Community

Ms. McMillan discussed the Commission's purpose and mission, and activities, programs and services designed to achieve them. The Commission has vehicles that have been established by predecessors to respond to issues as they arise. She distributed copies of the HRC Strategic Plan for 2002, noting that one strategic direction was to provide education through community dialogue and analysis. That Commission established the objective of collecting information to identify the existence of discrimination or prejudice, and coming up with different ways to respond.

The ongoing border issues have attracted hate groups that are looking for someone to blame. Opportunists fan the flames of fear and give these groups the resources they need to exploit the situation. The HRC has resources to respond to this trend. The Southern Poverty Law Center offers free publications to provide programming information on how to combat hate groups. The HRC in 2002 developed a program called "Promoting Unity in the Community" as a way to reimburse community partners for their diversity efforts.

Ms. McMillan also suggested that the HRC could work with Channel 11 to develop PSAs to distribute to other Valley community stations. PSAs could be used to provide information on how to file hate crime or racial profiling complaints, or to disseminate the Regional HRC's joint statement on civil liberties. The Anti-Defamation League could also provide information and empowering resources.

COMMISSIONER LOPEZ MOVED TO INVITE THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE TO ATTEND A HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION MEETING. COMMISSIONER MARTIN SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

8. **Chair Reports**

Chair Seiden discussed a recent newspaper editorial that noted the recent resurgence of hate groups in Arizona and across the country. The Southern Poverty Law Center reports that there are 19 hate groups in Arizona. The Commission discussed ways to increasing the general awareness that hate groups exist in the State, and ways to counter this trend through education. Commissioner Lamé suggested part of the Cross Cultural Communication Series could be dedicated to discussing cultural experiences of prejudice and hate, and how they are overcome.

9. **Commissioner Items**

No discussion.

10. **Open Call to the Public (A.R.S. § 38-431.02)**

No members of the public wished to address the Commission.

11. **Staff Liaison Items**

Ms. Walton noted that the next Regional HRC meeting would be hosted by Phoenix.

12. **Adjournment**

With no further business to conduct, the meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

A/V Tronics, Inc. DBA AVTranz.