
**MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, February 11, 2008
5:00 p.m.
Human Resources
Pinnacle Training Room
7575 E. Main Street
Scottsdale, Arizona**



PRESENT: Michele deLaFreniere, Chair
Enid Seiden, Vice Chair
Marty Gendron, Commissioner
Carol Padwe, Commissioner
Linda Simmons, Commissioner
John Tutelman, Commissioner
Richard Woerth, Commissioner

STAFF: Linda Walton, Staff Liaison
David Ellison, Assistant City Manager
Luis Santaella, Assistant City Attorney

ALSO PRESENT: John Greco

1. **Call to Order:**

The meeting of the Scottsdale Human Relations Committee was called to order by Chair deLaFreniere at 5:11 p.m.

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

Commissioner Gendron requested that in the last paragraph of item 6, "human relations conflict," be changed to "human relations issue."

COMMISSIONER GENDRON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 10, 2007 MEETING AS AMENDED. VICE CHAIR SEIDEN SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

3. **Election of Officers:**

Chair deLaFreniere invited nominations for the seats of Chair and Vice Chair.

COMMISSIONER TUTELMAN MOVED TO NOMINATE ENID SEIDEN TO THE POSITION OF CHAIR OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION. COMMISSIONER SIMMONS SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

COMMISSIONER TUTELMAN MOVED TO NOMINATE MARTY GENDRON TO THE POSITION OF VICE CHAIR OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION.

CHAIR DELAFRENIERE MOVED TO NOMINATE RICHARD WOERTH TO THE POSITION OF VICE CHAIR OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION.

In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Woerth, Mr. Santaella said the Commission's bylaws do not stipulate a seniority system for Chair or Vice Chair appointments.

COMMISSIONER GENDRON WITHDREW HIS NAME FROM CONSIDERATION.

COMMISSIONER GENDRON MOVED TO NOMINATE CAROL PADWE TO THE POSITION OF VICE CHAIR OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION. VICE CHAIR SEIDEN SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

4. **Discussion regarding a process to recognize businesses and organizations for their diversity efforts:**

The Commission discussed whether to establish a process to acknowledge businesses, organizations and individuals for their support of diversity issues in Scottsdale.

Commissioner Simmons argued that well-defined standards should be met in order to qualify for an award.

Commissioner Tutelman said certificates would be both easy to produce, and valued by recipients. He disagreed that standards be set, adding to do so in advance would be too limiting. If a Commissioner felt a particular entity was deserving of recognition, the Commission could discuss and vote on it. A formalized set of standards may become irrelevant later.

Chair deLaFreniere suggested using standards set by the Human Rights Campaign as a guideline for the Commission's standards.

Vice Chair Seiden inquired how the recognition would be publicized. Commissioner Woerth suggested making a recommendation to Council.

Commissioner Gendron noted that one of the Commission's goals is to promote human relations and formal recognition would be a good way to do it. He added that the honor should be reserved for efforts that are above and beyond the norm.

Chair deLaFreniere suggested some basic guidelines be established for researching potential candidates prior to a vote.

COMMISSIONER GENDRON MOVED THAT THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION DEVELOP A PROCESS TO AWARD CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION TO BUSINESSES, ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR DIVERSITY EFFORTS. COMMISSIONER TUTELMAN SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0).

5. **Discussion on whether to grant some type of recognition to Anderson's Fifth Estate, Equality Arizona and Arizona Trans Alliance:**

Chair deLaFreniere asked the Commission to discuss whether to recognize Anderson's Fifth Estate, Equality Arizona and the Arizona Trans Alliance for their efforts to bring about the resolution of a major issue in Scottsdale.

In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Gendron, Chair deLaFreniere explained that the Arizona Trans Alliance was responsible for bringing the other two parties together. She felt that formal recognition not be granted in this case since the owner of the nightclub came to an agreement once he became aware that it would be a prudent business decision to do so.

The Commission agreed not to recognize the parties involved in this incident.

6. **Cross Cultural Communication Series:**

Ms. Walton said the Cross Cultural Communication Series requires help from the Commissioners to generate bigger attendance. The audiences for the last few events have been sparse.

Commissioner Gendron said the series is not getting the support from the City that it needs to promote the events. Posters would help spread the word.

Vice Chair Seiden suggested that public notices be sent with the City water bills.

Commissioner Padwe said holding the lectures at the library or Scottsdale Community College would grant the series more exposure than it currently has at the Senior Center. Chair deLaFreniere suggested rotating venues to see which location draws the most people.

Mr. Ellison said the city government is very supportive of the series, but suggests that a marketing plan be further developed to help maximize results. It would be vital to have the Commission's input, including that already provided during the meeting. He reiterated the already discussed importance of Commission involvement, from attendance, to inviting friends, family, churches and other audiences through personal contacts. He also suggested that Linda and he invite the person(s) responsible for Communications and Public Affairs (CAPA) to the next commission meeting to share what the City is already doing, and can do, to market all HRC sponsored activities. The Commission indicated interest in having CAPA professionals present at the next meeting as suggested.

Commissioner Gendron suggested that the letter that goes out inviting participation be sent in April instead of June, to get more schools involved before they close for the summer.

7. **2008 Regional Unity Walk Update:**

Ms. Walton said the Unity Walk is scheduled for February 23 and will conflict with the Parada Del Sol. In order to contain the cost, the Unity Walk has been linked to the Tempe Empty Bowls event. Posters are available for distribution.

Vice Chair Seiden encouraged the Commissioners represent Scottsdale by attending the event.

8. **Regional HRC Meetings:**

Ms. Walton said the next Regional HRC meeting is scheduled for March 3 and is being hosted by the Chandler HRC. She encouraged the Commissioners to attend.

Scottsdale will host the following regional meeting in the second quarter of 2008. On the agenda for next month will be an item to discuss a date and a theme for that meeting.

9. **Future Direction for the Commission:**

Vice Chair Seiden said she spoke with Police Chief Rodbell and Mayor Manross to get their opinions on the Commission's future direction. She asked them to share their opinions of what the City's problematic issues are. The Mayor suggested domestic violence.

She said one police officer indicated that homelessness was a problem, though Connie James from Human Services said the homeless are served in Scottsdale. Vista del Camino provides emergency assistance, and Scottsdale contributes funding to regional shelters that provide many services.

Commissioner Gendron said homeless services exist, but a lot of people have chronic problems. He suggested that the Commission look at what parachutes are available for people who find themselves homeless. The question was asked if there is a Human Services Commission better suited to address this issue. Mr. Ellison stated that homelessness would be more related to the role of the Human Services Commission, but the HRC might be interested in exploring it from the standpoint of helping the community better understand and respect this segment of our society.

Commissioner Simmons suggested looking into the services that are available to help people with disabilities.

Commissioner Tutelman said Scottsdale could definitely benefit from some more outreach to the Salt River Pima/Maricopa Indian Community. One place to start would be to invite someone from the tribal administration to speak to the Commission, or offering to go there. Simply showing interest may help start a dialogue. Mr. Ellison noted that he is not sure it still happens, but there used to be an annual rotational dinner between the Scottsdale City Council and the Community's governing leaders.

The Commission and Ms. Walton once again discussed identifying possible appointees to the Commission from the Latino community. Mr. Ellison mentioned that the administrative team has talked about the dialogue and communication series potentially going even deeper in the sharing the contributions of various people and cultures. He shared, as one example, that the administrative team is discussing the concept of a public reception hosted by the HRC in honor of Dr. Jose Burruel and Ms. Burruel. The recent release of his book: *Images of America: Mexicans in Scottsdale* was discussed. Mr. Ellison stated that it did not have to be a one-time event, nor does it have to occur during Hispanic Heritage festivities, unless preferred. The Old Adobe Mission in Old Town Scottsdale was mentioned as a potentially good venue because it was a center of worship and life for many Latinos, and the Burruel family is strongly committed to its restoration and effective use. The Commission discussed this and other related ideas. The staff agreed to report back to the Commission after a soon to be held conceptual planning meeting with the Burruel family. Commissioner Tutelman repeated the importance and value of honoring Dr. Jose Burruel and his wife as a tie-in to a broader effort to meaningfully recognize and explain the contributions of Hispanics.

Commissioner Woerth said he would like to hear from representatives from an employee group regarding any issues they may have. Every other HRC he is aware of sees it as part of their responsibility to understand how employees are treated. Commissioner Simmons agreed. Ms. Walton suggested inviting the Diversity Advisory Committee to come and speak about their activities. Chair deLaFreniere said opening up doors to the DAC would be very important.

In response to Commissioner Woerth, Mr. Ellison said based on his understanding of the role and scope of the HRC, it would be inappropriate for the Commission to get involved in employee relations matters, unless instructed to do so by Council. Commissioner Woerth disagreed. Commissioner Simmons requested clarification from City Council on the matter.

Chair deLaFreniere said there are administrative and outside systems in place for employees to use if they have concerns, but as an employee, she does not know of venues within the City for employees to make suggestions on what can be done to improve diversity.

Mr. Ellison said his view is the Commission could request information and reports on such things as workforce demographics and the extent to which they reflect the community, EEOC case filing numbers and resolution data, if appropriate to release, etc. Mr. Ellison added that it is extremely important to be mindful of the City Charter's definition of the roles and relationship between the city council and the city manager it appoints to run the administration.

Mr. Ellison said that in the event an employee wanted to file a complaint against a supervisor, but feared retaliation, they could turn to either the Office of Diversity and Dialogue or the Human Resources Department. If employees feel they are disciplined unfairly, some may go to the Personnel Board, another council-appointed citizen group. Any individual citizen can also share their feelings with the city council or city manager directly.

Vice Chair Seiden said she did not feel that the Commission should get involved in employee issues. Commissioner Tutelman said that while he is sympathetic to employee issues, he does not see how the Commission could contribute. There are channels independent of City government that employees could turn to if management was not responding to their complaints.

10. **Chair Reports:**

Chair deLaFreniere noted that Commissioner Tutelman would be leaving the Commission. On behalf of the Commission, she presented him with a gift in recognition of his years of service.

Commissioner Tutelman announced that the next meeting would be his last. The last six years have been exceptional and have afforded him the opportunity to work with a remarkable group of people. While much remains to be done, the Commission is leading the way with great programs, and has become a valuable resource for the City of Scottsdale.

Chair deLaFreniere announced she did not anticipate being able to attend the rest of the meetings before her term expired due to health reasons, and thanked the Commission for their support. Chair deLaFreniere was also presented with a gift from the Commission.

11. **Commissioner Items:**

Commissioner Padwe distributed flyers that her firm produced in recognition of Black History Month.

Vice Chair Seiden discussed a Philadelphia sandwich shop owner who asked customers to only order in English. The shop owner defended his actions before the Philadelphia Human Relations Commission. The Commission said the requirement was intimidating and ruled against him, alleging that the policy discourages customers of certain backgrounds from eating there. Commissioner Gendron added that the owner was also an immigrant who had to learn English himself.

Commissioner Simmons said that this year's Martin Luther King Dinner was a success. Tuskegee Airmen were guests of honor.

Commissioner Tutelman reported that the Court of Appeals upheld the Superior Court's decision regarding the day laborer issue surrounding Pruitt's Furniture in Phoenix. Parties are waiting to learn whether the Arizona Supreme Court would decide to hear the case.

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

Mr. Greco thanked the Commissioners for donating their service to the community.

13. **Staff Liaison items:**

Mr. Ellison handed out his resume and briefly discussed his background. He offered to assist the Commission in fulfilling its mission. He also said Linda and he would be extending invitations to commissioners for coffee or lunch so everyone can get to know him little better and vice-versa. At the next meeting, he will share an update on the status of the Human Resources General Manager search process, and any relationship between this opening and the filling of the Director of Diversity and Dialogue position. He mentioned that HR General Manager

semi-finalists were specifically asked to address how they would take philosophical commitments to diversity and convert it into action.

Ms. Walton announced that the Phoenix Urban League Dinner is being held on February 29.

Ms. Walton said a representative could be invited to speak to the Commission about what the Police Department is doing regarding the homeless.

14. **Adjournment:**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

A/V Tronics, Inc.