
**MINUTES
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, September 8, 2008
5:00 p.m.
Human Resources
Pinnacle Training Room
7575 E. Main Street
Scottsdale, Arizona**



PRESENT: Carol Padwe, Vice Chair
Nolan Harrison, Commissioner
Jeff Jameson, Commissioner
Kuros Lamé, Commissioner
Linda Simmons, Commissioner
Richard Woerth, Commissioner

ABSENT: Enid Seiden, Chair

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

GUESTS: Michele DeLaFreniere
Erika

1. **Call to Order:**

The meeting of the Scottsdale Human Relations Commission was called to order by Vice Chair Padwe at 5:07 p.m.

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

COMMISSIONER JAMESON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 9, 2008 REGULAR MEETING. COMMISSIONER LAMÉ SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0).

Vice Chair Padwe amended a sentence on page 2 to read, "Chair Seiden explained that the hosts would be provided with scripts to read when introducing the panels." Ms. Walton noted that Mr. Santaella's title is Assistant City Attorney.

COMMISSIONER JAMESON MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 25, 2008 REGULAR MEETING AS AMENDED. COMMISSIONER WOERTH SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0).

3. **Introduction of New Commissioner:**

Ms. Walton introduced Nolan Harrison as the newest Commissioner. Commissioner Harrison is currently a Vice President with Morgan Stanley, and previously played in the NFL. He is on the Board of the Scottsdale YMCA, and is active in the Arthritis National Research Foundation, the Boys and Girls Club, United Way, Arizona Leukemia/Lymphoma Society, and the Arizona Cardinals Charities. Commissioner Harrison said he is glad to have an opportunity to contribute to the community, and wants to teach his children to lead by example.

4. **Cross Cultural Communication Series:**

Ms. Walton noted that each Commissioner has been asked to host one of the lectures in the series. Most lectures have been assigned, though the March 3 and March 5 events remain available.

The Series provides an opportunity for the community to discuss topics of diversity. This season's theme is "Scottsdale: Many Cultures." The series is looking at the contributions different ethnic groups have made to Scottsdale in the past and currently. The Library is a partner in the series, and has helped obtain speakers for each lecture.

Commissioner Harrison volunteered for the March 3 lecture.

5. **Unity Walk:**

Vice Chair Padwe reported on the August 13 meeting of the Coordinating Committee she attended. The group approved a mission statement "Walking for unity in our community, to promote mutual respect and understanding." She felt the statement is inadequate and should clearly define what is meant by unity.

The Scottsdale HRC has been assigned to arrange for cultural entertainment, advise Mayor/Council about the event and request their presence, and invite the Phoenix Suns Gorilla to entertain the kids after the walk. The goal is to get people to stay longer after the walk concludes. Ms. Walton clarified that City officials would be expected to make remarks once the walkers get to Tempe Town Lake.

Commissioner Harrison agreed that the mission statement is ambiguous. Vice Chair Padwe explained that the event started out as a civil rights walk, but the current iteration does not reflect that. Commissioner Harrison noted that the event would be held only two weeks after what will be a historical Presidential inaugural, regardless of the outcome. Tying into that awareness might get more people involved.

Commissioner Jameson said the statement should reflect some civil rights sentiment since it takes place during Black History Month. Mr. Santaella suggested the Commission make a motion to send a letter to the Coordinating Committee recommending a revision of the statement. That would carry more weight.

Commissioner Jameson said "unity" could infer that the individual cities are trying to get along with each other. It should instead say that the communities are uniting for justice, civil rights

and understanding. Commissioner Woerth said the point the organizers are trying to make is that the Unity Walk is inclusive and shows mutual respect for everybody.

Commissioner Lamé inquired whether the Native American communities have been invited to take part in the event planning, and whether corporate sponsors have been lined up. Ms. Walton explained that the event has not pursued those types of sponsors, as it has such a low overhead. Each Commission has budgeted an appropriate share of the expense. The plan is to have other diversity related organizations take part. Commissioner Lamé explained that the event should consider inviting corporations to share their ideas for promoting unity within their organizations. Ms. Walton said each city would have a booth to explain the diverse services they provide, and that idea could possibly be incorporated in some way.

Vice Chair Padwe said the event has lost momentum over the past few years, and has suffered from poor planning. Commissioner Harrison said part of the problem could be that the event moved away from its roots as a Martin Luther King, Jr. related event. Ms. Walton said the event moved away from those roots because there already is an M.L.K. Unity Walk that is well attended. The Unity Walk decided to broaden the theme to be all-inclusive. Commissioner Lamé suggested inviting Valley Metro, since it is literally connecting communities. Commissioner Jameson suggested that a media sponsor could broadcast some PSAs.

Vice Chair Padwe read a new proposed mission statement to present to the Unity Walk Committee, "Walking together to promote diversity and combat discrimination and prejudice." The Commission discussed whether the word "combat" was appropriate. Commissioner Harrison suggested phrasing the statement in the positive.

Commissioner Harrison suggested sending a letter requesting that the mission statement be revamped to improve its clarity.

COMMISSIONER JAMESON MOVED TO SANCTION ITS REPRESENTATIVES TO THE UNITY WALK COMMITTEE, TO STRENGTHEN THE LANGUAGE OF THE EVENT'S MISSION STATEMENT SO THAT IT SENDS A STRONGER MESSAGE IN SUPPORT OF TOLERANCE, JUSTICE, AND UNITY. COMMISSIONER HARRISON SECONDED.

Mr. Santaella noted that the Commission could send a letter that requests that the Unity Walk Committee consider revising the mission statement to include those factors.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0).

Ms. Walton asked whether the Commission's intent should be expressed verbally or in writing. Mr. Santaella suggested another motion to clarify the intent.

COMMISSIONER HARRISON MOVED TO VERBALLY COMMUNICATE, VIA THE STAFF LIAISON TO THE UNITY WALK COMMITTEE, TO STRENGTHEN THE LANGUAGE OF THE EVENT'S MISSION STATEMENT SO THAT IT SENDS A STRONGER MESSAGE IN SUPPORT OF TOLERANCE, JUSTICE, AND UNITY. COMMISSIONER WOERTH SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0).

6. **Regional HRC Meeting:**

Commissioner Jameson reported that Scottsdale had four representatives at the regional meeting. Ron Wakabayashi of the Community Relations Service of the U.S. Department of Justice gave a presentation. He discussed the Department's community mediation efforts to head off potentially larger disruptions of the peace. Commissioner Harrison explained how the service helped resolve conflicts during the L.A. riots of 1994, and could be used to mitigate the discord between Phoenix's disenfranchised population and the Sheriff's Department.

There was also a presentation on a new exhibition at the Tempe Historical Museum. It is one of only seven permanent museum installations in the country to highlight art related to the GLBT experience.

7. **Strategic Direction for the Commission:**

Ms. Walton noted that the Commission recently discussed whether the current long-range plan was still valid. The Commission decided to obtain input from the community through a set of focus groups. The plan is to have five main groups meet in October or November. The groups would consist of people from the business, faith, and educational communities, as well as a general group of citizens, and the Community Celebrating Diversity organization.

Ms. Walton asked the Commission to discuss the kinds of questions that the focus groups should address, and identify an approach these questions should take. Should the scope focus on the municipality specifically, or on the community at large? Sample questions could be what do participants feel are diversity concerns in the community, what good things are happening, and what things could be improved on?

In response to Commissioner Harrison, Ms. Walton said the same set of questions would be asked of all the groups to see what issues come forth. The Commission could then decide what type of initiative it wanted to take, in response to the feedback. The idea is to not guide the discussion but to simply listen.

Commissioner Jameson said he would be interested in knowing more about the level of community awareness in the HRC and in diversity in general. Ms. Walton said the participants would be provided with information on the various diversity models in advance. The Commission would have an opportunity to review the plan at the October meeting.

Commissioner Harrison suggested asking open-ended questions such as, "What does a diverse community look like to you?"

8. **Chair Reports:**

No report was given.

9. **Commissioner Items:**

Commissioner Jameson suggested that money and food could be saved if each Commissioner sent an R.S.V.P. with their intent to attend the meeting. Box meals could be ordered based on the expected turnout. He requested an agenda item to discuss the change.

Ms. Walton reported that a number of community representatives, including Commissioner Woerth, were recognized for their efforts at the recent Valle del Sol luncheon.

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

Ms. DeLaFreniere said the AZ Trans Alliance is a community resource for information and political action for the GLBT community throughout Arizona.

11. **Staff Liaison Items:**

Ms. Walton said at the last regional staff liaison meeting, there was discussion on establishing a proclamation for World Unity Day on November 11. The regional liaisons are asking each Commission to consider establishing support for this proclamation in support of World Unity Day, and perhaps do some related events. Ms. Walton said she would distribute information and set an agenda item to discuss it.

Ms. Walton said the Hispanic Heritage Community Celebration would be on September 27. This year's event will be downsized a bit from past years. The budget does not allow for the educational booths to be subsidized this year, but the rest of the event will stay the same. She asked for volunteers to staff the HRC table.

Ms. Walton reported that the City has named the new Human Resources General Manager, and she plans to attend the next HRC meeting. Dr. LaVerne Parker Diggs has had her own consulting business, and was the Assistant City Manager with the City of Norfolk. She was also the HR Director for the City of Glendale.

Ms Walton asked the Commission whether it wanted to invite former Commissioner Gendron to the next meeting to formally thank him for his service. Vice Chair Padwe noted that Commissioner Gendron resigned without notice. Mr. Santaella suggested agendizing a discussion about how to handle cases where Commissioners are termed out, resign, or do not re-apply.

12. **Adjournment:**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

A/V Tronics, Inc.