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**MINUTES  
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
Monday, NOVEMBER 10, 2008  
5:00 p.m.  
Human Resources  
Pinnacle Training Room  
7575 E. Main Street  
Scottsdale, Arizona**



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**PRESENT:** Enid Seiden, Chair  
Carol Padwe, Vice Chair  
Jeff Jameson, Commissioner  
Kuros Lamé, Commissioner  
Linda Simmons, Commissioner

**ABSENT:** Nolan Harrison, Commissioner  
Richard Woerth, Commissioner

**STAFF:** Linda Walton, Staff Liaison  
Luis Santaella, Assistant City Attorney  
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 5:14 p.m.

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

**COMMISSIONER SIMMONS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 13, 2008 REGULAR MEETING. COMMISSIONER LAMÉ SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0).**

3. **Cross Cultural Communication Series:**

Chair Seiden tabled this item, as the invited guest was unavailable.

4. **Review of Proposed Changes to Commission Bylaws including Participation Requirements**

Mr. Santaella reviewed the proposed changes to Commission bylaws. Commissions are supposed to select their chairs each January, however the HRC often does not meet then because of the Martin Luther King celebration. The bylaw language was changed to allow chairs to be selected at the first meeting of the year. Mr. Santaella noted that he clarified language related to vacancies and removals, and deleted language pertaining to legal advice.

The Chair has the authority to cancel regular meetings if no quorum is expected to be present. The Commission may choose to meet during summer recess at its discretion. All meetings must abide by open meeting laws as required by State law. State law also requires that notices for special meetings be posted at least 24 hours in advance, though more notice is preferred.

New bylaw language provides more flexibility by giving the Commission the option to extend public hearings and work study sessions beyond four hours, by a majority vote. The current language does not allow new agenda items to be entertained after the fourth hour. In response to Commissioner Jameson, Mr. Santaella explained that there is no legal requirement to limit meetings. The Commission agreed to simply remove the language entirely to avoid confusion.

Any agenda items submitted by Commissioners shall be put on the agenda, unless the Chair determines that they exceed the scope of the HRC's authority. Vice Chair Padwe noted that a group of parents recently approached the Commission to express their objection to the proposed closure of Aztec Elementary School. She felt that that item should not have been on the agenda since it concerned the Scottsdale Unified School District, not the City. Chair Seiden disagreed, saying the item was placed on the agenda because it was a human relations issue. The Commission wanted to determine whether or not the children were being discriminated against.

Commissioner Simmons expressed concern about one person being able to make agenda decisions alone. Mr. Santaella suggested that the current language could remain unchanged. It says that if a Commissioner submits an item, the Chair has to put it on the agenda. Commissioner Simmons suggested an aspirational statement to remind that agenda items need to be positioned against the scope of the Commission. Commissioner Jameson said the Commission should have the latitude to determine whether an introduced item was beyond the scope of the mission. Chair Seiden agreed that it would be best not to have all the power in the hands of one person. Mr. Santaella proposed that if a Commissioner feels an item is inappropriate, they could introduce a motion to leave it off the agenda.

Commissioners would be required to attend a certain number of meetings within a fiscal year, rather than within six months. Vice Chair Padwe asked about excused absences. Mr. Santaella suggested that Commissioners should make every effort to notify the staff liaison whenever they are unable to attend a meeting.

Special event attendance is a new area that the bylaws address. Commissioners shall attend one special event related to the HRC's purpose every three months. Upon a majority vote, the Commission may recommend to the Council the removal of a Commissioner. Any such recommendation shall state the specific reasons. Poor attendance would be considered good cause.

Commissioner Simmons asked whether the bylaws defined what a special event is. Mr. Santaella suggested the term be changed to "an HRC-related activity." Commissioner Simmons inquired whether a diversity-related activity associated with ones workplace would count. Chair Seiden felt it should be based on events that the Scottsdale HRC is sponsoring, not something that is for personal education. Following a discussion on the matter, Mr. Santaella said he would work to define what an HRC-related activity is. It should be specific enough to give people notice, but open enough to include a wide variety of situations.

Each Commission would be recognized for their service upon completion of their term in office. The Commission may vote to recognize a Commissioner who is unable to complete their term due to extenuating circumstances. In response to Commissioner Lamé, Mr. Santaella explained that a personal issue happens by the choice of the Commissioner, while extenuating circumstances is something that is beyond their control. The Commission decides by majority vote whether the circumstance is extenuating or not.

Commissioner Jameson inquired about the section on conflicts of interest. Mr. Santaella explained that State law and City ethics codes already govern those issues, making that section redundant.

The bylaws address parliamentary procedures. Mr. Santaella added language that the Chair can use Robert's Rules of Order as a guideline, rather than as a mandate. The rules can often be complex, and strict compliance with them is not expected.

Mr. Santaella said he would revise the bylaws based on the Commission's comments, and return at the next meeting.

##### 5. **Chair Reports:**

Chair Seiden said she tried to contact Commissioner Woerth by email and phone, but received no response. Commissioner Woerth did contact Ms. Walton to inform her that he was resigning. The process of finding a replacement begins immediately.

Ms. Walton said Commissioner Woerth indicated that he was very busy, and understood that his attendance was important to the Commission. He also expressed his dismay, saying that the Commission should be addressing more extensive kinds of issues, but was not. In response to Vice Chair Padwe, Ms. Walton said he mentioned one specific example regarding employee-related activities. There were things that he had brought forth in the past that had not been addressed. Ms. Walton said that Commissioner Woerth would be sending a letter to the Commission to formalize his position, but he wanted to make it clear that his plan was to resign.

Ms. Walton said Council would be accepting applications for the position. Commissioner Jameson said he only met Commissioner Woerth once. He asked whether the issues he raised were worth bringing to bear. Commissioner Simmons said he put energy into those issues, but the Commission never felt they were in its purview. Chair Seiden added that the Assistant City Manager indicated that employee relations were not an area the HRC should be delving into.

Chair Seiden asked the Commission to read a letter she received from Mr. Nagasawa, a Scottsdale citizen. Mr. Santaella noted that this item was being introduced for informational purposes only. An item would need to be agendized, for the Commission to discuss it.

Chair Seiden explained that the citizen contacted the City to ask about the reasons behind dressing up for Halloween, and was upset by one particular costume. The citizen has been contacted to convey to him that there is sensitivity in the City of Scottsdale. She felt that it would be the right thing to do to send a letter from the Commission to acknowledge his reason for being upset, and stating that the City is aware of diversity and is very sorry that this has happened. Ms. McMillan said staff has contacted the Police Department about insensitive graffiti, and will follow up with the citizen to let him know that the City understands the gravity of what has happened.

Chair Seiden said she wants him to feel that the City is doing as much as possible. He plans to attend the regional HRC meeting to discuss the issue. The Commission's letter should go out before that meeting. She said the regional HRC meeting precedes any opportunity to agendaize a vote for action. Ms. McMillan suggested that Chair Seiden could contact Mr. Nagasawa to inform him that a letter is being prepared in response to his. At the next meeting, the Commission can approve the correspondence. Chair Seiden said she wants the letter to go out before the regional meeting. Ms. Walton noted that Mr. Nagasawa copied Ken Ihori who is on the Phoenix Human Relations Commission. Mr. Ihori suggested he attend the regional HRC meeting.

6. **Commissioner Items:**

Vice Chair Padwe discussed the Unity Walk planning meeting she attended. She introduced the Scottsdale HRC's comments about the mission statement, but it was voted down. They did, however, amend portions of the brochure that were unclear. She expressed frustration that her attempts to positively influence the direction of the event have met with little result.

Commissioner Simmons reported on the dialogue on diversity presented by a representative from the Department of Justice. He discussed what the role of a Human Relations Commission is. She came away from the event with much material and requested an agenda item to discuss it next month. The speaker has also indicated a willingness to turn to speak to the Scottsdale HRC at some point.

Commissioner Jameson said the results of the presidential elections indicate that the nation has taken a big step towards better human relations.

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

There were no public comments.

8. **Staff Liaison Items:**

Ms. Walton said the Unity Walk planners are considering several groups of entertainers. Childsplay may also be performing a play. Commissioner Jameson inquired about the public relations plan. Ms. Walton said a flyer is being prepared for each city to distribute.

Ms. Walton said she sent an email to Mr. Nagasawa explaining how diversity is extremely important to the City. She invited him to come to a Scottsdale Commission meeting. He is unable to attend on Monday nights, and therefore sent the letter to Chair Seiden. He noted that the swastika he found on his utility box was the third such one. This could be perceived as hate crime behavior. The Police Department is checking their incident reports. She also spoke with the graffiti abatement department, and they are following up on the matter.

Ms. Walton noted that Mr. Nagasawa spoke with some City staff and indicated he was not happy with their response. The City takes this matter very seriously and will respond appropriately. She also spoke to the staff liaisons at the Unity Walk planning meeting to alert them about the issue. They welcome and support Mr. Nagasawa, but also recognize that the appropriate protocol would be to allow Scottsdale the opportunity to address the complaint. The Human Relations General Manager has also spoken to Mr. Nagasawa, and the Department will continue to follow up with him.

Mr. McMillan said the City has a protocol that should have been engaged in when Mr. Nagasawa first made contact. He should have been immediately transferred to the Diversity Office, but he was not. Despite this, he should have received the same information regardless of whom he spoke to. Those issues are being addressed internally. All employees are required to take diversity training within the first six months of being hired. When issues arise after the probationary period, the one-on-one process is initiated.

Ms. McMillan explained that when Mr. Nagasawa found the swastika, he went online to locate the City's abatement program. While doing his research, he saw an advertisement about the Fall Festival, which featured a photograph that he found insulting. He first contacted the staff of Communications and Public Affairs to find out who published the photograph.

Ms. Walton reported that the City was contacted by the Asian Chamber of Commerce who offered diversity training. She explained that the City has training, but was open to any ideas they may have. They extended the City an invitation to attend a reception to launch a report on the state of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders in Arizona. The Human Relations General Manager will attend the reception.

Ms. Walton noted two certificates of appreciation for sponsors that were generated through the HRC. She said the new Commissioners recently attended an orientation. The next regional HRC meeting is on November 19, and will focus on immigration.

9. **Adjournment:**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

A/V Tronics, Inc.