

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
November 20, 2002

MEMBERS PRESENT

Gilbert Blanks
Kathleen Conley
Alice Lewis
Ed Peterson
Will Riley
Robert Whitman

MEMBERS ABSENT

Teressa Delph
Rosemarie Herbert (exc.)
Thomas Ramundo (exc.)

STAFF

Henry L. Jenkins

GUESTS

Tom Swain, Center for Independent Living

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Blanks at 6:40 p.m. Roll call was taken.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS:

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

A motion was made by Kathleen Conley to approve the October 16, 2002, minutes. The motion was supported by Robert Whitman. The motion carried.

4. COMMUNITY UPDATE/CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE:

Chairman Blanks advised the HRC of an Empowerment Quest Media Summit to be held on October 17. He encouraged members to attend. Two members stated that they were planning to attend.

He also reported on a introductory seminar to be held regarding conducting Study Circles in a community. This seminar will be held Wednesday, December 11, 5:30 p.m., 2nd Floor Council Chambers, City Hall. Information will be sent out in the next few days.

Chairman Blanks thanked members for attending the film festival. He stated that he was pleased with it. There were approximately 50-60 people who attended with about 30 who stayed afterwards. A discussion followed regarding media coverage and how the discussion was handled. Alice Lewis offered to find the next movie, date and time. It was suggested that perhaps a movie regarding disabilities could be used. Alice Lewis asked what some of the comments regarding the movie were. The movie seemed to be accepted by the audience.

5. STAFF REPORT:

Staff reviewed the financial reports.

Staff reported that the recent National Association of Human Rights Workers Conference was very good.

Staff also reported that there will be a meeting at McCulloch School regarding their concern about the possibility of a charter school moving in and taking some of their students. There is a neighborhood meeting on October 17 at McCulloch School. All HRC members are invited to attend.

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights will be holding a couple of forums – one will be held on Tuesday, November 26, at 10:00 a.m., in Detroit, and another will be held on Wednesday, December 4 at 1:00 p.m., in Flint. These will address the immigration and naturalization community relations program. Also on December 13, in Lansing, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights will be having a training called, “Building Cultural Competency.” HRC members were invited to attend if possible.

Will Riley made a motion to accept the staff report. Kathleen Conley supported the motion. Motion carried.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Community Needs -

Staff reported that the HRC, Chamber of Commerce, NAACP, and some religious insitutions are getting together to plan a Martin Luther King Breakfast for January 17, 2003, 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The theme will be, “Diversity is Good for Business.” Planning is going very well. Sponsorships are going for \$1,000. As of this point there are about 6-8 sponsors committed. Tickets will be sold for \$10. The next meeting will be November 21, 2002.

Diversity Training - No report.

Proposed Civil Rights Ordinance - Robert Whitman reported he spoke briefly with the City Attorney. He further reported that he was in Ypsilanti before elections helping with the Get Out the Vote campaign. They are currently involved in trying to save their civil rights ordinance from a second well funded attack. Staff reported that he had spoken to the City Manager of Ypsilanti at a recent meeting. He was very happy that the effort to repeal their civil rights ordinance had gotten turned down. Discussion followed regarding communities and their civil rights ordinances.

Labor and Industry - No report.

Public Relations and Information - Ed Peterson stated that he felt that showing the film was great publicity for the HRC. It was agreed that a thank you note should be sent to Dr. Constance Johnson and George Davis.

7. OLD BUSINESS:

8. NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Blanks inquired about plans for the next HRC Oratorical Contest. Staff stated that he would start working on that. Alice Lewis and Teressa Delph will also work on this.

The Oneness of Human Kind resolution was discussed. Staff stated that Councilmember Carl Breeding had received a copy of it to review. Tom Swain requested a copy of the resolution also.

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Alice Lewis reported on a meeting held regarding changing of the City street names. She provided a list and map that was given to her. A discussion followed.

Chairman Blanks stated that he will plan to give a report to the City Council at their December 10 meeting. He will then announce the Study Circle Orientation, how the film festival went, the Martin Luther King Breakfast in January and will also recommend the reappointment of Alice Lewis and Kathleen Conley. Discussion followed regarding filling the vacancy of Rosemarie Herbert's position. The nominating committee will consist of Alice Lewis, Robert Whitman and Thomas Ramundo. Will Riley stated that he hoped the Nominating Committee would formulate a list of questions to follow for the interviews. It was decided to recommend the two reappointments to the City Council now, and wait until after the first of the year to conduct interviews for the vacant position.

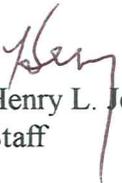
A motion was made by Ed Peterson to recommend the reappointment of Alice Lewis and Kathleen Conley to a three-year term on the HRC. Will Riley supported the motion. Motion carried.

Chairman Blanks reported on the mentoring program at Jackson High School. The emphasis this year is to be friends with the students. One of the potential problems is that the school is requesting that mentors meet with the students between 8:33 and 9:06 a.m. This may exclude quite a few of the mentors.

Robert Whitman inquired about the Racial Profiling meeting. Alice Lewis reported that there had been a meeting scheduled, but no one showed up. Another meeting is being rescheduled for the second week of December.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Henry L. Jenkins
Staff