



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Minutes

August 12, 2014

6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Darnel Frost.

Present:

Margaret Duwe
Jacob Fiene
Darnel Frost
Denis Hart
Genevieve Hodges
Romona Miller
Tere Owens

Absent:

Ed Johnston

City Council Liaison:

Council Member Bob Sears

Staff Liaison:

Chief Administrative Officer Russell Hawes

Other:

Kathie Valentine, Administration

Visitors:

Josh Lewis

Roll Call

Roll call was taken with attendance reflected above.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Darnel Frost and seconded by Maggie Duwe to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2014 meeting as amended. All in favor, motion carried.

Report of City Council Liaison

Council Member Sears explained that the Council is in the approval process for Fresh Thyme.

Contractors are working at city hall on the hardscape portion of the city hall enhancement project with the completion date on this segment of the project estimated to be the end of November. Landscaping is scheduled to begin next year in early spring.

Ready in 3 Presentation, Genevieve Hodges

Genevieve Hodges gave a presentation on planning for emergencies explaining that it is important to do as much as possible prior to an emergency actually happening. She distributed copies of the Ready In 3 booklet which contains information on creating a plan for your family or business, preparation of an emergency bag, and the importance of listening for information about what to do and where to go during an actual emergency.

A demonstration of the Ready in 3 program will take place at 10:00 a.m. on October 11 in Meacham Park. CERT training is also available to citizens with a new session scheduled to begin in early October. Applications to attend the CERT training can be obtained through the Kirkwood Police Department.

Elections

- Motion was made by Darnel Frost and seconded by Genevieve Hodges to elect Maggie Duwe as Vice Chair. All in favor, motion carried.
- Motion was made by Romona Miller and seconded by Maggie Duwe to elect Darnel Frost as Chair. All in favor, motion carried.
- Motion was made by Romona Miller and seconded by Genevieve Hodges to elect Tere Owens as Secretary. All in favor, motion carried.

Strategic Plan Reports

It was noted that due to changes in the Commission membership, the responsibility portion of the Strategic Plan should be updated. Denis Hart offered to update the plan and once completed a copy will be e-mailed to Commission members.

B.5 – Darnel Frost advised that he plans to attend the next Kirkwood Cultural and Arts Commission meeting to discuss the HRC's idea to sponsor an art contest instead of the annual essay contest next year. Some items discussed were:

- Consider extending the contest to all grade levels – elementary, middle, and high school students.
- Establish multiple categories for awards.

A subcommittee consisting of Darnel Frost, Genevieve Hodges, Denis Hart and Romona Miller was formed. It was noted that Public Information Beth von Behren should be involved.

C.2 – A decision should be made by the Commission regarding sponsoring an art contest or holding the annual conference.

Elegy to Connie Karr Film

Russ Hawes explained that he did not feel the city would want to sponsor a showing of the film but that the Commission could make a formal request to the City Council. Council Member Sears advised that he was personally neutral and that he had not been in any discussions on the subject. Showing the film at a Kirkwood church was mentioned with it being noted that the HRC would most likely not be able to sponsor it.

Pam Coaxum, St. Charles Human Relations Commission

Darnel Frost invited Pam Coaxum of the St. Charles Human Relations Commission to the table. She spoke on the importance of dialogue and fostering new commissions. She noted that St. Charles holds an art contest which has been successful. They also have a video on their website and on a cable television network which is popular. She complimented the Kirkwood HRC on their work.

Youth and Police

Romona Miller spoke on the importance of educating youth on how to handle situations when police are involved, instructing them on what to do if stopped, and how to navigate the legal system. She suggested the HRC partner with the Kirkwood Police Department in order to provide this education/guidance to youth in the area and that she felt it could be a huge event.

Darnel Frost advised that it is his intention to contact Chief Plummer in order to discuss the concept.

D.1 – Denis Hart plans to attend a two-day training program in September in Kansas City, Missouri that is being hosted by the Missouri Commission on Human Rights and presented by the National Community Reinvestment Coalition on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing. He will be paying for the conference, hotel and travel expenses with money from the Fair Housing Grant. Grant monies can be used up to 30 days after the September 30th deadline.

He also reported that the Joint Community Group made up of the Meacham Park Neighborhood Improvement Association, the HRC, and Citizens for Understanding and Hope has taken the name Kirkwood Neighbors United. This group meets monthly with their mission statement being: "To create a collaborative environment that promotes and participates in initiatives that further a more inclusive and welcoming community and celebrates the value of diversity". The next meeting of Kirkwood Neighbors United is scheduled for August 20th at Eliot Chapel.

F.1 – Tabled until new Commission assignments can be made.

G.1 – Included in D.1 discussion.

H.1 – Denis Hart is tracking the distribution and use of the \$1,000 grant.

Neighborhood Caretaker Alert Form

Russ Hawes reported that the Neighborhood Caretaker Alert Form had been finalized and printed. Each form is numbered and has a yellow carbon copy page. The city's MIS Department has created a way for citizens to anonymously access information on the status of the form they submitted through the city's website by simply entering their form number, pressing enter, which will bring up a response to their concern.

Complaints that are submitted will be handled through the City Clerk's office first with city department directors being able to record on the city's website information on what they have done in response to the alert.

If needed, citizens can use computers at the Kirkwood Library with the assistance of library staff. Public Information Officer Beth von Behren will publicize the alert form in multiple ways. It was noted that citizens can also anonymously phone in information.

LGBT Ordinance

A letter regarding enforcement of the LGBT ordinance had been sent to the City Council by Maggie Duwe and Council Member Sears with no response being received. Council Member Sears advised that he would send something additional to the Council on the matter.

Other

- The HRC brochure will be mailed with the October utility bills.
- Genevieve Hodges brought up concerns regarding the lack of sidewalks in the area of Big Bend and Kirkwood Road, near Sonic, and also from Sonic to Highway 44 and from Doc's Harley Davidson to Nipher School. It was noted that that those areas are county/state roadways. Council Member Sears stated that sidewalks are a requirement in the code for new construction in Kirkwood.
- Maggie Duwe passed out two handouts: 1) Information on the Nelson Mandela Human Rights Day, and 2) on payday loans (e-mailed to Georgia Ragland by Scott Stearman, Kirkwood Baptist Church, with the thought that the HRC could somehow be involved).

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the HRC will be held on Tuesday, September 9, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. at Kirkwood City Hall.

Adjourn

Motion was made by Darnel Frost and seconded by Maggie Duwe to adjourn. All in favor, motion carried.

Tere Owens, Secretary