

Richfield Human Rights Commission  
Monthly Meeting Minutes  
April 3rd, 2018

Members Present: Mark Westergaard, Carrie Chillman, Debbie Eng, Brett Stursa, Cathy Stephens, Husniyah Dent Bradley, Will Ruckel, Grace Verbrugge, Sarah Musgrave, Matthew Kiflu. Ben Sunderlin.

Mike Howard - City Council Liaison

1. Meeting called to order by Chair Mark Westergaard at 6:30pm.
2. Motion to approve agenda Eng/seconded Musgrave; motion carried.
3. Motion to approve 3/18 minutes Chillman/seconded Stursa; motion carried.
4. Open Public comment: none.
5. Reports
  - Chair's report: Mark noted an LGBTQ speaker event sponsored by the Edina HRC and the League of MN Voters that was publicized recently in the Sun Current, he suggested we think about hosting a similar event; Mark also noted the need for occasional graphic design for the commission, Brett volunteered for this.
  - Secretary's report: none.
  - Vice Chair's report: none.
  - Liaison reports: Mike Howard stated that Mark did an excellent job on the annual commission report to the City Council and a good discussion was had on how to move this work forward; city staff is participating in a year-long training on racial equity; VEAP is sponsoring tennent listening sessions on affordable housing in April, specific dates will be emailed.
6. New Business
  - Academic Balance Bill - Debbie gave history and background on a bill proposal stemming from Edina students suing for free speech rights and shared an early draft of a resolution; discussion of resolution resulted in need to further develop the document (subcommittee formed of Deb, Ben, Heather, Husniyah). Group will research more and see what others are doing as well; in the meantime Mike suggested HRC members could send letters stating views to elected officials by the end of the year's session; Ben suggested putting out media statement or having a couple of HRC members to testify against bill at capitol.
  - 2018 Planning Calendar - Mark announced that the current RHRC event calendar is on the City's website. Mark also suggested the idea of hosting Jane Elliot, author of the Brown Eyes/Blue Eyes study, at RHS next spring; Ben suggested opening the idea to include a diverse speaking panel to discuss racial equality.
  - 6. New Business continued....
    - b. Commissioners expanded on Ben's speaking panel idea and suggested organizing a 2019 Human Rights Speaker Series. A subcommittee was created (Ben, Mark, Carrie,

and Matthew) to further develop this concept and create a draft Purpose Statement to be reviewed by RHRC. Richfield High School was discussed as a venue for this Speakers Series. Mark mentioned that he knows a disabled woman who is an excellent speaker on disabilities that he will check into regarding speaking in Richfield. Mark stated that RHRC would also need to secure funds to bring her to Richfield.

c. Citizen of the Year Process – Mark gave some history regarding the Gene and Mary Jacobson award and explained the process for Citizen of the Year. Mark also mentioned the criteria developed last year to assist the commission in determining the Citizen. A City Council presentation and reception (hosted by RHRC prior to the council meeting) will occur in the beginning of June.

d. Islam 101 event (Will team lead, Carrie, Cathy, and Husniyah) - Committee is looking for a venue to hold event. Commissioners discussed bringing in different speaker(s) this time as RHRC has hosted IRC two times in two years.

e. Human Trafficking Forum - Details have not yet been finalized, however Mark is looking to late October/early November as a potential date due to school scheduling. Richfield Assistant Principal Teresa Rosen has stated that she attributed last year's good attendance to Swopnil (RHRC youth member) getting the word out to students.

#### 7. Unfinished Business

a. Commissions Demographic Survey – Mark discussed survey data with RHRC commissioners.

#### 8. Announcements/Open Forum

Ben mentioned that the Richfield Social Justice Group will be working with the League of Women Voters to register voters in April and May 2018 and 2019 (dates to be determined).

9. Next meeting: Tuesday, May 1st @ 6:30PM

10. Adjourn: Moved Stursa/Seconded Dent Bradley

Submitted by:

Carrie Chillman

Secretary

Assisted by Debbie Eng