

Topeka Human Relations Commission

Meeting Minutes

August 4, 2014

Commissioners met on August 4, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. for the August monthly meeting
Holliday Building – Conference Room
620 SE Madison Street
Topeka, KS 66603

To request an ADA accommodation, please contact 368-3606 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. no later than 3 working days in advance of this meeting.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Human Relations Commission is to conduct outreach and educational activities that promote justice and cultural understanding, and improve relationships among all citizens of the City of Topeka.

Commissioners present:

Ms. Lorean Williams
Ms. Margo Rangel
Mr. Bill Beachy
Ms. Stephanie Mott
Ms. Amy Cohen
Mr. Anthony Fadale
Ms. Darcella Goodman
Mr. Mike Padilla

Commissioners absent: Ms. Joyce Grigsby

City Present: Ms. Shawn Maisberger

- I. Call to order – Commissioner**
Noting a quorum, Lorean Williams, Chair, called the meeting at order at 5:30 p.m.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance followed by a Moment of Silence**
- III. Approval of Agenda**
Bill made a motion to adopt the agenda; Amy seconded. No discussion. Motion carried
- IV. Approval of Minutes**
Minutes were unavailable.

V. Staff Report

No report.

VI. Committee Reports

- *Prejudice & Poverty Committee Update*

Stephanie reported that last month was the completion of the program and what to do next. She has visited with Margo regarding getting an audience before the council on a mini presentation - see the film on discrimination. Good visuals to show that although you can have laws does not mean people have equality. Displays of equity vs equality.

She has talked to Precious about providing a presentation to the governing body and have participants share their experience. It would take about 20-30 minutes. Take to governing body prior to the Town Hall Meeting but sharing the ideas about the Town Hall Meeting and get community input and public attention and awareness.

Margo and Stephanie have met to discuss the program. Precious was the primary presenter for the class. The class met twice six people participated with a nice mix of diversity. Talked about individual journeys in one another lives - discovering things about people that you might know for a long time and get a better idea of their values, obstacles that they encounter. She realized that she has so much more to learn and it has changed the words that have come out of her mouth and how she interacts with others. All participants expressed the same experiences. Discussed program curriculum vs the power point presentation for the class. Margo agrees with the information shared. Anthony recommends that anything before the city council should be work session driven for non-action. You want to convey to the council this is important. Then the council could draft a policy or give input for future programming. Shawn explained the new process for presentation and the replacement of work sessions for the governing body. There is now a section in the agenda for non-action items.

Anthony made a motion Darcella, Margo, & Stephanie and anyone else the chair authorizes to make a presentation to the city manager or council on the social justice education as outline by Precious as appropriate and available. Bill seconded. Discussion: Mike question putting the names in the motion in case folks can't attend. Just leave it to the chair to decide on who's available. Anthony said that he stated the names and the bylaws state who is speaking on behalf of the commission so there is no misunderstanding of the representation. He was hoping that it was clear on who could speak on behalf of the commission so that there were no issues. He is okay with leaving it open. Margo appreciates his intensions and understands Mike's point. Motion carried.

- *Troy Scroggins Award Committee Update*

Stephanie - committee is in a holding pattern - need nominations by November meeting. Next month to put out a call for nomination for an organization. Close

nomination October 24 to talk about at the November meeting for presentation in December. Stephanie will contact Ally about a potential story and advertisement in the newspaper. Need to make sure people know who he was and what he stood for. Margo inquired about forms - they are available on the website and could send out information. Shawn will ask Suzie to tweet it out. Stephanie would like to request that another commission take a committee assignment on the Scroggins.

Stephanie made a motion to add Amy to the Troy Scroggins committee. Seconded by Margo. No Discussion. Motion carried.

- *Town Hall Committee Meeting Update*

Margo - reported that she met with Stephanie about social justice education series and was hoping for September possibly October. Date to be determined after council presentation. Margo needs a pamphlet made for the advertisement of the program. Shawn offered to have the communications staff help prepare. Stephanie will get information to Shawn.

She would like ideas on future THM and see what other subject could be addressed prior to the social justice education. Anthony suggested the sales tax on the ballot and covering the entire community. Bill - doing something close to elections to host candidates for what they stand on in regards to human rights and their stand. Friends of the Freedom State Capital by Chris Meinhardt. Mike - has commission considered speaking on voter turnout Stephanie - talked about the sales tax and the specifics in the language is set and unable to modify. Anthony clarified his discussion. She wonders if Bill's idea is more effective for our local elections.

VII. Old Business

Liaison city attorney - Bill followed up on the status of the collection of ideas and he does not have anything to report. Mike is hopeful to have information for the Aug 28. Shawn mentioned that Chad Sublet would be happy to discuss the City of Lawrence's program. Margo wants to make sure that Mike does not feel that he doesn't have any support. Bill is glad to help if Mike gets a committee together for discussion.

Margo presented material for specific details on the program and relations to fair housing and grants. Kansas has received funding - sources for potential funding. Lorean suggested that Bill is a walking resource of information and could be beneficial. Mike wants to make sure he gets all perspectives in order to be better prepared and anticipate questions and concerns.

VIII. New Business

HUD Fair Housing Funding - Stephanie reported that the FIP announcement came out today minimum \$120,000. FHAP - funding to state and local agencies equivalent to fair housing act and certified. FIP includes other nonprofits that receive funding from fair housing initiatives. Margo believes that the City was a FHAP recipient

previously. Anthony believes the distinction is that one is more enforcement driven FHAP and FIP educational. She believes they can be both and the program came out today and stated that the deadline is September. She would like to have someone from the City's legal and financial services review the program and see if there is a possibility to submit an application. Shawn will send link to the Commissioners.

Margo believes that the commission should apply because it is related to outreach and education especially with the social justice education program. Anthony have appropriate City grant staff review the information provided to determine whether at a minimum education and outreach funding is possible for the Commission to make such application and report back to the Commission. Stephanie agrees that she would like to have them review to see if there is a possibility for the Commission to take advantage of the program.

Stephanie motion to submit to city staff for a recommendation to the Commission. Seconded by Darcella. No Discussion. Motion carried.

IX. Public Comments

None.

X. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Fadale

- Apologize for last month he committed to be here and his ride situation when haywire with 3min to go and that is what happened. He wanted to let folks know that Barry Grissom symposium was announced for August 13 in Wichita which is free. Everyone please try to attend the state fair on September 5-14 in Hutchinson, KS. There are governmental forums on Saturday. Come to celebrate the fair.

Commissioner Goodman

- She was sorry that she missed last month - she has been in the fight for her life with medical conditions and receiving treatment. She is getting better.

Commissioner Padilla

- Apologizes for missing last month. Welcome Amy aboard and worked with her on the YWCA board previously. He is thankful for the assistance on the committee work. He hopes people are candid as much as possible so that he does not get blindsided.

Commissioner Mott

- Transgender faith tour - she has presented in Manhattan and Lawrence catholic women in Manhattan, next Sunday speaking in Topeka and a Sunday

school program in Lawrence and other speaking engagements. Her tour is going well. Sept 6 on the 800/900 block of North Kansas several organizations are coming together to host the Topeka Pride 3:00 - 8:00 pm and after party - speakers Councilmembers Hiller and Manspeaker - families are welcome. Moving forward as an inclusive city.

Commissioner Cohen

- Glad to be here and meet the entire commission.

Commissioner Beachy

- Don't have much to say - good meeting and glad Darcella is feeling better. Welcomed Amy.

Commissioner Rangel

- Commission is moving right along and she likes the momentum and has enjoyed serving on the social justice class and was a great opportunity and enjoyed it and was worth it. She is glad to be looking back into the potential for investigation and applying for grant. October 4 Mana event at Shawnee Ballroom at the Capital Plaza.

Anthony will try to get information on the ADA symposium and yearlong celebration for the 25th Anniversary. He would like it on the future agenda for discussion on the commission's involvement.

Commissioner Williams

- We appreciate everyone's hard work and sacrifices the members make and stay a working commission and everyone works. If it is not me today it might be me tomorrow and continue to fight to make a difference. We will work to make sure all members get a training notebook. Bylaws - attendance - want to make sure we don't lose anyone due to the requirements. Keep your ear to the ground to make sure we are listening to what makes a difference. Get yourself out there. Her son was in the hospital and is well.

XI. Adjournment

Commission meeting adjourned.

The next meeting will be August 28, 2014 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Shawn Maisberger.