

Duluth Human Rights Commission
Minutes
February 9, 2011

Attendance:

Present: Scott Yeazle, Brian Thorbjørnsen, Robert Kaner.

Absent: Cruz Mendoza.

Others Present: Bob Grytdahl, Robin Roeser, **.

Meeting called to order at 5:05pm.

Approval of Minutes:

Previous meeting minutes unavailable.

Old Business:

1. Petition – Duluth Immigration Coalition is planning to continue collecting signatures on the sign-on letter/petition until April 3. Legislation is being monitored to see what kinds of bills are being introduced. A meeting is scheduled with the Duluth Police Department to propose and plan for the development of an information card that police officers can give to individuals stopped by police. Concerns have been raised by Duluth community members that police are unnecessarily requesting assistance from U.S. Border Patrol when they suspect that individuals may be immigrants.
2. Immigration: Possibilities and Challenges -- Commissioners reviewed the activities of the “Immigration: Possibilities and Challenges” discussion series, with films at Zinema 2. As the Human Rights Commission is a sponsor of these activities, Commissioners are encouraged to attend and participate.

Reports on Community Events:

1. Oberstar recognition dinner – Scott Yeazle indicated that there is a Jim Oberstar recognition dinner scheduled for Saturday, February 12 at the DECC. Free reception begins at 5; dinner is at 6:30.
2. Upcoming Elections – Scott Yeazle noted that the Duluth City Council has six (6) seats up for election in 2011, as well as the Mayor’s office.
3. Session with Representative Gauthier – Bob Grytdahl noted that Henry Banks is coordinating a listening session with State Representative Kerry Gauthier at the Central Hillside Community Center on February 26 at 2:00pm.
4. New Radio Program – Bob Grytdahl noted a new radio program coming from the University of Wisconsin-Superior radio station addressing issues, concerns, and telling the stories of minority populations, and is called “People of Color”. This program is on Thursdays at 5:00 p.m.

New Business:

1. Appointment of New HRC Commissioners – Scott Yeazle raised the question of doing an

orientation with the new Commissioners that will be joining soon. The purpose is to attempt to clarify what the Commission can and cannot do, attendance expectations, etc. Scott expressed concern that the Human Rights Commission experiences a lot of attrition when the high expectations of new Commissioners cannot be achieved. Bob Grytdahl suggested that a letter to new Commissioners be drafted to welcome them, and to list expectations and general operations of the Commission.

2. 2011 Work Plan – Commissioners discussed a 2011 work plan. Robert Kaner suggested identifying a series of topics to hear about and discuss at each meeting, and to finish the meeting with a vote on a position statement of the Commission. This was agreed upon, and the following tentative schedule of topics was discussed and agreed upon:

April: MN Dept. of Human Rights will be invited.
May: Employment Discrimination & EEOC. Speaker(s) to be determined.
June: Topic and speaker to be determined.
July: Child Welfare Disparities. Speaker(s) to be determined.
August: GLBT. Speaker(s) to be determined.
September: Education Disparities. Speaker(s) to be determined.
October: Voting regulations and restrictions. Speaker(s) to be determined.
November: Topic and speaker to be determined.
December: Topic and speaker to be determined.
January 2012: Topic and speaker to be determined.
February 2012: Topic and speaker to be determined.
March 2012: Topic and speaker to be determined.

3. Scott Yeazle discussed the possibility of changing the Commission's agenda structure to accommodate the new work plan. Suggested agenda structure:

- 1.) Welcome
- 2.) Roll call
- 3.) Approval of minutes
- 4.) Topic presentation, discussion, and vote.
- 5.) Business
- 6.) Reports on Community Events

Robert Kaner made a motion to approve the new agenda structure. Seconded by Brian Thorbjørnsen. Motion passes 3-0.

4. Adjourn – *Motion made by Robert Kaner to adjourn. Second by Brian Thorbjørnsen. Motion passes 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Brian Thorbjørnsen

BT:jm