

Duluth Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 13, 2012

CORRECTED COPY

Members in Attendance: Margie Nelson, Scott Yeazole, Scot Bol, Cruz Mendoza, Cindy Strange, Michelle Naar-Obed, Rebecca Domagala, John Phung, Chris Cherry, Em Westerlund, Robert Kaner

Excused Absence: Chris Homan, Sheryl Boman Schneider

Unexcused Absences: Allegra Henderson, Heather Yun, Joycelyn Dorscher

Others Present: Bob Grytdahl, Robin Roeser

Meeting called to order at 5:03 p.m.

Meg Bye, the founder of the Duluth Human Rights Commission and first Human Rights Officer for the City of Duluth passed away a few weeks ago. The Commission took a moment of silence in her memory.

1. Corrections to the meeting minutes for May 9, 2012

Cruz Mendoza corrected the minutes to reflect that he did not move that the Commission discuss their involvement with the Unfair Campaign and he would like the minutes to reflect his inquiry about the steps taken by the Unfair Campaign to oppose the proposed amendments (anti-marriage and voter ID) on the Minnesota ballot this fall.

2. Meeting time

Motion was made by Cruz Mendoza and seconded by Scot Bol to move the Commission meeting time from 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. The motion failed and was followed by a discussion.

A motion was made by Scot Bol and seconded by Rebecca Domagala to table the meeting time change to the July Commission meeting, allowing the new chair to discern the availability of members. Motion passes.

3. Elections of Board

Motion made by John Phung and seconded by Scot Bol to table elections until the Nominating Committee was present to make a report. Following discussion, John withdrew his motion and elections moved forward as planned.

Scott Yeazole announced his intention to step down as Chair and not pursue another term.

Those elected without contest to the board were as follows:

Chair: Margie Nelson

Vice Chair: Michelle Naar-Obed

Co-secretaries: Sheryl Boman Schneider and Em Westerlund

4. Bylaw Changes

A motion was made by John Phung and seconded by Cruz Mendoza to accept the proposed changes to Article IV, Section 2 of the Commission bylaws. Motion passes. Changes are below:

(Original)

Article IV, Section 2. Election.

Officers shall be chosen by vote of the majority of the sitting Commission, and shall serve one year terms. Initial Officers shall be elected at the meeting immediately preceding the first meeting in which the newly appointed commissioners will sit. Thereafter, Officers shall be elected each March.

(Proposed changed)

Article IV, Section 2. Election.

Officers shall be chosen by vote of the majority of the sitting Commission, and shall serve one year terms. A nominating committee shall be formed immediately at the first meeting in which the newly appointed commissioners will sit. The nominating committee shall provide the commission a slate of officers to be voted on at the following meeting.

5. Unfair Campaign

- A. “Are We So Different?” race exhibit coming to Duluth. The Unfair Campaign is seeking docents and encouraging people to come out to see the exhibit who are not the “usual suspects” at racial equity events in our community. “Are We So Different?” will be at the space formerly occupied by the Children’s Museum at the Depot.
- B. The question was asked how the Unfair Campaign decides which actions to take and how to move forward on educational opportunities for the community. We will contact a representative from the Unfair Campaign to ask this, and other questions that the Commission has as a partner agency.

6. Proposed Voter ID Amendment

- “Our Vote, Our Future” coalition organizing in the metro against the proposed amendment
- MN DFL opposed both the voter id and anti-marriage amendments.
- We are not sure if the Duluth City Council has taken a position on the Voter ID amendment. It was proposed that we address the Duluth City Council and ask them to publicly oppose the amendment.

7. Duluth United for All Families

At the “Coming Out” event on Sunday, June 10th, Duluth United for All Families distributed over 300 packets of information to attendees and raised \$7500 in one afternoon. The event was a fund-raiser for Duluth United for All Families and those opposing the anti-marriage amendment.

8. St. Louis County Health and Human Services Conference

Bob reported that the Commission will be sharing a table at the conference, and will be looking for volunteers to staff it

9. Commission Retreat

Scot Bol would like to look at best practices of successful national Human Rights Commissions.

Margie Nelson will look further into it now that she has assumed the role of chair

10. Other

A. *John Phung moved that we add housing discrimination discussion to the agenda of the next meeting and potentially provide a recommendation to the City Council on housing issues. Scott Yeazle seconded. There was discussion on whether to make that a retreat topic or to put on the next meeting agenda. Consensus was reached to add housing discrimination to both the next meeting agenda and to the retreat agenda.*

B. Thanks were given to Scott Yeazle for his year and a half of service as chair of the Commission.

11. Reports on Community Events

A. Ordinance for the Police Civil Review Board will be coming to Council again on June 25th 2012 at 7:00 p.m. The public is asked to come to show support for the ordinance as it stands now without either proposed amendments.

B. Saturday, June 30 is the Jamming for Lefty Benefit for Larry Sandman, who recently had a stroke. \$10 donation, at Roscoe's Pioneer Bar.

C. Juneteenth is Saturday June 16, at the Central Hillside Community Center from 12:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

D. Rebecca Domagala asked for anyone who might be interested that Duluth United for All Families is looking for volunteers to help make phone calls and do office tasks.

E. Scott Yeazle reported that since CHUM is at capacity. Gloria Dei Lutheran Church has been housing people each night. He suggested the Commission might write a letter of gratitude to them for their service to the community. Scot Bol reported that they are looking for volunteers to help staff the evenings, and will email forward the information.

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 PM.

Minutes submitted by Em Westerlund.

EM:jm