

Duluth Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2013

Present: Scott Yeazle, Chris Cherry, John Phung, Rebecca Domagala, Charisa Homan, Cruz Mendoza, Robert Kaner, Cynthia Strange;

Others present: Robin Roeser, Bob Grytdahl

Absent (excused): Margie Nelson

Meeting called to order at 5:01 p.m.

1. Approval of minutes: *Cruz Mendoza made the motion with Rebecca Domagala seconding. Minutes unanimously approved.*
2. Police Liaison: Robin Roeser provided information on annual police hiring, 23 interviews and eight candidates. Unaware of any candidates of color and no female candidates. Every year Police Department reviews its instruments to check for biases.
3. City Council Liaison: Margie Nelson, City Council liaison, absent. Scott Yeazle reports that there are few things of interest to the Human Rights Commission on their agenda currently. Expects more material toward the end of year. Vacancy on the city council in the 4th district.
4. Unfair Campaign: Meeting to restructure. Desires to set up work groups to deal with different issues (health, housing, etc). None of the partners except the Human Rights Commission wanted to take any of the issues on. Contacted publicity campaign company, (Swim Creative) to generate a new campaign about "bringing people to the table." Education task force met with Lee Stewart, CHUM, who offered to do a two-day workshop to develop a systematic way of impacting the schools/school districts. Cruz Mendoza requested group to meet after 4:30 p.m., after working hours, but it is unclear as to whether Unfair will oblige. He also will request that any ad campaign be presented to Human Rights Commission before implementation.
5. Old Business
 - A. School District / School Board Candidates Forum
1st, 4th, and at-large races. Chamber of Commerce is already having a forum. Talked about getting with LWV to set up forum, but LWV never returned call. Students for the Future contacted League of Women Voters, and plan to do forum SF, PTSA, and LWV. List of questions to be prepared related to racial disparities. Duluth News Tribune forum will also make point of asking questions about racial disparities at their candidate forum.

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School district has hired new Education Equity Officer (Bill Howes). Conversations about different kinds of suspension procedures. Community Action had meeting with principals, superintendents, Title I program and associated issues. Cruz Mendoza presented document Policies for Racial Equity in Education. Mendoza discussed need to hire more people of color within school district. Difficulty may be in human resource office/hiring process. Discussion of policy suggestions contained in document.

B. Native Issues

Scott Yeazle shared that the eagle staff was removed the day after meeting/conversation two months ago. He discussed resolution to put Minnesota Chippewa flag on civic center flagpole as compromise. American Indian Commission has had several meetings recently where they have not met quorum. Yeazle will follow up with interested parties in the community to discuss. Robert Kaner voiced concerns about these issues and what litigation or slippery slopes might present themselves.

6. New Business

A. Second Chance

B. Public Input Forum

Scott Yeazle proposes that the next meeting have invited guests from community. Charisa Homan suggested that we put it in the news or in the paper. Chris Cherry suggested that it be issue-based rather than group-based. Bob Grytdahl suggested that we plan well and wait a month or two. Cruz Mendoza suggested that the Commission send Human Rights Ordinance to State Human Rights Office for review and interpretation. Also suggested that we invite Unfair Campaign to commission meeting as first attempt. Housing, native issues, sex trafficking, education, etc. Mendoza suggests that a request be made to Unfair at next meeting to come speak with us, perhaps in November. Grytdahl suggests that at next meeting we have a draft of a plan. Yeazle and Rebecca Domagala will meet to flesh out document. They will share date and time with Commission. Invite members of AI community to next meeting.

Mendoza – 19th – Idle No More – forum on human trafficking.

Charisa Homan moved to adjourn. Cruz Mendoza seconded. Unanimous approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Cherry

CC:jm