



City of La Crosse, Wisconsin

City Hall
400 La Crosse Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

Meeting Minutes

Human Rights Commission

Wednesday, February 15, 2017

5:15 PM

5th Floor Conference Room

Call to Order, Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 5:18pm.

Present: 7 - Ashley Lacenski, Fabio Burgos, Vacant 1, James Parker, Shaundel Spivey, Will Van Roosenbeek, Elizabeth Digby-Britten

Absent: 1 - Lu Lee Yang

Approval of Minutes

The minutes were called for approval by the chair. The minutes were approved 6-0.

Agenda Items:

1. City of La Crosse Housing Authority message shaping

Fabio Burgos suggested postponing a meeting with the Housing Authority until the Human Rights Commission determines how they want to approach them and be able to further discuss several issues that have been brought to their attention by local housing and human service agencies. Shaundel Spivey stated to the local agencies present that it would be helpful to the Commission if they would provide additional information about their client's experiences with the Housing Authority. Maybe obtain this information through anonymous surveys for confidential purposes. James Parker stated that this information would be beneficial when presenting to the the Housing Authority as it would provide a structure for the Commission to be able to state the issues and back it up with client testimony. Fabio suggested that another meeting of the Commission be held, prior to meeting with the Housing Authority, that would be devoted to hearing stories, comments, issues from the local agency clients. This way the Commission can also agree on the top issues that need to be addressed. Many of the local agencies present felt that they would be able to gather that information prior to the next meeting. Shaundel Spivey suggested that contact be made with the Mayor about this initiative and to invite him to the next meeting to hear an update on is efforts. No action was taken.

Present: 7 - Ashley Lacenski, Fabio Burgos, Vacant 1, James Parker, Shaundel Spivey, Will Van Roosenbeek, Elizabeth Digby-Britten

Absent: 1 - Lu Lee Yang

2. HRC speaker for La Crosse Housing Coalition meeting

Ashley Lacenski stated that she would attend the La Crosse Housing Coalition Meeting as the Human Rights Commission Speaker. No action was taken.

3. Mayoral Neighborhood Breakfast

The Commission was unsure of what event this was or when it would be held. Staff stated that they would look into this event and report back to the Commission. No action was taken.

4. Mayor's Expo - HRC exhibitor table?

The Mayor's Expo will be held on March 25th starting at 8:30am. Elizabeth Digby-Britten stated that she would help with staffing a table for the Human Rights Commission but would need assistance from the Planning Department in putting it together. Tim Acklin stated that the Planning Department would be willing to help but would need to know what the Commission would like to display/provide at their table. The Commission requested a display board, Housing Complaint Forms, Guide to Renting Brochures, the HRC's Proclamation, user friendly version of the HRC's Ordinance, and a user friendly explanation of the process for filing a complaint. No action was taken.

5. La Crosse Reads Community Conversation and Panel Discussion event follow-up

Shaundel Spivey provided an overview of the event to the Commission. Fabio Burgos stated that it was a great event and a great discussion. Ashley Lacenski agreed that it was great event and would like to see more people attend in the future. Elizabeth Digby-Britten stated that she would have resources to donate for the next event. No action was taken.

Present: 7 - Ashley Lacenski, Fabio Burgos, Vacant 1, James Parker, Shaundel Spivey, Will Van Roosenbeek, Elizabeth Digby-Britten

Absent: 1 - Lu Lee Yang

6. Sundown Town class project follow-up

Shaundel Spivey stated that he and Will Van Roosenbeek went to UW-L class to talk to about the Human Rights Commission and how they could get involved. Shaundel stated that there was about five students who wanted to work on a project. Due to timing the students would be able to start a project but the Commission would have to finish it. No action was taken.

Present: 7 - Ashley Lacenski, Fabio Burgos, Vacant 1, James Parker, Shaundel Spivey, Will Van Roosenbeek, Elizabeth Digby-Britten

Absent: 1 - Lu Lee Yang

7. Progresstival follow-up

Elizabeth Digby-Britten stated that the Commission's table was off in a corner and that she had nothing really to hand out. She also stated that the venue was too small for the number of people that attended and that this even was a missed opportunity. No action was taken.

Present: 7 - Ashley Lacenski, Fabio Burgos, Vacant 1, James Parker, Shaundel Spivey, Will Van Roosenbeek, Elizabeth Digby-Britten

Absent: 1 - Lu Lee Yang

8. City support staff for HRC

Fabio Burgos expressed his desire to have dedicated staff for the Human Rights Commission. Tim Acklin stated that the Planning and Development Department is responsible for staffing the HRC and will make sure that someone from the Department will attend their meetings. Due to the number of Commissions the Department staffs and the flexibility the HRC has in its meeting dates and times it may be hard to have the same person at their meetings. Tim also stated that he will make sure that name plates for the Commissioners are ordered so members of the public know who they are. It was also requested of staff to find name tags that had been created for the Commissioners that they can use when they are at events. Tim stated that he would try to locate them. Fabio also stated the Commission has been trying to replace Lu Lee Yang on the Commission as they have not been to a meeting for a long time and has made a request to the Mayor's Office. Fabio also stated that they Commission even voted to remove them. Tim stated that a vote from the Commission does not remove someone. Only the Mayor can remove and replace a member of the Commission but he would check with the Mayor's Office to see where they are at with that request. No action was taken.

Present: 7 - Ashley Lacenski, Fabio Burgos, Vacant 1, James Parker, Shaundel Spivey, Will Van Roosenbeek, Elizabeth Digby-Britten

Absent: 1 - Lu Lee Yang

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next meeting will be held on March 22nd. Will Van Roosenbeek expressed his desire to support the recent statements by the Mayor that La Crosse was not going to turn into a police state and wanted the HRC to pass a Resolution stating their endorsement of the Mayor's comments. Will Van Roosenbeek moved to pass a resolution that the Human Rights Commission endorses the Mayor's Statement regarding La Crosse as a Sanctuary City. Shaundel Spivey seconded. The motion passed 7-0. Tim Acklin stated to the Commission that this motion is technically not valid as it was regarding an item that was not on the agenda. He would make sure that the request and action was reflected in the minutes but an item has to be publicly stated on an agenda for this Commission to take action on it. Will Van Roosenbeek requested that the item be on the March 22nd meeting agenda. The HRC endorsed the statement made by Mayor Tim Kabat that La Crosse would not comply with any order that mandates that local police enforce federal immigration law. Mayor Kabat state that "We are not going to become a police state. We...and our police department (are) going to continue to treat every person with respect, regardless of their immigration status." Since this was not on the agenda, HRC agreed to postpone a vote on the motion until the March 22 meeting.

Present: 7 - Ashley Lacenski, Fabio Burgos, Vacant 1, James Parker, Shaundel Spivey, Will Van Roosenbeek, Elizabeth Digby-Britten

Absent: 1 - Lu Lee Yang

Adjournment

Shaundel Spivey moved to adjourn the meeting. James Parker seconded. The motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:34pm.

Notice is further given that members of other governmental bodies may be present at the above scheduled meeting to gather information about a subject over which they have decision-making responsibility.

NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Requests from persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk's office at (608) 789-7510 or send an email to ADAcityclerk@cityoflacrosse.org, with as much advance notice as possible.