

**Minutes
Human Relations Commission
December 14, 2010**

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, December 14, 2010, 6:00 P.M. at City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 31 East Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Florence Boyle
Dr. Colleen Byron
Belinda Chiu
Kathy Dietz
Armando Espinoza
Thaddeus Swiecki
Joseph Mann
Frank Morales
Dr. Patricia Young

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Robert Marshak
Jay Scherotter
Kade Twist
Josephine Vega

Diversity Staff Present:

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Administrator
Dee Hodson, Diversity Office Assistant

Guests Present:

none

Meeting convened at 6:05 P.M.

Florence Boyle called the meeting to order and invited members of the public to address the Commission.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

None

Agenda Item 2 –Consideration of Minutes

November 9, 2010, HRC Commission Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Byron to ACCEPT minutes.

Second by Commissioner Mann.

Minutes APPROVED.

Agenda Item 3 – Inclusion Training

Kent Kortsen did not attend.

Agenda Item 4 – Diversity Unity Grant Review

Rosa reported that Tempe Community Council asked if any Commissioners would be interested in reviewing the Diversity Unity Grants. The grants are short, just two to three pages, and would need to be done by December 20th. Rosa would e-mail them out with a scoring sheet that would then be e-mailed back to Caterina Mena. Commissioner Mann, Commissioner Boyle and Commissioner Dietz volunteered to assist with the scoring.

Agenda Item 5 – Teen Diversity Dialogue Subcommittee Update

Commissioner Dietz reported on her and Commissioner Chiu's attendance at the Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission (MYAC) on Tuesday, December 7th. They attended the meeting to discuss the Teen Diversity Dialogue program. Commissioner Dietz said it was an impressive group consisting of 20 – 30 teens. MYAC was very receptive and interested in the program but had concerns regarding the proposed times and dates. MYAC was opposed to the program beginning soon after Spring Break, suggesting early Fall as a better time. The adult leaders, Kim Bauman and Peggy Goldberg concurred. Commissioner Dietz said she was disappointed with the suggestion to wait until the Fall. The Teen Diversity Dialogue Subcommittee will have a meeting at the end of January (date to be determined) to further discuss MYAC's suggestions. Commissioner Dietz encouraged all subcommittee members to attend the January meeting. Commissioner Young agreed with MYAC's suggestion of moving the program to the Fall. Commissioner Young said that Fall is a better time due to AIMS and Advanced Placement testing with graduation quickly following Spring Break. Commissioner Dietz said MYAC suggested getting 8th graders involved rather than 7th and 8th graders. Commissioner Chiu stated MYAC felt that peer pressure begins more towards the end of middle school. Commissioner Chiu stated that if it was logistically feasible, it might be a good idea to start practicing the program in the Spring and learning from different dialogues. Commissioner Chiu continued that facilitating will be difficult and the subcommittee has not determined who will be the facilitators. Commissioner Dietz added that she had learned that Commissioner Espinoza was a Diversity Trainer. Commissioner Chiu said that the first dialogue could be a pilot program that could be used as a learning tool for the Fall program. Commissioner Dietz thought that they would lose momentum if they waited until the Fall to begin. Commissioner Boyle thought that 7th graders should be included and not be sold short. Commissioner Dietz agreed about getting 7th graders involved and said that MYAC was the one that thought 7th graders were too young. Commissioner Chiu said that Kim Bauman was concerned that having 7th and 12th graders in one group would intimidate the younger participants. Commissioner Chiu suggested having a pilot program for a specific age group which might make the participants more comfortable. Commissioner Dietz said that MYAC thought Tuesdays were a bad choice due to other commitments, although they liked the Tempe City Library as a meeting location. MYAC agreed they would not be interested in participating in a weekend or summer program. Commissioner Byron said the subcommittee should not be discouraged. Commissioner Byron added that additional preparation time might be good since they will be working with a population that they were unfamiliar with. Commissioner Boyle thanked the subcommittee and encouraged more consistent sharing at future meetings.

Agenda Item 6 – SB 1070 Update

Commissioner Byron did not have an update. Rosa stated that the Commission had asked for SB 1070 to be a standing agenda item. Commissioner Byron opened it up to comments. Commissioner Espinoza said that Governor Brewer and Terry Goddard were recently in San Francisco at the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The SB 1070 discussion has been tabled and is currently under review. Commissioner Espinoza said it would take a couple months to get a decision back on the legislative and constitutionality aspects of SB 1070.

Commissioner Young shared that she had three very fearful, undocumented Latino senior students visit her today inquiring about continuing their education past high school. Commissioner Young called Universities asking if they accept non-documented students and if so, what financial aid is available to them since they are unable to apply for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Commissioner Young further inquired as to what the State's status for dealing with undocumented students. She explained that some states are more receptive to students who are undocumented. Commissioner Young said these are real questions concerning talented, multilingual, multicultural children who through no fault of their own are undocumented. As these children reach adulthood they are reluctant to share information for fear their families might be deported. Commissioner Dietz asked what the response was from the Universities. Commissioner Young said the Universities told her they would get back to her. She added that they may not be willing to go on record with this information. Commissioner Young continued by saying one of her students said if he goes back to Mexico, he might be killed and would have to go into the military. Commissioner Young explained that these kids are stuck in a real Catch 22.

Commissioner Dietz reported on a forum held in the Arizona Legislature which had a representative attend from the Federation of Americans for Immigration Reform (FAIR). The lawyer from Missouri, who wrote SB 1070, was a featured speaker discussing the pros of the bill. Commissioner Dietz said that FAIR is listed as a hate group with the Southern Poverty Law Center in Alabama. Commissioner Dietz said this is not just an Arizona issue but a national movement.

Commissioner Espinoza reported on the Dream Act which is currently in the Federal Legislature. The Dream Act has passed the House but was tabled by Senator Harry Reid in the Senate so he could get additional support before it goes to a vote. Commissioner Espinoza added that if the Dream Act gets passed, which is a long shot, it would help answer some of these difficult questions. Commissioner Dietz said that if it doesn't get passed through this session it will not pass. Commissioner Espinoza agreed it would be finished since most Republicans oppose the Dream Act.

Commissioner Boyle said she sees this issue as a potential outreach for advocacy. Rather than be discouraged, Commissioner Boyle suggested this be looked at as opportunity for more support for many people and not only for Hispanics. She added that we cannot afford to back away from these tough issues. Commissioner Boyle said the educational community could be a friend to the students. Commissioner Dietz wondered how ASU handles undocumented students. Commissioner Boyle feels that intimidation is used to scare this population.

Commissioner Boyle asked the Commissioners to come up with ideas about reaching out to students that could be discussed at the next meeting. Commissioner Boyle stated that it was important to find a nonthreatening way to approach those holding positions in the school system. Commissioner Young said that there are legal aspects and responsibilities to be considered. Commissioner Young stated that

every student is accepted into schools through high school but the question remains, where do they go after high school. Commissioner Young offered this as a good topic for the Teen Diversity Dialogues. Commissioner Dietz said that it is important for citizens to know that City services will be delivered to everyone equally.

Commissioner Byron suggested that the standing agenda item SB 1070 Update, be changed to an Immigration Education Update. This item could include SB 1070 but would be a broader conversation. Commissioner Byron asked for a volunteer to take over this new standing agenda item. Commissioner Espinoza said he would be happy to take up the Immigration Education Update forum.

Agenda Item 7 – Diversity Department Update

Rosa reported that we have the Regional Unity Walk on February 5, 2011. Rosa said we have more early responses from schools, which is promising. Commissioner Young inquired about walking with a HRC banner and Commissioner Mann confirmed HRC has walked with the banner in past years.

Agenda Item 8 – HRC Nominations and Elections for Chair and Vice-Chair

Commissioner Boyle called for nominations for Chair. Commissioner Byron nominated Commissioner Young for Chair. Commissioner Dietz seconded the nomination. No other nominations were made. Commissioners voted unanimously for Commissioner Young as incoming Chair. Commissioner Espinoza asked if Commissioner Young accepted the nomination. Commissioner Young said “yes, she did”.

Commissioner Boyle called for nominations for Vice-Chair. Commissioner Byron nominated Commissioner Morales and Commissioner Morales nominated Commissioner Dietz for Vice-Chair. Both Commissioners accepted the nominations although Commissioner Dietz stated she would like to defer to Commissioner Morales. Ballots were passed out for a vote. Commissioner Morales received the most votes for Vice-Chair. Commissioners voted unanimously for Commissioner Morales as incoming Vice-Chair.

Agenda Item 9 – MLK Diversity Awards Update

Commissioner Young reported that they will be meeting on Monday and that the deadline is this Friday, December 17, 2011. Rosa asked the Commissioners to think about businesses. Rosa added that the Diversity Supplier category was created by the HRC and is often a forgotten category. This category helps to support and encourage small and minority businesses in the City of Tempe.

Agenda Item 10 – Current Event Announcements

Commissioner Morales reported on the Police Department tour he and Commissioner Chiu attended. The progress and use of technology was most impressive. Commissioner Morales reported what capable and dedicated employees Brenda Buren and Charles Cobbs are for the City of Tempe. Rosa confirmed that funding for the renovations had been allocated before budget cuts. Rosa offered to arrange another tour of the Police Department if anyone was interested.

Rosa shared the passing of Cecilia Esquer and what a true loss it is to our community.

Commissioner Boyle presented Commissioner Byron with an engraved pen in recognition of her six years of service on the Human Relations Commission. Commissioner Byron thanked the Commissioners for an amazing six year experience, which she said has made her become a better professor. Rosa said that she has appreciated Commissioner Byron's work and support of the Diversity Office, GSA and LGBT Community for the past six years.

Motion: Commissioner Mann moved to adjourn the meeting

Second: Commissioner Byron

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 P.M.

Prepared by: Dee Hodson

Reviewed by: Rosa Inchausti

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Administrator