

ADVISORY COMMUNICATION



Agenda Item #: IX. C.1.

To: Mayor & City Council

From: Human Rights and Relations Commission

Date: October 7, 2014

Subject: NFL Team Name Change Resolution

Attachments: Draft Resolution; Draft Letter from the Mayor

Action Requested:

Direct staff to work with the HRRC to prepare a resolution and/or letter for consideration on a future Council agenda.

Situation:

The National Coalition Against Racism in Sports and Media wants the University of Minnesota to bar the National Football League (NFL) team from Washington from using its “Redskins” name on the University of Minnesota’s turf.

Background:

The Minnesota Vikings will host the Washington Redskins on the University of Minnesota property, at the TCF Bank Stadium on November 2, 2014. The coalition vowed to keep fighting and plans to hold a rally outside of the stadium on game day, November 2.

Assessment:

The NFL’s use of the demeaning and offensive term “Redskins” denigrates and demeans Native American citizens.

Recommendation:

The Edina City Council approves the resolution in support of encouraging the Edina community to speak out against labels and names that do not honor the heritage and culture of all our citizens. Additionally, the Mayor writes and sends a letter to communicate Edina’s disapproval of the use of the term “Redskins”. The letter would be sent to the NFL, Washington team, University of Minnesota, Minnesota Vikings, the media, state and federal legislative officials and other interested parties.

Prepared by MJ Lamon, HRRC Staff Liaison, on behalf of the commission.



HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION

NFL Team Name Change Resolution

Whereas the Edina Human Rights and Relations Commission is the advisory body of the Edina City Council committed to supporting a community where all are accepted, respected and have full participation, and

Whereas the National Football League supports a team with a nickname that denigrates and demeans Native American citizens, and

Whereas the Minnesota Vikings will host this team using the offensive team name on University of Minnesota property, at TCF Bank Stadium on Nov 2nd, 2014, and

Whereas the use of the demeaning and offensive term "Redskins" continues to occur in TV, radio, print and digital media, and other forms of communication.

Therefore be it resolved that the Edina City Council affirm that any name or label which is clearly offensive to any member of our community is offensive to all members of our community; and that the City Council encourage all members of our community to speak out against labels and names that do not honor the heritage and culture of all our citizens.

Therefore be it resolved further that the Mayor is encouraged to communicate by letter our disapproval of the use of the term "Redskins" to the National Football League, Washington team, University of Minnesota, Minnesota Vikings, the media, state and federal legislative officials and other interested parties.

NFL Name Change Example Letter

Today's Date

Roger Goodell, NFL Commissioner

Address

City, State Zip

Mr. Goodell,

The people of Edina Minnesota speak out when any of our community are treated in a way that is disrespectful. The continued use of the mascot label by your Washington DC team denigrates our American Indian/Native American citizens. We stand with them in seeking an immediate end to the use of this word by your franchise.

It is expected in our country that citizens have the ability to speak freely and to be treated with respect. The owner of the Washington DC football team has abused that freedom and wants to profit from the use of a label that is hurtful to American Indians - and to those of us who stand with them. This insult can no longer be tolerated.

I have attached a copy of the Resolution prepared by the Edina Human Rights and Relations Commission (which was approved unanimously by our City Council). Our letter and the Resolution will be shared with many elected representatives, major media outlets, social media and others.

It is time for the NFL to move into alignment with values and practices of the 21st century.

Honorable Jim Hovland

Mayor, Edina MN

Please note, the HRRC would like to recommend the letter submitted to the following:

- 1. MN Governor*
- 2. Edina State Senator and Representatives*
- 3. Both MN Senators and 8 Representatives*
- 4. Local NBC, ABC, and CBS TV stations*
- 5. CBS radio stations*
- 6. Area print media and other recommended media by Edina's CTS department*

*Respectfully submitted,
Commissioner Arnie Bigbee*