

**MINUTES
OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE
EDINA CITY COUNCIL
HELD AT CITY HALL
MARCH 2, 2010
5:00 P.M.**

Mayor Hovland called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Community Room of City Hall. Answering rollcall were Members Bennett, Brindle, Housh, and Mayor Hovland. Member Swenson entered the meeting at 5:12 p.m. Attending from the Human Rights and Relations Commission (HRRRC) were: Chair Arnold Bigbee and Commissioners John Cashmore, Lisa Finsness, Jessica Kingston, Robert Mayor, Dee Moore, Meg Newell, and Russ Stanton. Staff attending included: Commissioner Shara Mohtadi entered the meeting at 5:30 p.m. Gordon Hughes, City Manager; Heather Worthington, Assistant City Manager; Roger Knutson, City Attorney; Ceil Smith, Assistant to the City Manager; Susan Howl, Administration Assistant; and Debra Mangen, City Clerk.

Mayor Hovland thanked the HRRRC for the work they do on behalf of the community. He asked Chair Bigbee to begin their presentation. Chair Bigbee noted that the Commission was in the process of reviewing nominations for the Tom Oye Award. He said nominations would be received until March 12, 2010. Mr. Bigbee turned the presentation over to Jessica Kingston.

Commissioner Kingston presented the proposed draft Domestic Partnership Registration Ordinance that the HRRRC requested the City Council to consider. ~~The proposed ordinance would allow couples to register as Domestic Partners or terminate their registration.~~ Ms. Kingston reviewed each section of the draft ordinance plus HRRRC's resolutions which request the Edina City Council to:

1. Adopt a Domestic Partnership Ordinance **establishing a domestic partnership registry;**
2. Assure all Edina public venues include domestic partnerships and their families within existing family or household memberships;
3. Update Edina's Personnel Code Section 150 allowing city employees paid and/or unpaid time off benefits to care for domestic partners;
4. Adopt an "Equal Benefits" ordinance that would require entities contracting with the City to provide equal benefits to spouses and domestic partners of the contractor's employees; and
5. Recognize domestic partner registrations for initial homestead rights and not require annual re-registration for homestead classification for domestic partner homeowners except in the instance of termination of a domestic partner registration.

The Council and Commission discussed the proposals in detail. Staff pointed out that a policy change had already been put into place that would eliminate annual re-registrations for homestead classification by domestic partners. It was also noted that before the FMLA Leave Act that required Edina's Code be amended to comply with Federal legislation, the Personnel Code had contained less restrictive language. Manager Hughes said staff would check with the City Attorney to ascertain whether reverting to the less restrictive language posed a conflict with the FMLA Leave Act.

Some members of the Council expressed concern with the fourth resolution **and requested more information. requiring contractors of the City to provide domestic partners full benefits.** Mr. Hughes and the City Attorney will review the draft ordinance, staff will review various venues offering family and household memberships, and staff will prepare an update to Section 150 with less restrictive language if not in conflict with FMLA Leave Act. It was noted that the issue relative to the HRRRC's fifth resolution had already been rectified. Mr. Hughes said that following any redrafting the proposed ordinance would be returned to the HRRRC for their review.

There being no further business, Mayor Hovland adjourned the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra A. Mangen, City Clerk

Minutes approved by Edina City Council, March 16, 2010

James B. Hovland, Mayor