

EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION  
TUESDAY, MAY 23, 2006  
7:00 PM - MAYOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM

Members Present

Mary Brindle  
Amy Frankfurt  
John Goetz  
Idelle Longman  
Debby McNeil  
Andy Otness  
Wayne Prochniak

Members Absent

Sharon Ming  
Dan Rasmus

Guest

Mary Ellingen

Student

Jennifer Watkins

Staff

Susan Heiberg

Recipient of Tom Oye Human Rights Award

Mary Ellingen, the first recipient of the Commission's Tom Oye Human Rights Award, was welcomed. As a volunteer lawyer with Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, Mary has participated in fact-finding missions regarding women's human rights in Poland, Tajikistan and locally. As a result, she has prepared recommendations to bring laws into conformity with international human rights standards. Tajikistan is in central Asia, located north of Afghanistan and west of China. Mary reported that Minnesota—specifically the Duluth model—is in the vanguard of the domestic abuse programs. She was thanked for the incredible work she is doing.

Approval of Minutes

Member Longman seconded Member Otness's motion to approve the minutes of February 28, 2006; the motion carried. Member Goetz seconded Member McNeil's motion to approve the minutes of March 21, 2006; the motion carried.

Diversity Dialogue Planning

Chair Brindle reported that Edina Reads, the Edina Community Foundation, Connecting With Kids and the Commission will collaborate to sponsor a diversity dialogue on Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, from 9 AM to 1 PM. Jim Gamboni will be the moderator, and he plans to meet with the planning group and the students to develop a dialogue around the topic of immigration. With 23 languages spoken in Edina, this should be a relevant topic. A title has already been created: "Edina Without Walls: Embracing Diversity in 2006—What We Think and What We Know." It was suggested that the Commission prepare a table-top presentation board for the event to display its role in the community. The objective of the dialogue is to look at the level of diversity in Edina. At the next planning meeting of the dialogue group, Chair Brindle will find out what would be the most helpful thing for the Commission to do and how to participate.

Housing Task Force Presentation

Member Otness seconded Member Frankfurt's motion that the Housing Task Force be invited to make its presentation to the Commission at a continental breakfast on either Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, or Saturday, August 12, at 9:00 AM; the motion carried.

### Grant Proposal Process

The Commissioners will have the month of June to study the proposals for 2007 human services funding. At the meeting on June 27<sup>th</sup>, each proposal will be reviewed and questions prepared for follow-up. The date of the hearing is Tuesday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, and one week later—July 25<sup>th</sup>—is the meeting to draft a proposed budget for consideration by the City Council. To prepare for discussion at the June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting and for follow-up with the providers, the following Commissioner assignments were made:

- Senior Community Services - Brindle
- Cornerstone - Otness
- VEAP - Brindle
- Women in Transition - Prochniak
- The Bridge - Frankfurt
- Minneapolis Mediation Program - McNeil
- Normandale Center - Brindle
- Store to Door - Prochniak
- Neighborhood Partnerships - Goetz
- Walk-In Counseling Center - Otness
- Chrysalis - Longman
- Bridging - Frankfurt
- Family & Children's Service - McNeil and Prochniak
- Charaka - Ming and Rasmus

Regarding follow-up, it was recommended that visits be made to providers with first-time proposals, whereas a phone call would suffice for connecting with the providers currently being funded.

### Senior Expo

Member Otness reported that the Senior Expo was a resounding success and that 150 people attended. It was held at Colonial Church on Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, from 9 AM to noon. It had been planned and launched as a result of the Senior Study conducted in 2003. The vendors who participated indicated that it was an excellent use of their time. Overall, the follow up was constructive and complimentary.

### Essay Contest

Member Longman shared the winning essay from the State League's Essay Contest, which was written by a Falcon Heights middle school student. The writer's work measured up well to the judges criteria for consideration—clarity of thought and expression; explanation of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination; and reference to the Bill of Rights and the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

League Conference

Member Longman reminded the Commissioners of the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commission. It will be held at the University of Minnesota Human Rights Center on Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. The title is “Huddled Masses, Hard Choices: The Human Rights Challenge of Immigration.” Detailed information is forthcoming.

Farewell to Jennifer

The Commission’s student representative, Jennifer Watkins, will be graduating from Edina High School and in the fall attending Tufts University in Massachusetts, majoring in international relations and French. She was congratulated on a successful senior year and thanked for her generous contribution of time and talent to the Commission. Rachael Pream Grenier, High School Program Supervisor for Youth Development/Youth Service, will be contacted regarding a new student representative to replace Jennifer.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Brindle, Chair  
Edina Human Rights & Relations Commission

MB/sh