

EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2007
7:00 PM - MAYOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM

Members Present

Luis Bartolomei
Mary Brindle
Idelle Longman
JoAnn McGuire
Debby McNeil
Andy Otness
Wayne Prochniak

Members Absent

Emery Erickson
Sharon Ming
Sarah Ratner
Hamdi Yusuf

Guest

Ellen Kennedy

Staff

Susan Heiberg

Dr. Ellen Kennedy, Outreach Coordinator for the Minnesota Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, was welcomed. She presented the following draft resolution for discussion: "A Resolution certifying that no funds have been invested in a targeted list of companies whose operations are deemed to be complicit with the government of Sudan's genocidal activities in Darfur, Sudan, and prohibiting the purchase of such securities in the future."

Dr. Kennedy shared that Edina is the third city in the United States to have adopted an anti-genocide resolution—the first and second cities being Chicago and San Francisco. She commended the Commission in that this represents Edina's recognition of the moral obligation not to be bystanders but rather to be "upstanders." Dr. Kennedy reported that Mayor Hovland spoke at the Capitol rotunda in October regarding genocide. The following was discussed:

- China's companies are buying Sudan's largest asset—oil.
- It is imperative that economic pressure be placed on the government of Sudan.
- Public awareness must be raised.
- There is no need for the City of Edina to divest because it does not have money invested in the targeted companies. Nevertheless, the City can pledge to become involved and be on a divestment list without having to withdraw funds.

The following was recommended:

- That the HRRC agrees with divestment in principle.
- That a sub-committee work with the City Attorney to create a resolution consistent with the agreement in principle.
- That the resolution be brought before the City Council for adoption.

Member Otness seconded the motion of Member McNeil that the editing of the resolution be handled by e-mail, with the Commissioners coming to an agreement and then forwarding the resolution to the City Attorney.

Member McNeil seconded Member Prochniak's amendment of the previous motion to complete the edit process by e-mail but vote on the resolution at the January meeting; the amendment of the motion carried.

January Event Recommended

To bring greater awareness to the people in Edina regarding the crisis in Sudan, Dr. Kennedy suggested an event be held on Martin Luther King Day. It could be centered on a documentary entitled "The Devil Came on Horseback," which is about a young marine who was sent to south Sudan to monitor the peace agreement. After the film, there could be a panel discussion with students and elected officials. This event could be co-sponsored by the Edina Foundation and the City of Edina (HRRC), and it would be free to the public. Volunteer donations would be suggested to target specific needs in Darfur.

Member Longman seconded Member Otness' motion that HRRC co-sponsor this community-wide event on January 21, 2008, and that Dr. Kennedy would put it together and connect with the Commission; the motion carried.

Minutes Approved

Regarding the Commission minutes of October 23, 2007, it was noted that Sarah Ratner and Humdi Yusuf had not been recorded as absent. Member Longman seconded Member Otness' motion to approve the minutes of October 23, 2007, with the correction being made; the motion carried.

Nominating Committee Selected and Charged

Members Otness, Bartolomei and Longman will contact the Commissioners to determine candidates for Chair, 1st Vice Chair and 2nd Vice Chair. The slate will be presented at the January Commission meeting.

Commission Brochure Carried Over

A draft of the Commission brochure will be presented at the January 22nd meeting.

CDBG Process Discussed

Member Bartolomei reported that having met with Associate Planner Repya and learning that Jewish Vocation Services (JVS) has a \$35,000 balance in expenditures, it is unlikely that they will be submitting a request for CDBG funds to provide for daycare. He shared that Ms. Repya recommends HOME Line be fully funded. Additionally, the City is in the process of serving a family within the land trust model and planning to purchase two more homes.

The CDBG proposals will be reviewed at the January Commission meeting, and Ms. Repya will be present to answer questions. Member Otness reported that there will be one new proposal from Edina Community Education.

Meeting Adjourned

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Brindle, Chair
Edina Human Rights & Relations Commission