

EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2010
7:00 PM – MAYOR’S CONFERENCE ROOM

Members Present

Zack Antar
Arnie Bigbee
Daria Brosius
John Cashmore
Lisa Finsness
Bob Mayer
Meg Newell
Russ Stanton

Members Absent

Jessi Kingston

Staff

Susan Howl

Guests

Scott Neal
Joyce Repya

Meeting Agenda Approved

Member Cashmore seconded Member Stanton’s motion to approve the meeting agenda for 11-30-10. The motion carried.

Commission Minutes Approved

Member Finsness seconded the motion of Member Cashmore to approve the Commission minutes as presented for October 26, 2010. The motion carried.

Visiting Students Introduced and Welcomed

The following students from the Valley View Middle School government class were visitors during the HRRC meeting: Jessica Bentley, Megan Froemming, Vivian Shubert and Lexi Struzyk. Also visiting was Ryan Gauthier of Edina Patch.

City Manager Introduced and Welcomed

Scott Neal, Edina’s new City Manger, was welcomed aboard and to the Commission meeting, and introductions were made all around. A graduate of Iowa State, Mr. Neal shared he had been the City Manager of Morris, Tennessee for two years, the City Manger of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa for six years, the City Manager of Northfield for six years and the City Manager of Eden Prairie for eight years. He currently resides in Minneapolis, and he and his wife have three sons.

Discussion ensued with Mr. Neal regarding the following:

- HRRC’s current and future participation in the human services funding procedure, funding of the Edina Resource Center and CDBG funding
- Attendance policy regarding health issues
- Student members’ ability to vote
- Proposed amendment to 180 of the City Code regarding reasonable accommodations for a commissioner with a temporary or permanent disability that would affect his/her ability to attend meetings
- HRRC’s current focus issue: bullying
- State of Minnesota’s annual conference on Human Rights in St. Paul on December 1st

Mr. Neal shared that an ongoing human rights issue in Eden Prairie is the large Somali population. At the current time, Edina is not facing similar challenges. However, he predicted that one day Edina would be.

Associate Planner Introduced and Welcomed

Joyce Repya, Edina's Associate Planner, was introduced, welcomed and asked to present information about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding process. Ms Repya explained the following:

- CDBG is a federal entitlement program administered by HUD.
- Hennepin County oversees the distribution of funds to communities.
- 85% of the funds is designated for community development with an emphasis on the rehab of private property. 15% is designated for public services.
- The City Council has requested that HRRC review and respond to the public services portion of the budget developed by Planning staff.
- Ms. Repya will have a 2011 proposed CDBG budget for the Commission's review and comment at its January meeting. The Planning staff will then ready the proposal for publishing in the Sun Current.

Edina Community Council Report Presented

Member Finsness reminded the Commissioners of the Resource Center's special event at Braemar entitled "Breakfast With A Purpose." Its focus will be on Edina's youth and how to better serve those who are unable to afford after-school/summer activities. The appeal for contributions will be made for the purpose of providing grants to the youth-in-need and to develop a network of support for the Edina Resource Center.

Member Finsness questioned the accessibility of the Resource Center on the website. She indicated that she will pass along the Community Council's budget scenario to the Commission at a later date.

Reallocation of Proposed 2011 Funds Approved

Member Newell seconded the motion of Member Stanton to approve a pro rata decrease in the amount of \$1316 from the proposed 2011 human services budget in order to increase the Edina Resource Center's proposed budget to \$38,316. The motion carried.

It was suggested that Mayor Hovland be invited to a meeting of HRRC in the New Year to discuss HRRC's role in proposing human services funding, Resource Center funding and CDBG funding. Conversation centered around:

- The fiscal responsibility and oversight of the Resource Center
- The necessity of analytical evaluation
- An audit to see how we leverage money on behalf of Edina citizens

Anti-Bullying/Cyber Bullying Subcommittee Update Presented

Member Newell reported that the movie "Bullied" presented by the Southern Poverty Law Center was striking and significant. She shared an axis handout with the Commission which highlighted areas for projects to undertake in the community. As a result, the Commission could pull together a creative event where people would come together and express themselves around the issue of bullying. It could be an event for public recognition, celebration of efforts, and the opportunity to stimulate interest in and begin a conversation about the need to combat bullying. The goal would be the ultimate benefit derived for the sake of the entire community. With the students' involvement, this could be done as a

May-term project, involving the elementary schools and parents. Members Finsness and Newell will create an outline of bullet points to use to gain information and ideas from the following: Student Council, 212 Student Leadership, Thespians, Sober Squad, Gay/Straight Alliance, Youth-Serving-Youth, sports captains, Thespians, Rotary, Resource Center, Chamber, Kids Club, Art Center and Community Foundation.

The following volunteered to contact particular organizations:

- Member Newell – Edina Art Center
- Member Finsness – Edina Resource Center, Community Foundation and Kids Club

Administrative Process Updated

Member Mayer reported that the nomination for 2011 HRRC officers will be preceded by interviews of any and all interested candidates. Additionally, preparations for the 2011 Tom Oye Award are underway, and a meeting with the City's Communications Director, Jennifer Bennerotte, will be initiated to expand ideas for publicity. It was announced that there is an opening for a Director of District 9 of the State Department of Human Rights and that Member Bigbee would be applying for this position.

Member Stanton seconded Member Mayer's motion that the Edina Human Rights & Relations Commission endorses the nomination of Arnie Bigbee for a Director of District 9 of the State Department of Human Rights. The motion carried.

Domestic Partner Insurance Benefits Discussed

Member Stanton provided a sample resolution for the City Council to consider which would request that the State Legislature change the law to allow cities local control for defining "dependents" within health care plans.

Member Cashmore seconded Member Stanton's motion to prepare this resolution and forward it to the City Council for consideration. The motion carried.

Amnesty International Request Shared

Student Member Brosius reported that the Edina High School chapter of Amnesty International would like to partner with HRRC to host a program next spring regarding the film "Dead Man Walking." It would be a community-wide event, and HRRC is being asked to help fund and provide publicity. It was suggested that a formal request be submitted by the chapter and delivered to Chair Bigbee at 6:30 PM before the next Commission meeting on December 14th.

Proposed Revision to the City's Ordinance Regarding Commission Attendance Approved

Member Stanton seconded Member Mayer's motion to approve and forward the Commissioner Attendance ordinance, edited by Member Newell, to the City Council. The motion carried. The newly-edited ordinance would accommodate a commissioner who is unable to attend the required number of meetings due to a disability. Samples of other similar ordinances from different municipalities were provided for guidelines.

Adjournment

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