

**EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION
TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2010
7:00 PM – MAYOR’S CONFERENCE ROOM**

Members Present

Arnie Bigbee
John Cashmore
Lisa Finsness
Jessi Kingston
Bob Mayer
Dee Moore
Meg Newell
Russ Stanton

Student Members

Shara Mohtadi
Emma Weisberg

Staff

Susan Howl

Agenda Edited

Student Member Mohtadi requested addition to the agenda of a STAND request for \$1500 for an event to highlight atrocities in Burma; the request was granted.

Minutes Approved

Member Finsness seconded the motion of Member Stanton to approve the minutes of February 23, 2010; the motion carried.

Draft Domestic Partnership Ordinance Edited

Member Kingston seconded the motion of Member Cashmore to add wording in 195.02 Definitions, Domestic Partnership, B. of the draft ordinance: “Marriages between persons of the same sex that would be legally recognized as a contract of lawful marriage in another local, state or foreign jurisdiction, but for the operation of Minnesota law.” The motion carried.

The Commissioners were reminded of the City Council’s prompting to revise the fourth resolution in preparation for another work session. The Commission work group consisting of Members Cashmore, Kingston and Mayer will oversee this project. The resolution currently reads: “Adopt an Equal Benefits ordinance in a form substantially similar to Exhibit B requiring entities that contract with the City be required to provide equal benefits to spouses and domestic partners of their employees.”

Tom Oye Human Rights Award Discussed

There were two nominations received for the Tom Oye Award: 1) Kelly Fitzgerald of Dow Water and Process Solutions, submitted by Dawn Hart; and 2) HRRC Students Members Shara Mohtadi and Emma Weisberg, submitted by Council Member Brindle. Student Member Mohtadi reported that the City’s website did not accept nominations which had been submitted on-line, and Staff liaison Howl indicated that communications staff had been notified. There was extended discussion about the possibility of lost nominations.

Member Cashmore seconded the motion of Member Kingston to select all three nominees for the award upon the successful vetting of candidate Fitzgerald. Member Finsness amended the motion to state that the award should be given individually to all three nominees. The amended motion carried. The vetting of candidate Fitzgerald will be carried out by Commissioner Moore.

Member Kingston seconded the motion of Member Mayer to request the Edina Communications Director to investigate the missing on-line nominations and respond before the next Commission meeting; the motion carried.

Member Newell suggested that early next year each Commissioner should make the effort to get out in the community to identify candidates for the 2011 Tom Oye Award.

Work Plan Team Members Selected

Before selecting team members for the Work Plan, Chair Bigbee reported that he would be meeting with the chair of the Community Health Committee and the staff liaison regarding the tasks of the Committee and a possible collaboration regarding the human services funding process. There was a concern shared by some that the process for developing the budget for human services funding should be left intact for HRRC to manage. In light of this discussion, Members Finsness and Newell agreed to revise the current RFP and bring it back to the next meeting for approval.

The following team assignments were made:

- Visibility – Members Cashmore, Finsness, Moore and Newell
- Administration – Member Mayer
- Bias/Hate Crime Response Plan – Members Bigbee, Kingston and Moore

The Commissioners were encouraged to call Member Bigbee or liaison Howl to add their names to teams. It was emphasized that teams can include other people within the community.

Member Newell indicated that she would like to see the Commission co-sponsor a film festival for student films/videos addressing human rights' issues with the School District.

Upcoming Human Rights Fair Noted

Student Members Mohtadi and Weisberg reported that the event regarding Eastern Congo would be held on March 25th at the Edina High School. The Commissioners were invited to attend a dinner beforehand at 6 PM and then stay for the Fair, the featured speaker and a question-and-answer session. There will be 11 NGO's at the 7:00 PM Fair. 600 students have signed up to participate in the event during the day. Chair Bigbee reported that he had ordered a portable Commission banner through the City which would be ready for display at this March 25th event.

Funding Requested

Student Member Mohtadi said that STAND has already made plans for an event on May 22 to raise awareness about the atrocities occurring in Burma. The event will begin with bikers traveling from City Hall to the Lake Harriet bandshell, followed by a band concert and speakers from Burma talking about their personal experiences. Student Members Mohtadi and Weisberg indicated that it would be helpful if the Commission could allocate funds to cover the cost of banners, posters, pamphlets, food and t-shirts. The Commissioners were reminded that \$1500 had been set aside in the operational budget for items such as this. Chair Bigbee requested a more detailed budget for the event, and Student Member Mohtadi agreed to provide one.

Member Stanton seconded the Motion of Member Mayer that the Commission fund the amount of up to \$1500 for this event on May 22 and to find out if the Commission could also be considered a sponsor of the event; the motion carried.

Community Council News Reported

Having recently attended a Community Council meeting, Member Finsness reported that discussion took place about gathering leaders to discuss needs, gaps and partnerships to accomplish community mapping/community building. Member Finsness shared that she brought up the model of the “World Café” to facilitate talking to partner groups.

Meeting Adjourned

Chair Bigbee thanked the members of the Commission for their passion and commitment to this work for our community.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Arnie Bigbee, Chair
Edina Human Rights & Relations Commission