

EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2010
7:00 PM – COMMUNITY ROOM

Members Present

Zack Antar, Student
Arnie Bigbee
Daria Brosius, Student
John Cashmore
Lisa Finsness
Jessi Kingston
Meg Newell

Members Absent

Bob Mayer
Russ Stanton

Guest

Mary Brindle

Staff

Susan Howl

After a one-half hour orientation with the two new student members—Zack Antar and Daria Brosius—Chair Bigbee was prepared to open the regular meeting at 7:00 PM.

New Student Members Introduced

To begin the meeting, Zack Antar and Daria Brosius, seniors at Edina High School, were introduced to and welcomed by each Commissioner.

Commission Minutes Approved

Member Kingston seconded Member Cashmore's motion to approve the Commission minutes as presented for July 27, 2010, and August 24, 2010. The motion carried.

Edina Resource Center Proposed Budget Revisited

Council Member Brindle brought a disparity of concern to the attention of the Commissioners regarding the amount requested by Val Burke for 2011 for the Resource Center and the amount proposed by the Commission. The amount of \$38,316 requested of the City for the 2011 funding of the Resource Center was essential to maintain staff (1.5) at their current level of performance and is a three-percent increase above the current amount funded. The amount of \$37,000 indicated as the proposal coming from the Commission represented a flat amount with no increase applied. Ms. Howl, Staff Liaison, indicated that the no-increase scenario applied to the human services budget in its entirety should not have automatically been applied to the Resource Center without a discussion. She apologized for not having emphasized this during the funding process.

Member Cashmore seconded Member Kingston's motion to change the 2011 amount proposed for the Edina Resource Center from \$37,000 to \$38,316. The motion carried.

This change in the proposal will be submitted to the City Council for its consideration. Additionally, the Commission agreed to have an in-depth discussion with Val regarding the budget and how to carry out this responsibility in the future.

Bias/Hate Crime Response Plan Formally Approved

With an edited plan distributed to the Commissioners along with an updated network list, it was noted that the only thing missing was a representative's name linked to the faith community. Until one is made official, a victim will always be given access to his/her own pastor or minister.

Member Finsness seconded the motion of Member Kingston to approve the edited and updated Bias/Hate Crime Response Plan for 2010. The motion carried.

Edina Community Council's Business Shared

- Member Finsness reported that a striking number of people came through the Welcome Center during the summer months—approximately 1000. The Center shares space with the Edina Resource Center.
- At the Community Council meeting, she also learned that the School District is striving to become more culturally responsive. It was noted that there will be Beyond Diversity Collaborative Workshops for staff held in 2010 and 2011. The curriculum is described as an “introduction to courageous conversation and a framework for deinstitutionalizing racism and eliminating the racial achievement gap.” If Commissioners have an interest, they could join one of the three LEARN Seminars regarding the Equity Walk and could register through Val Burke.
- There will be a Mix-It-Up Day again at the High School on November 9th, with the opportunity to mix with other students through different-than-usual seating arrangements. Student Member Antar indicated that he would talk to Rachael Pream-Grenier about having a multi-cultural day as well.
- On Wednesday, December 1, from 7:30 to 9 AM, the Edina Community Council along with the Edina Resource Center, the Edina Community Foundation and Connecting With Kids will host a breakfast to highlight the needs of youth in Edina, especially as it pertains to financial needs taking place in a growing number of families.

Visibility Group Updates Reported

Member Newell shared what she had learned from Rachael Pream-Grenier regarding her activities with Youth-Serving-Youth (YSY):

- The STRIVE Program is in place and operates as an in-school mentoring partnership between the High School and the Rotary Clubs of Edina.
- According to numbers, more girls get involved in service projects than boys. Nevertheless, the SALT program is effective as a leadership team for boys.
- YSY students have indicated that they would be interested in teaming up with HRRC for Lobby Days.
- The Amnesty International Group is interested in holding a forum on the death penalty.
- The Gay/Straight Alliance at the High School is a diverse group of students.

Member Kingston reported that the Visibility Group had met and discussed the following:

- How does HRRC become better known in the community?
- Develop a PowerPoint presentation.
- Discover ways to partner with the school.
- Sponsor forums at the schools, such as anti-bullying & cyber bullying, religious tolerance, aging discrimination and public accessibility.
- Participate in the 4th of July Parade.
- Define visibility and how HRRC might choose to be a vehicle to change perceptions.
- Not become a single-issue group but try to be a feeder for the legislature.
- Update the purpose of the Commission and what it is doing.
- Should attention be drawn to this Commission with a purpose to highlight issues?
- Lay out the mission of the Commission and look for ways to collaborate with others to hold events.

- What about a PowerPoint that just addresses human rights without promoting HRRC?
- School May-Term projects could work on a PowerPoint presentation for HRRC. The You Tube model could be used.
- Student Member Antar agreed to join the Visibility Group and agreed to look into making educational previews before the movies shown at Centennial Lakes.
- Should the Visibility Group select one or two items for focusing, or perhaps make the decision to plan an event on bullying? Would this be about adopting an initiative?
- Is the word “visibility” about responding or advocating?

Member Finsness seconded the motion of Member Cashmore to change the name “Visibility Group” to “Issues Sub-Committee.” The motion carried.

Member Newell seconded the motion of Member Finsness that the Issues Sub-Committee focus on anti-bullying and that it bring back recommendations to the Commission regarding this issue. The motion carried.

Member Newell indicated that she would lead this discussion on this issue as a host at her home before the next Commission meeting. Issues Sub-Committee Members are: Zack Antar, John Cashmore, Lisa Finsness, Jessi Kingston and Meg Newell.

Richfield Forum on Domestic Partnership Ordinance Shared

Member Kingston reported to the Commissioners that the public forum on a domestic partnership ordinance held by the City of Richfield was well attended and with some resistance. This will be the first of many meetings held by Richfield, and HRRC will be told when they will be holding a hearing. The Cities of Bloomington, St. Louis Park and a handful of others are also going through this process.

November Meeting Date Discussed

An e-mail vote will be taken to determine the best date for the Commission’s November meeting:

- Tuesday, November 23rd, the fourth Tuesday and regular meeting date, or
- Tuesday, November 30, the fifth Tuesday of the month

Meeting Adjourned

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.