

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION
MAY 24, 2011
7:03 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kingston called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Answering rollcall were Members Brosius, Cashmore, Finsness, Kingston, Mayer, Newell, Seidman and Winnick.

III. MEETING AGENDA APPROVED

Motion by Member Cashmore and seconded by Member Winnick approving the meeting agenda.

Ayes: Cashmore, Finsness, Kingston, Mayer, Newell, Seidman, Winnick

Motion carried.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTED

Motion by Member Seidman and seconded by Member Cashmore approving the consent agenda as follows:

IV.A. Approve regular meeting minutes of March 22, 2011 with one edit, and notes from the Anti-Bullying Forum on April 26, 2011.

Ayes: Cashmore, Finsness, Kingston, Mayer, Newell, Seidman, Winnick

Motion carried.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENT

There were no community comments.

VI. REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

VI.A. CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION WITH COMMISSION CHAIRS

Chair Kingston shared draft minutes from the City Council Work Session with commission chairs which was held on May 3, 2011. Items discussed by the City Council were: 1) Filming and Rebroadcasting Meetings, suggesting that one meeting of each commission, titled the "Annual Meeting", would be filmed annually in the Council Chambers; 2) Standardization of Agendas, Bylaws, Minutes and Meeting Protocol; 3) Working Group, Subcommittee and Task Force Protocol, noting that such bodies must comply with the Open Meeting Law; 4) Commissioner Orientation and Training, including the possibility of providing opportunities for specialized training; 5) Synchronization of Work Plans and City Council Priorities, possibly accomplished at each commission's Annual Meeting; and 6) Website Presence, with HRRC indicating an interest in adding more information to its website.

VI.B. "NAZI PERSECUTION OF HOMOSEXUALS" TRAVELING EXHIBIT

Chair Kingston shared an outline for sponsorship of/involvement of the "Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals" Traveling Exhibit. It had been submitted by Laura Zelle, JCRC Director of Tolerance Minnesota & Holocaust Education. The JCRC will be coordinating a Midwest tour of the exhibit, and it will be previewing at the University of Minnesota in the Andersen Library from April 1st through May 15th, 2012.

The following issues/comments were raised: 1) Is this serving the community of Edina? 2) There is the need to develop criteria for this kind of decision-making. 3) HRRC would be supporting an educational effort in the amount of \$500. 4) The number one criteria for approving such opportunities is that it should make an impact on Edina. 5) Could HRRC be misunderstood as a funding vehicle? 6) Is there a way to tie the event into the anti-bullying initiative? 7) Is more information necessary in the nature of a

formal request or a recommendation from the Mayor? 8) The event would be a catalyst for continuing dialogues. 9) Participate and use this event as anecdotal evidence for developing standards for evaluating RFP's. 10) The event could be noteworthy for Edina and HRRC. 11) There were 2000 people at the exhibit in Seattle, and it has also traveled to Norfolk, VA. 12) We should "hop on the train" and solidify Edina standing up for human rights. 13) Because the 2012 Exhibit in Minneapolis will occur during the time of Edina's "Days of Remembrance" event, HRRC could dovetail with the Exhibit's event and focus on its mission. 14) An Edina dialogue could be scheduled on one of the nights during the Exhibit, which would be a way to reach out and demonstrate HRRC's purpose and commitment. 15) This should not be about HRRC becoming well-known and getting recognition by attaching its name to the Exhibit.

Member Newell made a motion, seconded by Member Finsness, to create a work group to report back to the Commission with ideas focusing on involving the youth in a dialogue in order for HRRC to be a participator of the Exhibit and not just a sponsor.

Ayes: Finsness, Newell

Nays: Cashmore, Kingston, Mayer, Seidman, Winnick

Motion denied.

Member Mayer made a motion, seconded by Member Cashmore, to support the Exhibit in the amount of \$500, for an activity to be determined through collaboration with JCRC.

Ayes: Cashmore, Kingston, Seidman, Winnick

Nays: Finsness, Mayer, Newell

Motion carried.

VI.C. TIME OFF

Chair Kingston recommended that the Commission take a month off. The following comments were made: 1) Summer is not opportune for time off from a meeting, as work needs to be done regarding the next Dialogue. 2) Because Commissioners all have different schedules, it may be better to have a flexible vacation schedule that meets personal needs. 3) The City Council does not appear to take a meeting off; therefore, the Members must have a way to miss a meeting for a vacation. 4) The new student members do not begin until September. Perhaps June or August could be skipped. 5) Having time off would be an opportunity for Commissioners to "re-charge." 6) June would be an ideal month for discussing a number of things—no action items. The June agenda should include a dialogue about what the criteria should be regarding sponsoring events.

Chair Kingston made a motion, seconded by Member Cashmore, for HRRC to take off the month of June this year.

Ayes: Cashmore, Kingston

Nays: Finsness, Mayer, Newell, Seidman, Winnick

Motion denied.

VI.D. CITY WEBSITE—COUNTRY CLUB DISTRICT

Member Winnick reported that he has had the opportunity to peruse the City's website and history books, focusing on the Country Club district. In doing so, he suggests that the City evaluate the website for complete disclosure of the early covenants and private deed restrictions. He indicated that the City should reveal its history and that the website could be improved to positively impact the future. Staff shared the recommendation that a hyperlink to the summary of the early restrictions and covenants be added to the Heritage Landmarks' page on the City's website.

Comments and observations were as follows: 1) Information on the website should be explicit and not just direct the reader to another site. 2) Improving the website with additional information would be an opportunity to educate the citizens of Edina. 3) If an expanded paragraph is developed on the website, there could be a link to HRRC. 4) The About Town has been and could also continue to be a good source for this information. 5) The Edina Historical Society maintains historical records regarding Edina.

Member Winnick will share an update with the Commissioners at the June meeting.

VI.E. EVENTS DEBRIEF

Due to time constraints, Chair Kingston recommended tabling the debriefing of two events—“Reflections on Bullying” and “Days of Remembrance.” The June meeting will be ideal for doing this—posting notes with ideas, documenting resources and identifying contacts.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

An Edina resident, Sanford Berman, contacted Chair Kingston after the “Days of Remembrance” event had been highlighted in the Sun-Current. Since that time, he has sent the Commission copies of letters to the Minnesota Twins and the State of Minnesota’s elected officials, referencing his concern about a team’s logo being racist and elected officials’ “faith-based prejudice” regarding same-sex marriage.

The Commissioners raised various questions:

- 1) Mr. Berman has been an active member of the community for a long time. His reputation is reputable among fellow librarians.
- 2) Does his correspondence require a response from HRRC?
- 3) Should HRRC acknowledge and thank him for his interest in Domestic Partnerships?
- 4) Should there be any response to him, or is this considered “for information only”?

Because Mr. Berman’s communication to HRRC was by “bc” (blind copy), no action was deemed necessary.

VIII. CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Cashmore reported that he is now a graduate of the Police Department’s Citizen’s Academy, a ten-week program led by Officer Brian Hubbard. The next class will be held in the spring of 2012. He highly recommended the class to his fellow Commissioners.

Member Mayer reported that there has been positive publicity of the Tom Oye Award in a number of media outlets.

IX. STAFF COMMENTS

Staff Liaison, Susan Howl, shared that the Commission is operating in full throttle with passionate and professional people on board. All discussion within the Commission has resulted in healthy consensus and positive outcomes.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business on the Commission Agenda, Chair Kingston declared the meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Howl, HRRC Staff Liaison

Minutes approved by HRRC, June 28, 2011.

Jessi Kingston, HRRC Chair