

Minutes Human Relations Commission March 10, 2015

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, March 10, 2015, 6:00 P.M. at City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 31 East Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Hannah Auckland
Don Calender
Belinda Chiu
Isabel Hochhaus
Peter Hodgson
Christopher Houk
Jay Scherotter

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Dino Castell
Armando Espinoza
Jeanne Powers

Diversity Staff Present:

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Director
Dee Hodson, Diversity Office Assistant

Guests Present:

Christina Hudson, Tempe Leadership XXX
Reverend Eric Ledermann, University Presbyterian Church
Javier Luera, Tempe Leadership XXX
Reverend Sue Ringler, Guardian Angels Catholic Community

Meeting convened at 6:04 P.M.

Commissioner Chiu called the meeting to order and invited members of the public to address the Commission.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

Tempe Leadership XXX members, Christina Hudson and Javier Luera were introduced.

Agenda Item 2 – Consideration of Minutes: HRC – February 10, 2015 Minutes (Motion Required)
February 10, 2015 HRC Commission Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Calender to ACCEPT minutes.

Second by Commissioner Hodgson.

Minutes unanimously APPROVED.

Agenda Item 3 – Faith Group Focus – Reverend Eric Ledermann and Reverend Sue Ringler

Commissioner Chiu introduced Tempe Emergency Assistance Ministries (TEAM) representatives Reverend Eric Ledermann with the University Presbyterian Church and Reverend Sue Ringler with the Guardian Angels Catholic Community. Commissioner Scherotter explained an invitation had been extended in response to former Commissioner Dietz's interest in forming an inter-faith based group. After Commissioners discussed Commissioner Dietz's proposal, the course of action decided upon was to investigate current inter-faith groups. Commissioners have expressed interest in supporting current inter-faith groups rather than creating an additional group.

Reverend Ledermann explained TEAM was currently transitioning into Tempe Inter-Faith Coalition. Coalition president Reverend Ringler explained that TEAM has been around for over forty years. TEAM's focus has been coordinating assistance for services such as food and housing. TEAM holds a Thanksgiving Inter-Faith service annually. After 9/11 occurred, local clergy came together to increase the understanding of different faiths. Tempe Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program (I-HELP) was then formed in partnership with Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA). Reverend Ringler has also created a Community Interfaith Library housed at St Augustine's Episcopal Church to assist in information on all religions.

Reverend Ringler explained their latest focus has been encouraging understanding in the community by way of dinners incorporating inter-faith dialogues on a specific topic. The first two have been very successful with a third one tentatively being planned for May 7, 2015, from 6:30-8:30pm at Temple Emmanuel. Reverend Ledermann said the coalition gets together monthly to share and discuss challenges. Reverend Ledermann concluded that although the group continues to support I-HELP with volunteers, they will be focused on increased development of inter-faith relationships. Reverend Ringler said that approximately thirty Tempe faith communities are represented in the coalition.

One of the recent issues has been attacks on Muslims at ASU as well as an increase in hate speech. Reverend Ledermann explained this is frightening to international students who may not understand the concept of American free speech. Commissioner Scherotter asked what might be the coalition's response to such acts. Reverend Ledermann said the response ranges from simply connecting with students affected to silent counter protests. Reverend Ledermann explained that faith based groups who want to be at ASU, must go through the Council of Religious Advisors (CORA) who have specific guidelines and ethics that must be followed. The Inter-Faith Coalition hopes to continue their advocacy and be a community resource for years to come.

Commissioner Chiu asked how the Human Relations Commission could assist the Coalition. Reverend Ringler said an exchange of topics would be helpful. Commissioners agreed they support the coalition and are inspired by their work. Reverend Ledermann said that the Tempe Inter-Faith Facebook is a good place to receive information on coalition events. It was confirmed that the Mosque is represented in the Tempe Inter-Faith group.

Agenda Item 4 – Future Challenge Day Discussion and Agenda Item 5 – Unity Grant Update
– Jay Scherotter

These two agenda items were discussed as one.

Commissioner Scherotter reported that he and Rosa had met with Tempe High School District officials who expressed their desire to move forward securing additional Challenge Day programs for Tempe High Schools in the 2015-2016 school year. Due to the high demand for Challenge Day programs, the minimum number of days that must be scheduled per city was increased to three with a maximum of four days per city. Schools are scheduled on a first come first serve basis with plenty of space currently available on their current 2015-2016 calendar.

Commissioner Scherotter asked if the Human Relations Commission would like to continue in partnership with the Tempe Union High School District, to promote and fund Challenge Day programs. Commissioner Auckland inquired what would be the alternative to partnership. Commissioner Scherotter said the alternative would be to hand off the program to the district for implementation. Commissioners thought the program lacked momentum because it has only has a one year history in Tempe. Commissioners agreed they would like to continue the partnership but would like to discuss the school district's long term plan regarding future Challenge Days.

Commissioner Scherotter calculated the cost at \$11,700 for three Challenge Day programs (adding a fourth day would cost an additional \$3,600). Historically the Unity Grant has been funded at the \$16,000 level with possible remaining funds rolling over for use in future years. Rosa will confirm the remaining amount in the Unity Grant fund after this year's Challenge Day invoices have been paid in full. Commissioner Hochhaus asked if it was possible to piggyback with a neighboring state if Tempe wanted to host only two Challenge Days. Commissioner Scherotter said that one trip in one city has been the explanation from the Challenge Day office in the past. Commissioners wondered about a long term plan of partnering with neighboring cities for future Challenge Day programs. Commissioner Scherotter reported he would know what high schools are interested in hosting Challenge Days after the principal's meeting on March 23, 2015.

Commissioners were then asked if they would like to continue to utilize the Unity Grant as the primary funding source for Challenge Days. Commissioner Auckland asked what other funding sources might be available. Commissioner Hodgson asked if the schools might possibly contribute a portion via fundraising. Commissioner Scherotter confirmed that tax credits have been used in some school districts so that might be an additional funding source. The consensus was to continue to utilize the Unity Grant funds as a primary, but not exclusive, source of Challenge Day funding. Rosa asked if commissioners would like any additional stipulations regarding the RFPs. For example, a stipulation might be added to include some long term accountability with awarded Challenge Day funding.

Commissioner Scherotter asked if the commission wants to consider adding a middle school Challenge Day program or should they be limited to high schools only. The consensus was to look at adding a middle school for a future Challenge Day program. Commissioner Hodgson suggested strategically choosing a middle school that feeds into the high schools who host Challenge Day programs to possibly track the program's impact.

Commissioner Scherotter asked if commissioners are interested in presenting a Challenge Day experience at the next Council Issue Review Session (IRS) to promote the value of the program and the importance of Unity Grant funding. Commissioners agreed sharing the significant impact of the Challenge Day experience is important. Rosa will check with the Council schedule and see when that could be added to an IRS agenda and e-mail dates to commissioners. Commissioner Scherotter explained that some of the commissioners would be involved in the IRS presentation as well as inviting the high school contacts from the January 2015 Challenge Day programs, to participate.

Commissioner Hochhaus asked if there was an adult Challenge Day program scheduled this summer. Commissioner Scherotter replied yes, and that he and Commissioner Chiu will be attending on May 22 – 24, 2015 in Concord, CA. The first program is called Be The Change and the second program is Living The Change.

Agenda Item 6 - Diversity Department Update – Rosa Inchausti

A. Diversity Dialogue Spring 2015 Program – Commissioner Chiu reported the Diversity Dialogue Program has met twice. Jan O'Malley facilitates the adult group with assistance from Commissioner Hochhaus and Commissioner Chiu facilitates the teen group with Flora Foraga, Leah Abriani and past teen participant, Laraib Mughal. Commissioners are invited to attend the potluck held at the last meeting on Monday, April 20, 2015.

Rosa invited commissioners to attend the Mayor's Disability Awards on Wednesday, May 6, 2015 at 3pm in the Tempe History Museum. The Tempe Diablos are sponsoring the youth scholarships this year.

Rosa reported the Diversity Office is beginning a three year transition plan of an ADA inventory to include all city structures and right of ways. A vendor has been selected and currently the Diversity Office is determining the highest use areas to include in Phase One.

Next HRC Meeting – April 14, 2015

**Motion made by Commissioner Calender to adjourn the meeting.
Second by Commissioner Scherotter
Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.**

Prepared by: Dee Hodson

Reviewed by: Rosa Inchausti