

Minutes Human Relations Commission June 9, 2015

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, June 9, 2015, 6:00 P.M. at City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 31 East Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Don Calender
Dino Castelli
Belinda Chiu
Peter Hodgson
Christopher Houk
Ira King Jr.
Jeanne Powers (on phone)
Jay Scherotter

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Hannah Auckland
Armando Espinoza
Isabel Hochhaus

Diversity Staff Present:

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Director
Dee Hodson, Diversity Coordinator

Guests Present:

none

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

No comments.

Agenda Item 2 – Consideration of Minutes: HRC – May 12, 2015 Minutes (Motion Required)

May 12, 2015 HRC Commission Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Calender to ACCEPT minutes.

Second by Commissioner Houk.

Minutes unanimously APPROVED.

Agenda Item 3 – Mayors Advocating Marriage Equality Discussion – Peter Hodgson

Commissioner Chiu began by explaining this was a continued discussion from the May 2015 Human Relations Commission meeting. Commissioner Hodgson shared two draft options, one in the form of a note and the other a letter, thanking the Mayor for his support of the Marriage Equality brief. Commissioners reviewed the drafts and discussed.

Commissioners asked the purpose be explained, of sending either of the drafts to the Mayor. Commissioner Hodgson said it would acknowledge the Mayor's support of marriage equality and keep the issue at the fore front for future equality efforts. Commissioners agreed thanking the Mayor would fall into the Human Relations Commission's powers and duties under "promoting mutual understanding and respect".

Commissioner Houk explained that the brief is purposefully broad and until exemptions are identified, he would be unable to support sending the Mayor either of the drafts. Commissioner Houk emphasized that the HRC is charged with protecting the rights of *all* people, including those with different religious viewpoints. Commissioner Houk read the following draft that he believed he could support. "The commission applauds efforts of the Mayor to promote mutual understanding and respect among all persons without regard to sexual orientation while respecting the views of the religious community." Commissioners respected Commissioner Houk's opinion and agreed marriage equality is a complex issue.

In their absence, Commissioner Chiu read a letter from Commissioner Auckland and sections of an e-mail from Commissioner Espinoza, advocating the acknowledgment of support to Mayor Mitchell from the HRC.

Commissioners continued the discussion by offering changes to Commissioner Hodgson's draft thank you note for the purpose of creating something all commissioners could support. Some of the suggested changes were seen as too generic. When asked if the vote must be unanimous, commissioners agreed a consensus was required but a unanimous vote was not required.

Commissioner Calender motioned to send Mayor Mitchell the following amended letter.
"The Human Relations commission would like to thank you for taking action on marriage equality by including your name on the Mayor's for the Freedom to Marry brief. We appreciate you continuously taking steps to make Tempe a place that respects the rights of all. Your actions help our community and its citizens thrive. Thank you for your dedication to our community, Mayor Mitchell."

Second made by Commissioner King.

Motion approved by Commissioners Castelli, Calender, Chiu, Hodgson, King, Powers and Scherotter.

Motion opposed by Commissioner Houk.

Rosa confirmed the letter would be sent this week, with Commissioner Chiu's signature in Commissioner Espinoza's absence.

Agenda Item 4 – Challenge Day Update – Jay Scherotter

Agenda items four and five were discussed in opposite order after receiving permission from Commissioner Chiu.

Commissioner Scherotter shared his Challenge Day Plan Recommendation document with Commissioners. Commissioner Scherotter reported funding had been secured for *eight* Challenge Day programs in Tempe for the 2015-2016 school year via RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) funds with the assistance of Tempe Police Chief Tom Ryff and Community Affairs Specialist Charles Cobbs. In addition to Compadre, Tempe, Corona del Sol and Desert Vista High Schools who have already confirmed their interest to participate, two additional schools will now be added along with Marcos de Niza and McClintock High Schools. Both Marcos de Niza and McClintock high schools will have the opportunity to include 25 students who participated in last year's program, serve as Team Leaders in addition to one hundred new students. Rosa said the funding has been confirmed and will be ready for the Challenge Day deposit due in September.

Commissioner Scherotter explained that the next step is to identify which high school will be assigned to specific program days from the reserved dates of January 11, 12, 13 14, 25, 26, 27 and 28, 2016. Commissioner Scherotter said that implementing last years Challenge Day programs at two Tempe high schools, required two years of preparation and after the fifteen minute presentation to Mayor and Council, approximately 850 students will now be impacted next year.

Commissioner Calender asked which middle school will be selected to participate. Commissioner Scherotter explained that the process would begin by with an enrollment meeting with the middle schools at the district level to explain the program and then the opportunity will be worked through the appropriate channels. Commissioner Scherotter invited Commissioner Calender to attend the middle school meetings regarding the selection process. Commissioners Hodgson agreed that choosing the participating middle school should be a thoughtful decision by considering which school might receive the biggest benefit.

Commissioner Scherotter asked commissioners to consider their suggestions and/or contacts for getting lunches donated and bring those ideas to the August HRC meeting. Commissioner Scherotter hoped that each commissioner would be able to participate in at least one Challenge Day. Rosa reported that Tempe directors as well as the city manager's office have been invited. Commissioner Scherotter has requested that a percentage of the volunteer positions be left available to Mayor and Council, community members, Student Resource Officers (SROs), and media, in addition to the school personnel and parents.

Commissioner Scherotter closed by reporting that he and Commissioner Chiu spent a weekend with the Challenge Day organization three weeks ago in California. The weekend was an amazingly powerful experience and showcased the dedication of the City of Tempe. Tempe is one of only two communities in the United States bringing Challenge Day to all of their high schools. The Commission offered immense thanks to Commissioner Scherotter for his perseverance in bringing Challenge Day to Tempe.

Agenda Item 5 – Unity Grant Direction – Rosa Inchausti

Rosa reported Unity Grant funds are available now that RICO funds will be used for the Challenge Day programs. Rosa asked which commissioners would be interested in setting the parameters on the Unity Grant RFP. Commissioner Powers, Hodgson and Chiu volunteered to assist Rosa.

Commissioner Calender asked what changes are being considered. A Unity Grant discussion to bring forth commissioner's ideas will be added to the next HRC agenda.

Agenda Item 6 - Diversity Department Update – Rosa Inchausti

A. Juneteenth Celebration, Saturday, June 20, 2015, 4-8 P.M. at Tempe Museum

Rosa invited commissioners to attend Tempe's Juneteenth Celebration organized by the African American Advisory Board.

**Next HRC Meeting – August 11, 2015
(July HRC meeting CANCELLED)**

**Motion made by Commissioner Calender to adjourn the meeting.
Second by Commissioner Scherotter
Meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.**

Prepared by: Dee Hodson

Reviewed by: Rosa Inchausti

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Director