

Minutes Human Relations Commission February 13, 2018

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, February 13, 2018, 6:00 p.m., at the City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 31 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Carl Hermanns, Chair
Dino Castelli, Vice-Chair
Beth Dietz
Amanda Lee Faustini
Rochelle Johns
David Kader
Ira King, Jr.
Jeanne Powers
Joe Rojas

(MEMBERS) Absent:

B. J. Ayers
Stefanie Garcia

City Staff Present:

Ginny Belousek, Diversity Manager
Megan Hutchison, Diversity Executive Assistant
Marie Raymond, Education & Youth Development Manager

Call to Order

Chair Hermanns called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. Chair Hermanns then welcomed the new commissioner, Joe Rojas, and each commissioner introduced themselves.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

No public appearances.

Agenda Item 2 – Consideration of Minutes: HRC – December 5, 2017 Minutes (Motion Required)

MOTION: Commissioner Castelli moved to ACCEPT the minutes

SECOND: Commissioner Kader

DECISION: Minutes unanimously APPROVED

Agenda Item 3 – School Funding & Test Scores

Chair Hermanns introduced Marie Raymond to the Commission. Ginny Belousek reminded the Commission that Marie was invited to further discuss the issues brought up at the Commissions' October meeting regarding school funding tied to test scores, resulting in even less funding for disadvantaged schools. Marie introduced herself to the Commission and then discussed the main functions of her office. They offer family and community support, identify community needs

and gaps and then bridge those gaps to help with success, work with school partners, and assist with supplying volunteers to help children achieve and stay on grade level. They have also helped to establish and maintain resources to support students such as College Connect and the newly created Pre- K pilot program. She informed the Commission that the current system being used is funding based on the results of one test. This government backed structure poses a challenge to the schools on many levels, one of which is the fact that a school's progress is not considered. She also mentioned the correlation between test scores and poverty, money and opportunities, and the lack of kids being prepared for school. Marie also mentioned that next year the school funding will be based on a new formula, a letter grade A – F. Unfortunately, this new formula is a point in time grade and will not show any improvements made during the school year. This will impact not only the school's funding but the communities as well. The Commission discussed the negative aspects of the new scoring system and agreed that it will not show progress and is not an accurate or reliable way to judge a school. The Commission also inquired if there was a way for the schools to expand upon the letter grade for a more holistic grade. The Commission inquired if Marie had any recommendations on how they could assist and if there were any policies that would be helpful. Marie encouraged the Commission to reach out to the schools and get to know them and listen to what they need. The commission discussed several ideas on how they could support the neighborhood schools and get the communities more involved. It was decided the commission would consider viable options and bring ideas to a future meeting. Chair Hermanns thanked Marie Raymond.

Agenda Item 4 - Diversity Office Update

Ginny Belousek gave an update on the recent Unity Walk. She thanked the commission for assisting in staffing the HRC table at the festival. She then asked the commission if they preferred the new format of the Unity Walk with the festival before the walk. The Commission responded agreeably and the consensus is to continue with the new format. It was also agreed upon that the festival part of the event will be expanded upon and more tables will be offered to those interested.

Ginny then gave a brief update on some concerns that had been shared with her regarding the recent MLK Diversity Awards. The African American Advisory Committee had brought forward three concerns regarding the event: there were no African American award winners, the speaker was not African American, and the event was not held on the Martin Luther King holiday. Ginny responded to the African American Advisory Committee's concerns and let them know that there were two African American winners, Bob & Yvonne Pipkin. Ginny also stated that the awards are given to those who are nominated. She encouraged the AAAC to nominate more people in the future. In regard to the speaker, over the years 98% of the speakers have been African American and this year's speaker had actually met Dr. King and was able to share his story with the audience. Finally, due to conflicts with hotel availability the event was not able to take place on the Martin Luther King holiday. Ginny then let the Commission know that a representative from the African American Advisory Committee is planning on attending the next HRC meeting for further discussion.

Agenda Item 8 – Upcoming Meeting March 13, 2018

Chair Hermanns announced the next meeting would be on March 13, 2018. Commissioner Kader let the Commission know that March 13th is Election day. He inquired if the Commission would like to move the date so they could watch the election. The Commission discussed the matter and agreed to keep the original date of the meeting.

**Motion made by Commissioner Castelli to adjourn the meeting
Second by Commissioner King
Meeting adjourned at 6:56 pm**

Prepared by: Megan Hutchison

Reviewed by: Ginny Belousek