Tempe

Minutes
Regional Human Relations Commission Exchange
August 13th, 2008

Minutes of the REGIONAL HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on WEDNESDAY, August 13th, 2008 6:00 P.M. at Tempe Public Library Program, 3500 South Rural Rd, Tempe, Arizona.

Present:

City of Tempe
Colleen Byron, Chair
Arlene Chin, Vice- Chair
Joseph Mann
Linda Ritland
Fentress Truxon
Rosa Inchausti, Staff
Ginny Belousek, Staff
Brandy Naleski, Staff

City of Chandler
Kay McDonald
Julio Revilla
Leah Powell, Staff

City of Mesa
James May, Vice-Chair

City of Phoenix
Diane D'Angelo
Kem Ihori
Robert Rosenberg
Raquib Abduallah
Reginald Ragland, Staff

City of Scottsdale
Nolan Harrison
Jeff Jameson
Enid Seiden, Chair
Velicia McMillan, Staff

Guests
Hugh Hallman, Tempe Mayor
Charlie Meyer, Tempe City Manager
James Burns, Tempe Historical Museum
Beck, 1n10
Kristina, 1n10
Ron Wakabayashi, Dept of Justice

Meeting convened at 6:10 P.M.

Tempe HRC Chair Colleen Byron called the meeting to order and invited members of the public to address the Commissions.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances
None

Agenda Item 2 – Welcome
Tempe HRC Chair Colleen Byron welcomed everyone to Tempe and shared how she brings Diversity into every class that she teaches at ASU. Colleen shared, "Diversity isn't just the right thing to do; it's the smart thing to do". Colleen thanked the Mayor and Council of Tempe, as well as the Tempe Diversity Department for their support of Diversity in Tempe.

Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman thanked Colleen Byron for her touching speech on Diversity. Mayor Hallman shared that Tempe is the most ethnically diverse community in the valley with 63 different languages are spoken in the Tempe Elementary School District.

City Manager Charlie Meyer also welcomed everyone to Tempe. Mr. Meyer shared a story of his first trip to Tempe and the Inclusive sign as he entered the city limits. The sign has deteriorated and is now being replaced with several signs that will be placed along Tempe's city borders.

Agenda Item 4 – All of Us – LGBT History Project

James Burns, with the Tempe Historical Museum, shared a collaborative project titled- "All of Us: Revealing LGBT history in the Valley of the Sun". The Museum has partnered with 1n10 and playwright Laurie Brooks. The purpose is to capture, preserve and present the undocumented experiences, stories and contributions of the LGBT community. The museum has trained the youth to conduct the oral histories and the museum will serve as a repository for the oral histories. James also shared that the museum is undergoing a major renovation and the LGBT project will have a permanent place in the new exhibit.

Beck from 1n10 and Kristina from QSpeak were also in attendance. Beck shared her background in theatre and how she founded QSpeak, to use theatre for social change. They are currently working on Saturdays at ASU on gathering the stories. This will continue through the fall semester and they anticipate writing the scripts from November through February. Rehearsals in March and production ready June 2009.

Phoenix commissioner Diane D'Angelo saluted Tempe for taking this project on and asked if AIDS will have a spot in the project. Beck answered, yes; there is a related question that will be asked of all oral history participants.

Agenda Item 5 – Ron Wakabayashi, Regional Director of the Department of Justice

Ron Wakabayashi shared with the commissioners the background of the Department of Justice's role in Community Relations. Their office is available to provide assistance and reconciliation. They specialize in community conflict.

Ron shared information on diversity, and how riots happen in communities. He provided examples of how the Department of Justice has assisted in diffusing situations. Phoenix Commissioner Diane D'Angelo shared that Phoenix is working on strategic planning, and asked if he is available for training in mediation skills. Ron stated that he is available for mediation.

Agenda Item 6 – City Exchange

Phoenix:

Staff Reginald Ragland and Commissioner Diane D'Angelo – Phoenix is currently reviewing and updating their strategic plan, working to reduce any redundancies in all commissions throughout the city and looking at the immigration issue.

Commissioner Raquib Abduallah added they are looking to be more community minded and ask ourselves if the community knows what we are doing.

Staff Reginald Ragland also shared that Phoenix is accepting nominations for their MLK Diversity Awards, and passed around a new HRC brochure and an Emergency Preparedness pamphlet.

Scottsdale:

Chair Enid Seiden shared that Scottsdale is working to refocusetheir direction; they are conducting focus groups in the community, faith, education, business, etc to identify their direction to go. The HRC is hosting a cultural series regarding the history of Scottsdale.

Chandler:
Staff Leah Powell shared that Chandler is busy with Hispanic Heritage month events. Leah also shared an upcoming screening at the Chandler Center for the Arts titled "Praying with Lior." The film will be shown on October 23rd, 2008. It is a touching film about the Jewish community and disabilities.

Mesa:
Vice- Chair James May shared that the Mesa HRC is going through a transition, and recently had a 40% turnover on the commission. Mesa is dealing with the immigration issue and the sheriff's recent efforts. The commission is trying to provide support to the community and solidify their relationship with mayor and council.

Tempe:
Staff Ginny Belousek reported on the following events:

- Unity Walk - Scheduled for February 7th, 2009. The walk will be culminating at Tempe Beach Park. The walk is the main focus and there will be a small festival at the park, with entertainment, and possibly a few food vendors.
- Diversity Dialogues will be starting September 17th, 2008. Beginner and Advanced sessions are offered, applications are still being accepted.
- Jewel in the Desert: Getting to know our Muslim Neighbor – There will be a reception for the exhibit opening night, October 3rd, 2008 at City Hall.
- Tardeada – October 12th, 2008. It is the 10th annual event this year and will be held in the Community Complex. All are invited to attend.

Commissioner Fentress Truxon shared that Tempe's MLK Diversity Brunch will be held on January 19th, 2009. Tempe has obtained sponsorship in order to make the event free for the community to attend.

Agenda Item 7 – Meeting Evaluation and Next Speaker Topic
The next meeting will be hosted by Mesa, please email Mesa Staff Mary Berumen for suggestions for the next meeting. Tempe Commissioner Fentress Truxon recommended inviting the Civil Rights Advisory Board to speak.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Prepared by: Brandy Naleski

Reviewed by: Rosa Inchausti

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Manager