Tempe

Minutes
Human Relations Commission
May 12th, 2009

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on TUESDAY, May 12th, 2009 6:00 P.M. at City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 31 East Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:
Florence Boyle
Arlene Chin
Kathy Dietz
Joseph Mann
Frank Morales
Thaddeus Swiecki

(MEMBERS) Absent:
Zach Berning
Colleen Byron
Linda Ritland
Josephine Vega
Janis Webb
Patricia Young

City Staff Present:
Rosa Inchausti
Brandy Naleski

Guests Present:
Corey Woods, Councilmember

Meeting convened at 6:10 P.M.

Chair Arlene Chin called the meeting to order and invited members of the public to address the Commission.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances
None

Agenda Item 2 –Consideration of Minutes
No quorum present.

Agenda Item 3 – Housing Council Committee
Councilmember Corey Woods spoke to the commission about the Housing Council Committee. Councilmember Woods chairs the committee with Vice- Mayor Shana Ellis serving as Vice- Chair. Affordable housing was a focal point for Councilmember Woods during his election and continues to be an area that is important to him. The Housing Council Committee is currently waiting for their 7 member board to be selected. The applications have been completed and the Mayor will soon be appointing the board. The board's first order of business will be to identify a sustainable funding source for the Housing Trust Fund. The question was asked if this program will raise taxes. It will be up to the appointed board to make recommendations on issues such as this to the mayor and council.

The concept of this Housing Committee is to ensure diversity in all areas of the city. Tempe is a highly educated town by virtue of the university, but most graduates can not afford to live in Tempe so they are moving to other valley communities. Commissioner Swiecki asked for the definition of affordable. Councilmember Woods responded that he intends to cover the whole spectrum from apartments to home ownership. He also recognizes the need to educate people to prepare them for the responsibilities of

home ownership. Commissioner Dietz asked if there was any money currently in the trust fund. Councilmember Woods responded that yes, there is a small amount, and he is being cautious as to how it will be spent. One idea being considered is to use it for land acquisition to building housing within the city. Commissioner Dietz asked if this would work with the homeless population. Councilmember Woods responded that he intends for this program to work with a variety of our population including the workforce, homeless, faith based and transitional housing. Some populations will be a bigger challenge than others.

There are several other avenues that are being looked into including; 1) educating people about loan modification scams, 2) city realtors are looking for a forum to educate the community through the Neighborhood Advisory Commission, 3) a group of architecture students at ASU that are interested in designing energy efficient housing, and 4) negotiating designated affordable housing units during the development of apartment and condo complexes. Councilmember Woods is working to keep Tempe in balance and he stated that we are the only city with the policy makers sticking their necks out and supporting this issue.

Chair Arlene Chin thanked Councilmember Woods for coming and sharing the information with the commission.

Agenda Item 4 – WUD Safety

Chair Arlene Chin reported to the commission that the employee scheduled to speak to the commission is ill and unable to attend the meeting. Chair Chin then stated that she received a letter just prior to the meeting tonight regarding the WUD issue and is signed by several employee union representatives. Chair Chin passed copies of the letter to the commissioners and will mail copies to the commissioners not present at the meeting. Chair Chin will agendize the letter for discussion at the next meeting but opened the discussion for reactions to the letter and/or last months presentation by the WUD management team.

Commissioner Dietz stated that she felt like Mr. Hawkes was presenting a defense, an attempt to smooth everything over. She stated that the primary concern of the commission was safety and treatment of employees, yet Mr. Hawkes didn't address either issue until he was asked by the commission and his response was "We're working on it". Commissioner Dietz stated that the question she wants answered is "When do you anticipate the safety issue to be resolved?" Chair Chin stated the commission can discuss this issue at length next month and that we as a commission need to determine our role in the issue and find a response to the imbalances that exist.

Agenda Item 5 –Tempe Police Hate Crime Update

Agenda item moved to June meeting due to President Obama's planned visit to Tempe.

Agenda Item 6 – Strategic Planning Discussion

Chair Chin stated that she wanted to wrap up the ongoing discussion the commission has had over the last few months regarding strategic planning. The commission decided to keep the mission statement as is and the following subcommittees will remain active and additional subcommittees will be called for when the need arises.

- Subcommittee for Community Network and Outreach
- Subcommittee for Diversity Supplier
- Subcommittee for Diversity Awards

Agenda Item 7 – Diversity Department Update

Staff Rosa Inchausti provided the Diversity Department Update

A. **Who's Your Neighbor** presents "Refugees & their Journey" on Wednesday May 13th.

B. **GSA Educational Series** will take place on Wednesday May 27th with guest speakers Michael Weakley from 1n10, Steen Lawson with Marriage Equality USA and Beck with QSpeak.
C. **Turnover Numbers** – Rosa passed around the citywide turnover percentages to the commissioners. The only category that stands out is the Black Ethnicity. The Diversity Steering Committee is working to implement Exit Interviews through their Strategic Plan and that process will hopefully offer insight to any discrepancies such as this. The interviews will be offered online, through Human Resources or the Diversity Department.
D. **Grievances** – There was only 1 grievance this past year and it was against the Diversity Department from WUD management/supervisors. The city hired an outside consultant to investigate, resulting in the Calderon Report and there were no findings of wrong doing by the Diversity Department.
E. **EEOC** – There were 3 EEOC complaints filed last year, none of which found the city negligible. There was 1 in the prior year, also found favorable to the city.

Agenda Item 8-Current Events Announcements

Commissoner Dietz requested two individuals to come and speak to the commission in the future:

- Theresa James, Homeless Advocate for the City of Tempe
- Dave Wells from ASU

The commission's next meeting is scheduled for June 9th, 2009.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 P.M.

Prepared by: Brandy Naleski

Reviewed by: Rosa Inchausti

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Manager