

**Minutes
Human Relations Commission
April 10, 2012**

Minutes of the HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 6:00 P.M. at City Hall, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 31 East Fifth Street, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Hannah Auckland
Florence Boyle
Don Calender
Armando Espinoza
Kathy Dietz
Isabel Hochhaus
Frank Morales
Jay Scherotter
Thaddeus Swiecki
Josephine Vega
Dr. Patricia Young

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Belinda Chiu
Peter Hodgson

Diversity Staff Present:

Rosa Inchausti, Diversity Administrator
Dee Hodson, Diversity Office Assistant

Guests Present:

None

Meeting convened at 6:05 P.M.

Commissioner Espinoza 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

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Motion made by Commissioner Scherotter to ACCEPT minutes.

Second by Commissioner Calender.

Minutes APPROVED.

Agenda Item 3 – Arizona Accord Cover Letter Review – Armando Espinoza

Commissioner Espinoza presented a draft of the cover letter that will accompany the Arizona Accord for comments and suggested changes. Commissioner Morales suggested several wording changes and offered those to the Commissioners. Grammatical errors were highlighted and repaired. Commissioner Scherotter asked for clarification on what the commission is asking of the Mayor and City Council by presenting them with the Arizona Accord. The consensus was the Commission is asking the Mayor and City Council to use the Arizona Accord “as a guide to further understanding in our community”.

Commissioner Calender asked for further clarification on what the Commissioners hope to achieve from presenting the Arizona Accord to City leaders. Commissioner Espinoza explained the Human Relations Commission’s role is to offer guidance to the Mayor and City Council and hopefully they will consider adopting the Arizona Accord. Commissioner Dietz pointed out the state’s immigration discussions have not been very civil up to this point. By adopting the Arizona Accord the Human Relations Commission is attempting to change the discussion so people are not afraid to discuss immigration. Commissioner Calender stated he is not against the Arizona Accord but wondered if the Commission planned to hold the City leaders accountable. Commissioner Espinoza reiterated the Commission’s role to offer advice and direction to the Mayor and City Council. It is the city leaders’ choice to either take that advice or not. Commissioner Swiecki asked if the Human Relations Commission is even able to hold city leaders accountable. The consensus was the Human Relations Commission’s role is to simply offer guidance and only as private citizens could Commissioners hold city leaders accountable. Commissioner Espinoza said the Human Relation Commission’s role is clear as a strictly advisory body.

Commissioner Young said upcoming changes in the City Council and Mayor make it a good time to present the Arizona Accord and offer the Commission’s assistance as a resource. Commissioner Hochhaus added that surrounding cities have found adopting the Arizona Accord to be a springboard for communication. Commissioner Boyle identified immigration as a volatile topic but one that needs to be addressed. Commissioner Calender agreed that although he is able to see both sides of the immigration debate, something needs to be done and adopting the Arizona Accord is a good first step.

Armando Espinoza, Chair of the Human Relations Commission asked the Commissioners if they would like to place the Arizona Accord on the Issue Review Session as a public presentation to the City Council. Rosa explained, historically the Human Relations Commission has presented recommendations to the City Council through a memo. After discussions with the City Clerk’s Office Rosa reported the following options:

1. Delivering the Arizona Accord with cover letter to the Mayor and City Council’s mailboxes or
2. Delivering the Arizona Accord with cover letter in the Council’s Friday packet and requesting to present at a future Issue Review Session with the Council’s approval.

Motion: Commissioner Calender moved to include the Arizona Accord and cover letter in the Mayor and City Council’s Friday packet and ask for the issue to be placed on an Issue Review Session agenda after the new Mayor and City Council have been sworn in.

Second: Commissioner Boyle

Motion Unanimously Approved

Agenda Item 4 – Immigration Education Update – Armando Espinoza

Commissioner Espinoza shared an article reporting almost 80% of Alabama businesses missed the deadline set by the state's strict immigration laws to register employees with the federal E-Verify system. Although the state is encouraging employers to comply, Commissioner Espinoza pointed out there are no penalties for failing to register.

Commissioner Auckland reported the decision to disbar former Maricopa County Attorney Andrew Thomas and one of his former lieutenants. Commissioners agreed this hopefully would send a message considering Andrew Thomas had a very strict stance on immigration.

Agenda Item 5 – Diversity Dialogue Update – Rosa Inchausti

Rosa reported the Diversity Office will work with Teen Diversity Dialogue facilitators Leah Abriani and Commissioner Chiu, to discover their availability for a summer Teen Diversity Dialogue program. A program beginning in June would be best so it can be advertised before the high school's summer break.

Agenda Item 6 – Diversity Department Update – Rosa Inchausti

- A. Diversity Dialogues Participants Recognized at City Council Meeting on April 26, 2012, 7:30 p.m.
- B. Mayor's Disability Awards at Tempe Museum on May 3, 2012, 3 p.m.

Rosa reported Arizona State University acknowledged the City of Tempe's Diversity Office with an award at their Excellence in Diversity Luncheon on April 6, 2012.

Commissioner Dietz congratulated the Tempe Human Relations Commission on their work with the Arizona Accord. Some of the Human Relations Commissions in neighboring cities are more focused on events and are not able to tackle the tougher issues.

The next HRC Meeting will be May 8, 2012

The next Regional HRC Meeting Hosted by Mesa – May 16, 2012

**Motion made by Commissioner Calender to adjourn meeting.
Second by Commissioner Dietz.
Meeting adjourned at 7:05 P.M.**

Prepared by: Dee Hodson

Reviewed by: Rosa Inchausti