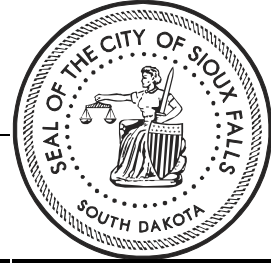


MINUTES

Thursday, May 8, 2008



**Sioux Falls
Human Relations
Commission**

12 Noon—1 p.m.
1st Floor, City Hall
224 West Ninth Street

Commissioners: Present: Abbott, Ahrendt, Carlson, Hariri, Harris, Hearn, Lodu, Luecke (12:35), Rist, Sieverding and Williams. DAC liaison - Absent

Staff: Jeff Munce, Human Relations Manager and Carol Garry, Human Relations Assistant.

Guests: Qadir Aware

1. Call to Order/Welcome Guests

- Abbott called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.
- Abbott announced there are three members of the Commission whose terms end June 1, 2008; Dr. Valerie Hearn, Wanda Harris, and Gary Sieverding and asked them to share a few words about their service on the Commission.
- Wanda Harris said she enjoyed the time she served on the Commission and felt that reading cases fueled her passion to make a difference in the community. Gary Sieverding felt his time on the Commission developed his interest in cultural diversity and was an outlet for his involvement with youth issues/concerns. Dr. Valerie Hearn was referred to the Commission by past member Dick Bohy. She appreciates the different backgrounds of the other Commissioners. She learned a lot about interpreting cases and how in making the decisions we can't go by what seems fair, we have to follow the law.

2. Approval of Minutes

- Carlson moved to approve the March 13, 2008, minutes; Harris seconded; passed by unanimous vote.

3. Status of Cases/Staff Report

- Munce provided an update on the status of cases. There are three cases ready to go out, two coming from the contract investigator. He wants to have them completed before he leaves his position as Human Relations Manager. His last day in May 14, 2008. The contract investigator will continue with the investigations in the interim.

Commission Chair: Karla Abbott

Commission Vice Chair: Terry Rist

Commission 3rd Officer: Vaney Hariri

HUMANITARIAN AWARD COMMITTEE
Chair—Terry Rist
Karla Abbott
Rod Carlson
Vaney Hariri
Wanda Harris

DIVERSITY CONF. COMMITTEE
Chair— Karla Abbott
Vaney Hariri
Wanda Harris
Terry Rist
Dwayne Williams

PSA Committee
Vaney Hariri
Karla Abbott
Valorie Ahrendt
James Lodu
Valerie Hearn

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- Munce outlined several things that the Commission should keep on their to-do list.
 - HUD – Fair Housing. Contact has been made with HUD regarding an agreement. Previous discussions brought up the need to make changes to Chapter 21 1/2 to qualify for a contract. HUD has grant money available - \$100,000 for education/outreach and \$100,000 for enforcement.
 - Continuing to strengthen enforcement of public accommodation violations most specifically as it applies to disability
 - Newsletters/annual report. We'll be incorporating the performance survey once we start closing '08 charges.
 - Keep tracking informal ADA complaints

4. Appointment May Case Panel

- Abbott, Hariri, Luecke, Rist, and Williams

5. Elections of Officers

- Slate of officers:

Abbott - Chairperson

Rist - Vice Chair

Hariri - Third Officer

- Carlson moved to nominate/elect the slate of officers; Sieverding seconded. The vote was unanimous.

6. Continuing Business

a. Humanitarian Award Committee

- The Humanitarian Award subcommittee has met twice.
- The date has been set for September 23, 2008.
- The committee wanted the Commission to review the nomination form and comment on what needs to be changed. Obviously the dates need to be changed and it was suggested that we have something added to let the nominators know that consideration will be given to those whose humanitarian efforts are done outside of their regular job activities.

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- The request for nominations will be sent out by June 15th with August 15th as the deadline for submissions.
- Orpheum will be the venue again this year and we will be using all three rooms; lobby, actor's studio and the theater.
- We are planning a reception this year; serving heavy appetizers. This will be set up in the studio with combination high and low tables and plenty of room for mingling. Coffee and water will be provided. Background music will be provided by a strolling Mariachi group and possibly a jazz trio.
- A wine/beer cash bar will be set up in the lobby. We will also ask them to serve pop.
- The theater will be used for the program and the award presentation. The string trio will be used as a transition performance while attendees are moving here from the studio. An African dance group is planned as well as the Lost Artists. Yvonne Hawkins has agreed to be the MC again this year.

b. PSA Committee

- The PSA is on hold until the new Human Relations Manager is in place. In the interim we will try to have something produced to market the Humanitarian Award (include Darwin's comments and Mary's acceptance.)

c. Diversity Council

- The Diversity Council has set up subcommittees that are working on projects. They used the information gathered at the Stakeholders' meeting to determine which issues to act on.
- Diversity Conference – subcommittee made up of representatives from the school district, the business community and the ethnic community. Co-Chairs are Tracy Vik (School District), Clara Jacob (community), and Debi Folkerts (Citi). They want to be sure to include young adults in their planning.

7. New Business

a. No new business was discussed.

8. Disability Awareness Commission Report

- The DAC is working on a few different projects. They will be providing the marketing materials for the ADA Celebration again this year. The event is Saturday, July 26, Noon to 4pm.

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- A project that grew out of the 2006 Accessible America award is a hotel self-survey. The DAC is partnering with the Convention/Visitor's Bureau (CVB) to create the survey, get it out to CVB members and compile information into a guide for people with disabilities who are looking for accessible lodging in Sioux Falls. This will be very useful as the City will be hosting the Special Olympics in '09 –'11.
- The DAC has already started gathering facts/information for the 2008 Accessible America Award. They are hoping their efforts will make the third time the charm.

9. Public Comment

- Qadir Aware stated that as the largest city in SD and with the diverse population found here, Sioux Falls should have a Fair Housing law and an organization to enforce it and to educate landlords and tenants of their rights under the Fair Housing Act.
- Abbott reported on her morning's presentation with the youth at Lincoln High School. The Parent Communication Network and Clara Hart set up a program on discrimination with student's asking questions. This was being recorded for presentation on KLRN – the school district's TV station. Abbott reported that the students had some very good questions.
- Aware - speaking as a member of the public, wanted to thank Jeff Munce for his work with the City and the Commission. In his opinion the City is losing a good asset. It will be tough to find a replacement.

10. Adjournment: Having no further business; Sieverding moved to adjourn; Pastor Williams seconded, the meeting adjourned at 1:15pm. In recognition of their service, the retiring Commissioners received awards and cake!

- Dr. Hearnns – August '00 – June '08
- Wanda Harris – June '03 – June '08
- Gary Sieverding – June '03 – June '08

Minutes respectfully submitted by Carol Garry.