

**Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission
Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2019**

Commissioners Present: Cat Beltmann, Keith Allen, Monica Bolinger, Etienne Djevi, Kathryn Macomber, and Lauren Peterson

Youth Commissioners: Yiling Xie

Commissioners Absent: Ahmed Hassan, Richard James (excused), Grace Lee

Staff Present: Rebecca Olson, Assistant City Manager

Call to Order/Roll Call

The Human Rights, Inclusion, and Engagement Commission (HRIEC) meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Approve Agenda

Commissioner Macomber indicated a correction to the Agenda date noting it should be 2019, not 2020.

Commissioner Peterson moved and Commissioner Macomber seconded a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment on Items Not on Agenda

Approve Minutes

a. November 20, 2019 Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission

Commissioner Peterson moved and Commissioner Macomber seconded a motion to approve the November 20, 2019 Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement Commission meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Youth Commissioner Report

None

New Business

a. Youth Commissioner Welcome

Chair Beltmann welcomed Yiling (Beverly) Xie to the Commission and noted the Youth Commissioner Report would start in January 2020. She administered the Oath of Office to Yiling Xie.

b. Best Practices Update

Chair Beltmann updated the Commission on the work being done on the Best Practices document. She noted she would like to have the Commission make any changes necessary in order to present this to the City Council at the joint meeting in January. She indicated the Racial Equity Statement is at the beginning of the Best Practices document and staff received an email from a community member that was questioning why this was just focused on Racial Equity versus broader diversity inclusion which she thought is a good point that the Commission might want to consider in terms of making a statement and asked Ms. Olson to provide some background on the Racial Equity statement.

Ms. Olson explained why the city is leading with race because there are a lot of other areas in the city where there are discrepancies and things that are not as they should be. What staff has learned through the year long process of going to these GARE meetings is race is an indicator across all lines of when it comes to success. By addressing race, a lot of different groups can be hit. The tools the city is using can be used in other areas as well. By focusing on the area that integrates all of those areas the city can hit all of them without having to be very specific.

Chair Beltmann thought it might make sense to think about adding additional context, whether it be a sentence or two that provides more context for why the Racial Equity statement is in this packet but then also states more broadly that the HRIEC Commission, while Racial Equity is important to them the Commission is also looking to better provide tools and opportunities for engagement across, whether it is age, race, sex orientation.

Commissioner Macomber indicated on Attachment A, Page 3, in the sentence prior to the upload link, second paragraph should read “the assessment provided in this toolkit has been slightly ~~modify~~ modified”.

Commissioner Bolinger indicated on the same page the first sentence should read “Nexus Community Partners is a highly ~~respect~~ respected Twin Cities...” and on the first page, the last sentence before the equity statement should probably read “put diversity and inclusion at the center of all projects”. She noted on page six, the fifth question should read “Where ~~does~~ is there agreement?”

Ms. Olson shared the GARE language in regard to race with the Commission.

Youth Commissioner Xie suggested removing “Racial” from the statement and just having it read “City of Roseville Equity Statement”.

Chair Beltmann indicated the Racial Equity Statement is something the City of Roseville has already approved, and staff has done a lot of work with GARE that

provides training around racial equity and the Commission wanted to tie this document to the work staff has already participated in.

Commissioner Peterson asked if staff could send the GARE statement to the public comment that was received via email.

Ms. Olson indicated she did not receive the email but could forward the GARE statement to Chair Beltmann to forward to the individual.

Commissioner Djevi indicated the question from the individual from the community was a good question and the city cannot look at race as the only factor of inclusion and being inclusive. He thought a really good point from the statement Ms. Olson read is making one where if race is taken out and only focus on the other issues, the people that belong to races that are usually oppressed get the really hard end of that stick. Black, gay, women get the hard end of that stick so if the focus is on race, the city addresses all the components and other issues related to that then hopefully the city can be as implicit as it can be.

Commissioner Bolinger thanked the Commissioners who worked on this because she thought it was a huge process.

Chair Beltmann asked if any of the Commissioners felt that there was anything missing. What was the general thoughts on this document?

Commissioner Peterson noted on the appendix piece, previously work was done on the demographic information and highlighted items but thought staff should be asked what would be useful to them. She would like to get feedback from staff on this information. She thought it was important to include demographic information.

Chair Beltmann thought the one piece that is missing is ideas and tactics around engagement. She thought in addition to seeking staff's input to also find out if staff felt this information was useful, what templates would be helpful for the Commission to develop and what frameworks for engagement could be provided along with demographics.

Commissioner Allen proposed that staff in leadership positions look at this document for feedback.

Commissioner Peterson asked if the survey information was also going to be presented to the City Council.

Chair Beltmann indicated Councilmember Laliberte requested the Commission include all of the survey responses in the document.

Ms. Olson did not think the survey responses needed to be a part of the document because responses will probably change from time to time but should be a part of the City Council packet.

Chair Beltmann wondered on the first page if adding a sentence prior to the Racial Equity Statement that says something along the lines of “As demonstrated by the city’s Racial Equity Statement, the city is committed to creating a more inclusive city...” and wondered if a statement like that is needed to provide a broader context around inclusivity or is the Racial Equity Statement enough and add the language Ms. Olson read from GARE related to race.

Commissioner Peterson thought a blurb or sentence from GARE would be more than adequate to explain why this document is leading with race.

Commissioner Peterson moved and Commissioner Bolinger seconded a motion to approve the document with noted changes to bring forward to the City Council in January for the joint meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

c. 2020 Work Plan Discussion

Chair Beltmann updated the Commission on the 2020 Work Plan progress.

Commissioner Peterson indicated on the 2019 review she would like to make a couple of edits. Under Proclamations the second box, the event should be Human Traffic Awareness Month, removing sex. She would change the decorating the third box to better word. She would also remove Rosefest Party in the Park because the Commission did not attend that in 2019. She asked to add in the Rosefest Parade section that the Commission engages community members from the LGBTQIA+ to also join with the Commissions and there were a couple of members attend.

Chair Beltmann asked if something should also be added under Proclamations that the Commission tied the Rosefest Parade to Pride Month Proclamation.

The Commission agreed.

Commissioner Peterson thought with the Engagement Project, the assessment tool document should be changed to the tool kit.

Chair Beltmann thought her only recommendation would be under Youth Commissioner that a new Youth Commission started.

Ms. Olson thought the Council was typically looking for accomplishments and did not know it that would be an accomplishment.

The Commission agreed.

Ms. Olson volunteered to update the 2019 accomplishments discussed.

Chair Beltmann thought the Hispanic Heritage Month event should probably be put into its own box because even though it got rained out there was a lot of work done by Commissioners and should be recognized.

The Commission concurred.

Youth Commissioner Xie asked what a “job description” was for youth commissioners.

Ms. Olson noted Youth Commissioner Xie received the job description in her folder and talks about the time commitment and projects.

Chair Beltmann asked if “Job description” could be changed to position description, leaving out the quotes.

Commissioner Peterson asked in the Rosefest Parade if her name could be removed because she did not want to be pointed out and thought the entire Commission should be recognized.

Chair Beltmann thought it should also be noted in that section that representatives from other Commissions in the city attended the parade as well.

Mr. Warren Wolf, 1999 Snelling Avenue North, explained under discussions it states, “Discussed several topics relevant to Human Rights, Inclusion and Engagement around events that happened in the Community”, but there is no detail and wondered if some detail should be included.

Commissioner Bolinger thought the Commission could address discussions based on community comments left on the website along with events that were in the news.

Chair Beltmann suggested taking the Discussions piece off because she did not think discussions was a part of the Commission and necessarily an accomplishment. She thought Project Outreach Recommendation could be revised to be Community Engagement Advisory and focus on this as an advisory commission that has worked with different city departments to provide advice on engagement projects. She felt discussions will be a distraction at the joint meeting with Council.

The Commission was comfortable with removing Discussions from the year end review.

Ms. Olson suggested changing Project Outreach Recommendation to Engage and Advise.

Chair Beltmann reviewed the 2020 Workplan piece of this discussion. She did not think the Commission needed to get into the workplan activities because those have already been reviewed and approved. She thought more broadly, looking at the document, does the Commission have what it needs to present to the Council. She wondered if the bullet points should be included because those are Commission task pieces.

The Commission agreed.

Commissioner Peterson asked regarding the Rosefest Parade, should there be more sentencing stating the Commission is going to engage with other Commissions and potentially community members into those parades. Should there be more detail or left as is?

Chair Beltmann thought it could be left as is and add that context at the joint meeting.

Ms. Olson suggested discussing who is going to be presenting the document at the joint meeting, whether it be one person or different people discussing the different topics.

Chair Beltmann indicated she would be fine with presenting the 2020 Workplan but thought it would be helpful for the Commission to be present at the meeting to advocate for the topics that each Commissioner is interested in, in case there are questions.

Commissioner Macomber indicated she would not be able to attend the meeting because she will be out of town.

Commissioner Peterson noted she may not be at the meeting as well due to possible conflict but will attend if able. She also agreed that those that had strong feelings about certain items be in attendance.

Chair Beltmann thought the next phase of the workplan is getting it approved by the City Council and then as a Commission decide what the next phase is of the workplan and actions and steps used to implement the different agenda items.

Youth Commissioner Xie explained her “job description” does not indicate how she is supposed to do this.

Chair Beltmann noted she can talk with Youth Commissioner Xie on how past Youth Commissioners have operated and done their positions.

Other New Business or Reports

a. Essay Contest Update

Assistant City Manager Olson reported staff was recently contacted by a social studies teacher in the Dual Language Immersion program in the Roseville Area Middle School asking if her students could participate in the essay contest by writing their essays in Spanish. She updated the Commission on the discussion with the teacher and how the scoring of the essays would occur.

Commissioner Bolinger wondered if there would be a difference in having another group of people score the Spanish essays versus getting them translated. She indicated she would be willing to help translate the essays.

Ms. Olson noted translation does not always translate well but she understood Commissioner Bolinger's point.

Chair Beltmann wondered if the Commission should take the top five Spanish essays and have them translated for the Commission to read.

Ms. Olson indicated there are multiple ways this could be done. Have the top five for each grade level, in English and Spanish, maybe translated into English and score as a group of the Commission could possibly have a winner from Spanish and a winner from English, depending on the budget.

Commissioner Bolinger asked if Ms. Olson had an idea of how many essays there might be in Spanish.

Ms. Olson did not know but guessed if the entire class did this it could be thirty per class.

Commissioner Macomber thought if the essays were translated the Commission would not know if the grammar or spelling was correct in the Spanish version, which is minor scoring. She thought the Commission could get a translation of the top three or five essays to see if the scoring rubric, apart from spelling and grammar is close to where the essays would be put.

Youth Commission Xie asked how the essays would be translated and how would the top five be determined. Would the teacher be grading and picking out the top five essays for the Commission?

Ms. Olson explained that has not been decided but the teacher did suggest possibly having several people read the essays and score them.

Commissioner Macomber indicated the Commission would provide the rubric and structure on how the essays get scored.

Commissioner Allen stated he did not think it would be fair for the teacher and parents grading the essays and preferred there be a rule around this and that this group

remains the only evaluators otherwise if there is going to be a teacher involved for evaluating the Spanish essays then a teacher should also be evaluating the English essays as well. He thought there needed to be a fair process.

Youth Commissioner Xie thought this was a very good idea because this is engaging the community by saying the community has a voice no matter what language is being spoken.

Commissioner Allen agreed but he was talking more about the process of evaluation. He thought it was a great idea but if the Commission is going to be the evaluators, he did not think it was fair to evaluate something that cannot be read and would need translation.

Chair Beltmann thought the other question this raises is whether there are other language immersion programs in the City of Roseville that are focused on other languages that the Commission would need to think about including as well or if those programs ask to be included. She thought it would be fantastic if the Commission would be able to accept essays in multiple languages on one topic but to Commissioner Allen's point this Commission is not a position where the Commission can quickly make a judgement on how to evaluate. She wondered if this is something the Commission could take time to try to develop a process on in 2020 for 2021 implementation.

Ms. Olson thought this could be a way to try to reach out to different communities and the Commission could then ask for people who might be interested in being on a team to evaluate the essays.

Commissioner Bolinger thought it would be a good way to get the community ambassadors to get together as a coalition to score these essays. She thought there are opportunities but also do not want to miss out on an opportunity especially when one community comes to the Commission asking to be included.

Chair Beltmann thought this sounded like the Commission would propose this be used as a pilot and seek community volunteers who speak both Spanish and English who could read all essays and then the Commission would just read the English essays. The Commission could use this as a test to see if it could be expanded in the future. She asked if everyone felt comfortable with this in terms of process.

The majority of the Commission agreed and felt the Commission needed to start somewhere.

Ms. Olson thought if this does not work she could talk to the teacher and explain that given the January deadline for essay submittal and the timeline it may not be successfully implemented this year but the Commission could start working on to make this work for 2021 if it is something the Commission is interested in.

Commissioner Bolinger thought if the Commission is open to agreeing to use this year as a test case the students could write their essays and finalize the scoring in January and February in order to get this accomplished.

Youth Commission Xie thought there should be a best Spanish Essay and a best English Essay so that people are aware that this is being done in another language in order to better engage the community.

Chair Beltmann thought the Commission was universally leaning towards trying this as a pilot and at the January meeting talk more about some of the logistics of doing this.

The Commission agreed.

Ms. Olson indicated if this is the direction the Commission is interested in, she will reach out to the teacher and have some more in depth conversations and bring back whatever feedback she gets to the January Commission meeting.

Commissioner Bolinger asked if it made sense to have the teacher come to the January meeting to brainstorm with her.

Ms. Olson would ask the teacher.

Announcements

Ms. Olson indicated at the January 6th meeting she is going to be bringing forward discussion to the City Council about Commission vacancies and having the appointments at certain times during the year. She reviewed some of the options with the Commission that will be brought forward to the Council.

Future Agenda Items

- a. Work Plan next steps
- b. Essay Contest discussion
- c. Debrief of the Joint Council meeting

Adjournment

Chair Beltmann adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Osbeck

TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.