

**City of Moorhead
Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2011 at 6:00 PM
City Hall Council Chambers**

Call to order – 6:00 PM

Roll call

Roll call of the members was made as follows:

Board Member:	Bibhusha Karki	Present
Board Member:	Dennis Medd	Present
Board Member:	Heidi Uecker	Present
Board Member:	Kris Kerzman	Present
Board Member:	Lyndi Williams	Present
Board Member:	Michael Carbone	Present
Board Member:	Nate Aalgaard	Present
Board Member:	Selvin Nygard	Present
2nd Ward Council Member:	Mark Altenburg	Present
Board Member:	Fatima Amedi	Absent
Board Member:	Octavio Gomez	Absent

Approval of Agenda/Minutes

Motion made to approve September minutes made by Kris Kerzman and seconded by Nate Aalgaard.

Motion Passed

For: 9 - Bibhusha Karki, Mark Altenburg, Heidi Uecker, Michael Carbone, Dennis Medd, Lyndi Williams, Selvin Nygard, Kris Kerzman, Nate Aalgaard

Against: 0 - (None)

Abstain: 0 - (None)

Absent: 2 - Fatima Amedi, Octavio Gomez

Recused: 0 - (None)

Citizens to be heard

Debbie Holbrook & Tammy Halland. Debbie had an incident in which her granddaughter was having a terrible and realistic dream and she was concerned about the nature of the dream. She contacted the police department and officers came to investigate. She was told by the police officers that her only solution was to work with the school counselors. Her neighbor, Tammy, spoke up and stated that there are other avenues for consultation to which she stated the police said it was none of her business. The issue at hand is that the police gave Debbie false information and that there was a feeling of racism toward the families. The suggestion given by the Commission was to pursue a complaint with internal affairs in the police department. Police Chief David Ebinger said that he is willing to look into the matter and supports citizens to voice their concerns on employees, policies, training, etc.

Reports

- Minutes: **Presentation – Dr. Andrew Conteh, MSU-M:**
Dr. Conteh wanted to thank the commissioners for their service to the city and its residents. He stated that it is very important for the commissioners to be knowledgeable of the human rights that are set forth by the US Government as well as the state of Minnesota. He is encouraging the members of the MHRC to meet with him on another date to really look at the human rights of the citizens within the FM community.
- Minutes: **Budget Group:**
The budget is restricted to city staff services, public notices, training for commission members, and information distributed to educate community members. The budget group will meet to come up with new figures to propose at the next meeting for repositioning budgetary items and approval.
- Minutes: **Orientation Group:**
The orientation group should meet to create binders to give to the new members with all pertinent information of the MHRC and human rights in general.
- Minutes: **Outreach/Education Group:**
Rough ideas have been created but more time is needed to submit a proposal for requests based on the new budget constraints.
- Minutes: **Moorhead Human Rights Award:**
The award was awarded at the last City Council meeting to Tom Figliuzzi. For the next round of nominations, the commission needs to do a better job making the public more aware of the opportunity to nominate others that are influencing human rights in the community.

Upcoming events

- Minutes: **Pangaea:**
Del Rae Williams spoke to the commission about the Pangaea event in the community which celebrates the cultures and traditions of this community. It is a multi-ethnic showcase of music, dance, culinary arts, and children's activities. This event will take place November 12th from 10 AM - 4 PM. Commissioners are encouraged to sign up to volunteer their help at the event. The possibility of hosting a booth at the event was discussed and it is supported by the commissioners.
- Minutes: **Diversity Conference - MSU-M:**
This event will be held on Wednesday, November 9th from 8.45 - 4.45. culturaldiversityresources.org. Commissioners are encouraged to attend. If 5 commissioners can attend, a table will be sponsored at the dinner following the conference that evening.

Motion to reallocate the already approved \$500 from sponsoring the Diversity Conference to paying for commissioners to attend the training event was made by Bibhusha Karki and seconded by Kris Kerzman.

Motion Passed

For: 8 - Bibhusha Karki, Mark Altenburg, Heidi Uecker, Michael Carbone, Dennis Medd, Lyndi Williams, Kris Kerzman, Nate Aalgaard

Against: 1 - Selvin Nygard

Abstain: 0 - (None)

Absent: 2 - Fatima Amedi, Octavio Gomez

Recused: 0 - (None)

New business

Minutes: **Lori Baker: FM Coalition for Homeless Persons.**

Discussion of the Moving Forward: Homelessness 101 Conference on Nov 17 & 18 at the FargoDome. The conference will be held to end stereotypes about the homeless community. The Moorhead Human Rights Commission is being asked to have commissioners attend the conference and attend the training events that are available. The cost per participant is \$40/member of the Coalition and \$60/Nonmember. Lori will send the link for registration. It was also suggested that the MHRC support the long-term plan of the FM Coalition.

Motion for the MHRC to become members of the FM Coalition made by Mark Altenburg and seconded by Bibhusha Karki.

Motion Passed

For: 9 - Bibhusha Karki, Mark Altenburg, Heidi Uecker, Michael Carbone, Dennis Medd, Lyndi Williams, Selvin Nygard, Kris Kerzman, Nate Aalgaard

Against: 0 - (None)

Abstain: 0 - (None)

Absent: 2 - Fatima Amedi, Octavio Gomez

Recused: 0 - (None)

Minutes: **Police Department Liaison:**

Chief Ebinger is supportive of providing a liaison to the MHRC. He is proposing that Sergeant Swenson be the contact person between the commission and the police department. The chief would like the MHRC to get the police department involved in human rights complaints. Discussion of the possible deterrent of citizens to come forward to the MHRC in the presence of the police liaison. Although it may be a deterrent, citizens need to be made aware of the process to be heard at the meetings and that our meetings are meant to be neutral grounds for concerns to be heard.

Nate Aalgaard moved to have Sergeant Swenson as the Police Department Liaison to the MHRC. Seconded by Selvin Nygard.

Motion Passed

For: 9 - Bibhusha Karki, Mark Altenburg, Heidi Uecker, Michael Carbone, Dennis Medd, Lyndi Williams, Selvin Nygard, Kris Kerzman, Nate Aalgaard

Against: 0 - (None)

Abstain: 0 - (None)

Absent: 2 - Fatima Amedi, Octavio Gomez

Recused: 0 - (None)

Minutes: **Poverty Simulation:**

Needs 40-80 participants and 10+ volunteers for a simulation on what it is like to live in poverty. This could be a wonderful learning experience for the commissioners and community as a whole. Discussion will be made with the city to work this into the parameters of the MHRC.

Adjournment – 8:26 PM

*Next Meeting: November 15, 2011 at 6:00 PM in City Hall Council Chambers
Video recorded meetings are available at*

http://www.cityofmoorhead.com/city_hall/agendaMinutesHumanRightsComm.asp