

MINUTES
OLMSTED COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
Thursday, April 21, 2016

1. Commissioner Dooley called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Olmsted County Government Center, Room 104.
Present: Commissioners Abdalla, Belisle, Burhop, Dooley, Erickson, Lawson Julius, Skolnick, Umpierre and Witz. Youth Commissioner Uhm. Olmsted County HRC Staff Liaison Buzard, and Olmsted County Director of Data Practices, Staff Development and Intergovernmental Relations Mueller.
Absent: Youth Commissioner Adams and Executive Director of Mediation & Conflict Solutions Moore.
2. Welcome given to visitors—Dee Sabol, Executive Director of the Diversity Council, Andy Sabol and Lisa Burns. Also welcome to Elissa DeGrand, new youth commissioner from Century High School.
3. There was no public comment.
4. Motion to approve the March meeting minutes 1) Commissioner Witz made a motion to approve 2) Commissioner Julius seconded. There was general discussion of the timeline for minutes outlined in the Commission by-laws, stated as distributed “no less than seven days before the next meeting.” All in favor, the motion carried.
5. Motion to approve the April meeting agenda made by Commissioner Erickson, seconded by Commissioner Umpierre. Three adjustments were requested. First, to remove informational item C, code of conduct and commissioner responsibilities, and replace with an informal birthday celebration for Youth Commissioner Uhm. Second, add action item B, Rochester Juneteenth celebration. Third, add action item C, request to sponsor “How Love Won” documentary. All in favor, none opposed, the motion carried.
6. Informational Items:
 - a) Presentation by Dr. Dee Sabol, Executive Director of the Diversity Council.
Commissioners Dooley and Witz met with Dr. Sabol to discuss new approach for the Council and ways to collaborate with the Commission. The Council is 27 years old, and Dr. Sabol has been Executive Director for four months. She gave the Commission some of her personal background prior to relocating to Rochester, and her plans and vision for the Council. The Mission is: to educate people to embrace diversity as a foundation for building a healthy, inclusive and prosperous community. The Vision is: an inclusive and welcoming community in which every individual is respected. According to Dr. Sabol, “diversity is everyone at the party. Inclusion is everyone dancing at the party.” She outlined the work the Council has been doing with youth and adult education and community engagement, and let the Commission know that her expectation is to increase community engagement. There was general information and

discussion of inclusivity coming from a host culture, meaning hosts offer experience of comfort, safety and enrichment. Hosts want guests to have great experiences and create a sense of membership in the community, and help visitors navigate a new community to create a sense of membership. Dr. Sabol discussed the need to move away from “open invitation” sense of diversity to create inclusion by inviting early, doing outreach to “pre-invite” people and cooperate with those in positions of trust. She discussed specific programs including “Community Leaders Creating Change,” “Art of Participatory Leadership,” and “Ready to Lead,” among others. There was also discussion of new initiatives such as creating a Human Library, bringing Encounter Poverty to the region and launching a survey of prior “Be the Spark” students. There was also discussion about city and county recruitment for councils, boards and commissions, and the need for inclusion in representation.

- b) Commissioner Julius discussed the Racial Equity Committee work for Rochester Public Schools in relation to the recent reports of racial disparities in discipline in the District. The Committee has taken the items that came up the most during community listening and input sessions, and has organized the top 12 into items to address. Commissioner Julius stated that “it is neat to be part of the process.”
 - c) Cake break for Youth Commissioner Uhm's birthday.
 - d) It was noted that Executive Director Moore is out of town, but had previously emailed the mediation report. Commissioner Witz noted that MCS is set to double or triple the number of mediations in a year, due to Executive Director Moore and changes to the intake process. Commissioner Dooley noted that the report is confidential to the Commission. Commissioner Lawson questioned the details of a closed case, noting that the issue (civil commitments for persons with mental health diagnosis) should be listed under the protected class of disability. Commissioner Lawson also noted that having civil commitments be public knowledge through records searches contributes to stigma against mental illness and could lead to discrimination in housing or other areas. There was general discussion on the ability to get civil commitment records sealed (with a side discussion of the need to get a “ban the box” type rule for housing applications. Commissioner Witz suggested a framework for taking to the Minnesota Legislature and Commissioner Belisle promised to send the Mental Health Legislative Agenda to the Commission.
7. Treasurer’s Report. Motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report: Commissioner Umpierre moved, and Commissioner Witz seconded. There was no discussion. All in favor, none opposed, the motion carried.
8. Action Items:
- a) Sponsorship of Pride Fest: Commissioner Julius told the Commission that Pride Fest is scheduled for July 14 to 17th, and the location has changed to the Wicked Moose parking lot, as the Downtown Alliance has raised prices for using Peace Plaza. There was general discussion of the Commission's discomfort with the location change and disappointment that Peace Plaza was no longer a viable location. Commissioner Julius requested sponsorship of \$250 for the event. (Becky Buzard noted that sponsorship in

2015 was \$500.) Commissioner Erickson made a motion to sponsor the event for \$250 as requested, and Commissioner Abdalla seconded. Commissioner Skolnick raised the possibility of making a motion to request the event return to Peace Plaza. After further discussion the idea was tabled. All in favor, none opposed, the motion carried.

b) Rochester Juneteeth Celebration: the Rochester Branch of the NAACP is asking for a \$100 contribution for Juneteeth Celebration, which is scheduled for Saturday, June 18th at East Silver Lake Park during Rochesterfest. Commissioner Belisle noted how important the celebration is in other communities, especially her former home of Cincinnati Ohio. Commissioner Erickson stated that she went last year and it was a great event. Commissioner Julius made a motion to approve the \$100 contribution as requested, and Commissioner Witz seconded. Becky Buzard noted that the request in 2015 was for \$250, and there was general discussion of the requested amount. All in favor, none opposed, the motion to approve \$100 contribution carried.

c) Commissioner Julius requested that the Commission also sponsor a local showing of the "How Love Won" documentary, and showed a trailer.
<https://vimeo.com/158647772> The documentary was recently released in Minneapolis, and communities are raising funds to show it locally. The cost is \$1000 for 2 showings, and \$750 has already been raised. The Diversity Council and Gay Lesbian Community Services are sponsoring. Commissioner Skolnick asked if patrons would need to purchase a ticket, and if so, could it be shown for free at the Chateau Theater or as a part of the summer film series. There was general discussion of venues and costs. Commissioner Witz made a motion to sponsor the film at \$250 as requested, and Commissioner Umpierre seconded. All in favor, none opposed, the motion carried.

9. Updates from Commissioners on Human Rights-related issues: the Commission waived updates due to time constraints.

10. Other Business: there was no other business.

11. Motion to adjourn 1) Commissioner Witz 2) Commissioner Lawson. All in favor, none opposed, the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.