



# HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

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## MINUTES

August 2, 2018

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

THIRD FLOOR

CSAC – WEST CONFERENCE ROOM

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Members present by roll call: Jacqueline Gerry, Shad Storm, Seth Malott, Mel Siyo,

Absent: Diane Cleveland, Lin Jennewein and Merton B. Tice Jr.

Also present: Assistant City Attorney, Jessica Rogers and Administrative Secretary, Robin Garner

Also present: Amanda Scott from the City Council arrived at 2:15 pm.

Gerry called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

### **ADOPT AGENDA**

Mallott moved to adopt the agenda, second by Storm. Motion carried.

### **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Catherine Greseth, Executive Director of The Workforce Diversity Network of the Black Hills, gave a presentation to the commission explaining their organizations mission to promote employment of individuals with disabilities. The group works in creating a more diverse and inclusive workforce by networking with employers and business to help them employ and retain individuals who are or become disabled. They sponsor numerous educational and awareness events on topics of interest to employers, act as a resource for employers regarding worksite modifications and accommodations, and assist with other issues concerning employment of people with disabilities. They work closely with the Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services to link employers to prospective employees. Since we are a tourist destination, they also try to make sure we have the proper accommodations for those who are visiting our area as well. Greseth also informed the Commission she has been presenting a lot of education regarding service animals verses comfort animals. Currently, there is no legal protection for comfort animals; however, whether or not a comfort animal is a reasonable accommodation is an open question under the law. Gerseth has also presented to the Mayors Committee, who also looks at recognizing businesses that go above and beyond employing persons with disabilities.

### **LIAISON REPORT**

Amanda Scott informed the group that Steve Laurenti is the new City Council liaison for the commission; however, due to a very tight work schedule, he will not necessarily be at every meeting. The Council will provide Vice President Becky Drury, and Amanda Scott, Council President as back-ups to the Commission. Scott indicated the City Council feels the Commission is running very smoothly, but her ask is that if we feel there is a need for a City Council Liaison to be in attendance at every meeting, they can look at re assigning another council member that could better fit this time schedule. She also suggested that if we come across a topic or issue that we would like a City Council member's viewpoint, to let them know and they will make sure that someone is in attendance for that meeting. She explained how the council rotates new members of the City Council to all committees to

gain exposure to all the different aspects of City Government. Gerry stated that periodically we would like an update on what the City Council is doing, such as the current water rates issue that is occurring. Scott gave the group an update on the water rates discussion that has been ongoing at City Council. She explained the 5 year rate plan and next steps. She also relayed information on the vote that took place in June regarding some confusion on what citizens were actually voting on.

### **CASE STATUS UPDATE- CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

Assistant City Attorney Jessica Rogers reported that she has had one meeting since the last commission meeting which is a possible employment claim. Rogers will prepare and file the complaint and will keep the commission updated.

The commission discussed fair housing discrimination cases based on familial status.

### **DISCUSSION ON COMMUNITY MEETINGS IN MAY, JUNE, JULY**

Mallott attended the Quality of Life Unit presentation. This was an introduction of the program to the community. The Police Department received a federal grant for this program and the idea is to assign certain police officers to develop relationships with the community.

Siyo attended a community meeting put on by Reider Tribal Chairman Southport.

Rogers gave an update on "The Cultural Impact Panel," the alternative sentencing tool currently being used. One person has gone through the program who they felt sincerely participate and seemed to learn from the program. Karen from MOA discussed the program with Police Chief Jegeris. Chief Jegeris is very receptive of having the panel talk to his police officers regarding racial insensitivity since the police officers are a sort of front line to our entire community. The program is a great learning experience, raises great awareness, and is an option the commission would be able to use in resolving issues as well. Rogers explained what happens with a defendant, how the alternative sentencing works, and how it could be added to a sentence or be used as a plea deal. This program can be court ordered but would like to open it up to the community at some point.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND 2018 PLANNING**

- A. Social Media Update: Storm informed the commission the "Rapid City Human Relations Commission" Facebook page is now live. It is ready for posts such as upcoming events, etc. Gerry suggested posting the last commission report that was presented to City Council. Gerry will add that. Storm came up with a calendar that can be used to place monthly identifiers that are applicable to our commission. Storm will reference the Work Diversity Network and Quality of Life Unit on the Facebook page. Storm brought the idea for building a calendar for upcoming events so the commission knows what events are coming up each month of the year to properly prepare and budget for them. Storm will create the calendar and request it as an agenda item.
  - B. Groups or Organizations for possible presentations update:
    - Siyo is going to speak to the Cornerstone Rescue Mission.
    - Gerry is working yet with The Hope Center.
    - Mallott is looking into the WAVY Board.
- The Commission discussed items needed for a booth. Currently, we have a power point presentation and a brochure. Storm will look into possible booths for LNI and the Pow Wow.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Gerry announced that Cleveland has given her resignation effective immediately. This information has been forwarded to the Mayor's Office. Rogers mentioned we may also want to reach out to other members to be sure they are able to fulfill their terms. Rogers will follow up with the Mayor's Office and update the Commission at the next meeting.

### **ITEMS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Gerry will be able to attend the September meeting for a short time and Storm will finish facilitating the meeting.

### **QUORUM DISCUSSION**

Gerry informed the group there have been three months this year that we have not had a quorum. Absences were discussed in length. It was determined there is nothing stated in the by-laws regarding absences and a change would require much additional work. The commission concurred that seeking new and/or replacement members is a better option. Gerry reiterated to the group to please reply to the email notification Garner sends out each month or to call the office phone number 394-4140 regarding your meeting attendance, even if it is the day of the meeting. Garner will notify the group if there is not a quorum.

### **BUDGET UPDATE**

Garner stated the current budget amount is \$1,000.00 for 2018. Gerry would like a motion to spend up to \$350.00 to place an advertisement to run in the Native Sun News a week before and the week of the Pow Wow. The paper is published once a week and has an electronic version of the paper as well as a Facebook page. Gerry will follow up on any additional website advertising opportunities they may have. Motion was made by Siyo, Second by Mallot. Motion carried.

### **SET DATE AND TIME OF NEXT HRC MEETING.**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 6, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.

### **ADJOURN**

Mallot moved to adjourn. Second by Storm. The meeting ended at 3:36 p.m.