

**Minutes of Meeting
Human Relations Board
April 18, 2013**

A meeting of the Human Relations Committee was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 5th Floor of City Hall, 6801 Delmar Blvd., University City, MO 63130

Members in Attendance: Kathy McGinnis, Charmaine Glenn,
Meg McClelland, Matthew Nosko, David Olander

Members Excused: Jackie Womack

Others in Attendance: Elaine Williams – Staff Liaison
Paulette Carr – City Council Member
Shelley Welsch, City Mayor
Steve Kraft-City Council Person

Minutes

A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the minutes for the March, 21, 2013 as written.

Old Business

A. School Board and Orthodox Jewish Community conversation

Steve Kraft, from the City Council was present specifically for this conversation. The Board was seeking suggestions of some names of representatives/spokespersons from the Orthodox Jewish community to discuss issues with the School Board. Councilperson Kraft wanted to get a better idea of what this is about. Meg McClelland gave a brief description of what happened at last Board meeting.

This is a follow-up to the discussion at the School Board meeting about the possibility of selling the McNair building to a group from the Orthodox community. The decision was not to sell, and there was some tension around that decision.

Mr. Kraft stated that the Orthodox Jewish Community was a very diverse complicated community. There is no one person who speaks on behalf of the Orthodox Community. After some discussion, the decision was to invite the people from the Orthodox community who spoke at the School Board meeting. Meg will get those names and give them to Dave, who will make the invitation to these specific people to attend a mediated conversation with the Superintendent and representatives from the School Board. As part of this discussion we also talked again about the need to be aware of the Sabbath and Jewish holidays in planning events in U. City.

Real Talk

The endorsement from this Commission is on the website. Real Talk is working in all the schools in the District at this point.

Celebration of Diversity

The Mayor joined us at this point of the conversation.

We were talking about the possibility of having a conversation on race.

Mayor Welsh talked about a group she was with about six years ago called U-City United, which staged three different events on race, class and culture, and received a lot of good response. They were facilitated and there seemed to be a lot of interest in the idea.

Mayor Welsch gave out a booklet outlining a six-session program with conversations on race. Chairperson McGinnis suggested that the members of the Commission read through the booklet. At the next meeting we will decide whether to use this format, and who to ask to be a facilitator. We are talking about the possibility of beginning these conversations in the Fall.

Mayor Welsh also commented that she does not believe this Commission has gotten out to the Community. This Commission does its best work when people outside in the City know that they can come to us. We need more of a presence than just being on the website.

The Mayor mentioned while she attended the National Day of Remembrance speech, she was able to set up talks with different schools through a lady named Susan Bogg, who may be a great person to contact to try and help people get connected to certain things.

We also discussed the fact that some older residents in U-City used to belong to a Bridges group, thru Focus St. Louis. These groups presented opportunities to socialize across racial lines.

Mayor Welsch suggested that the Commission be a part of the City table at the City Fair. Handouts could be passed out at this table that would inform people about who we are and what we do.

Ms. Williams will inform Mr. Walker that the Commission will be requesting funding for a mediator and for a facilitator; also she will ask if a table could be available at the Fair. Ms. Williams asked that the Chairperson send Mr. Walker a justification.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

Mayor informed the Board on numerous projects currently going on:

- Washington University stuff is going up fast, ready for occupancy in the summer of 2014
- A new Medical Office Building is opening up at North and South of Olive
- The McKnight School Site is going up very fast, nearly 200 market rate apartments
- Walgreen's will be moving to Delmar and Delcrest
- Villages of Wyncrest have been sold. East side will be rebranded the District to upgrade to a higher level development and try to connect visually the different plazas for different personalities.
- We are in the midst of budget hearings-- final hearing will be in May. Mr. Walker presented a draft with surplus which needs to be approved.
- Mayor Welsh was asked about funding's for mediated meetings, for venue space, mediators, etc. Mayor Welsh instructed the Board to contact Mr. Walker because the budget was already in. She also advised them to use venues space free in the city like the School district building or Heman Park Community Center

- The Senior and Youth Commission have recommended Commissions for Seniors and for Youth are created. Perhaps these can be appointed in May. Over 500 responses were received 500 from Youth and 400 from seniors from surveys. A very high response rate.
- The Mayor is receiving comments on streets sidewalks and curbs because we are doing a lot of them now. Things are based on priorities.
- Mr. Walker has set up a Sub Committee to prioritize capital needs. We have about 63 million dollars of capital needs that need to be handled. We are 20 million dollars behind on maintenance.
- Engineers are on the City Staff and hopefully we can rectify maintenance issues.
- Talk about renovating a new Police Department or building a new one is going on, because the cost is similar
- Aquatic groups are in discussion about having another indoor swimming pool, heated with a program for seniors
- Parks-8 million dollars work that need to be done.
- Bike Walk master plan is still in conversation, nothing is confirmed.

Appointments

Appointment process is set up so that one seat on each commission is connected to one seat on the council. In an effort to get more people involved, residents will not be allowed to serve on two Commissions at the same time.

Mission Statement

Matt has done some preliminary work on the mission statement. We hope to finish that at the next meeting.

Report on HR Commission meeting at History Museum

Meg discussed the meeting she attended with Kathy McGinnis.

It was a Regional meeting where Human Relations Commission meeting members get together to talk. Various issues were discussed with representatives from St. Charles, Kirkwood and U. City.

Next Meeting Date

May 16, 2013

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.