

Owatonna Human Rights Commission - Minutes

The Owatonna Human Rights Commission (OHRC) met on Tuesday, December 8, 2020 in the Second Floor Conference Room at City Hall and accessible via Microsoft TEAMS Call-in Number 507-242-3225; Conference ID 374 940 357#. Commission Chairman Gunderson called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. with City Administrator Busse and Administrative Specialist Clawson present. Attending virtually were Commissioners Effertz, Gillespie and Vanoosbree. Commissioners Cords, Emanuelson and Worden were unable to attend.

Commissioner Gunderson welcomed everyone to the meeting and lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Minutes of the November 10, OHRC Meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Effertz made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented; Commissioner Vanoosbree seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, voting aye were Commissioners Gillespie, Effertz, Vanoosbree, and Gunderson; the motion carried.

During Old Business, Commissioner Vanoosbree commented the Community Reading Circles are meeting separately and may gather to hold a group summit when COVID restrictions allow larger group meetings. Members of Better Together and the Cultural Diversity Network continue to meet to proceed merger of their groups.

Commissioner Effertz asked for topic suggestions to use in the next edition of the OHRC Newsletter. Commissioner Vanoosbree offered to forward some items within the next few days. A message from Commissioner Emanuelson suggested using data from a report in the Migration Policy Institute titled, "Immigrant Workers – Vital to the US. Covid-19 Response Disproportionately, Vulnerable."

Commissioner Gunderson advised City Administrator Busse obtained a contract with Regan Outdoor Advertising to display an OHRC message for a 7-week period. The message "Take Care of Each Other" will be displayed during December and in January the message will be change to "Color Should Never Divide Us". Commissioner Gunderson asked a message honoring Martin Luther King also to be displayed mid-January near Martin Luther King Jr Day, the third Monday of January.

During New Business, Commissioner Gunderson proposed contacting the school to request a student representative join the OHRC as an unofficial member. Commissioner Gillespie commented students are restricted from participating at in-person meetings. Commissioner Gunderson said he heard two student groups are organizing to become involved within the community. Commissioner Gunderson will contact school administration for additional information on student participation.

Commissioner Gunderson suggested organizing an event for Black History Month, the month of February. City Administrator Busse suggested acknowledging black authors, Chairman Gunderson asked City Administrator Busse to contact Library Staff for program options and report during the January OHRC Meeting.

Commissioner Gunderson commented members of the group being formed by Better Together and the Cultural Diversity have indicated they want the OHRC included in their organization. Commissioner Vanoosbree commented the education and program pillars might offer opportunity for the OHRC to participate on a subcommittee. Commissioner Gunderson commented he will follow-up with group members for participation opportunities.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. and will have option to access by TEAMS.

At 6:00 p.m., Commissioner Gunderson made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Vanoosbree seconded the motion; with no objections, the meeting was adjourned.