

Owatonna Human Rights Commission - Minutes

The Owatonna Human Rights Commission (OHRC) met on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 in the Second Floor Conference Room at City Hall. This meeting was also accessible via Microsoft TEAMS Call-in Number 507-242-3225; Conference ID 374 940 357#. Commission Chairman Gunderson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with Commissioners Emanuelson, Vanoosbree and Gunderson present as were City Administrator Busse and Administrative Specialist Clawson. Attending virtually were Commissioners Cords and Gillespie; Commissioners Effertz and Worden were unable to attend.

Commissioner Gunderson welcomed everyone to the meeting and read a Meeting Statement regarding COVID-19 concerns and virtual participation options. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag, Minutes of the March 9, 2021 OHRC Meeting were reviewed. Commissioner Emanuelson made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented; Commissioner Vanoosbree seconded the motion; a with a roll call all members present voted aye for approval; the motion carried.

During Old Business, commission members reviewed the MN House Select Committee's Racial Justice Report issued to the Legislature on December 22, 2021. OHRC Commissioners agreed the report was extensive and many sections were not applicable to Owatonna but does provide good information to be aware of. Commissioner Gunderson offered to contact Senator John Jasiniski and House Representatives John Petersburg and Brian Daniels to confirm what Steele County data is included in this report. Commissioner Vanoosbree suggested asking for housing and/or education disparities and Commissioner Emanuelson suggested requesting information of disparities regarding medical availability.

Commissioner Gunderson asked members consider potential 2022 activities and anticipated expenditures for the 2022 Budget. City Administrator Busse explained the OHRC should adopt a Budget Request itemizing the expenditure requests during the May OHRC Meeting which would be presented to Council during Budget Preparation which begins in June.

Commissioner Vanoosbree reported she and Commissioners Cords and Gunderson met with members of The Alliance for Greater Equity (AGE) to consider collaboration of activities. Suggested items they discussed included meetings with local business owners or establishing a mentorship program at OHS. They plan to meet again for further discuss on opportunities which could be partnered to expand opportunities offered.

Commissioner Gillespie is currently attending the Courageous Community Leader Training which is being coordinated by the school district. This program was offered last year and OHRC Commissioners Cords and Gunderson attended. School administration has indicated they will offer future sessions and Commissioner Gunderson encouraged everyone to consider attending this training.

City Administrator Busse commented the Mayor and City Council received a request from a local Girl Scout Troop asking to use the wall panels near the Blast which are planned for the OHRC Mural Project. She suggested OHRC consider partnering with the Girl Scouts for a joint mural at this site. The OHRC Mural Project has been overseen by Commissioner Worden, Commissioner Emanuelson will advise Commissioner Worden of this request and ask him to provide a project update during the May OHRC Meeting. City Administrator Busse will also invite members of the Girl Scout Troop to the May Meeting to discuss mural options.

Commissioner Cords presented a draft version of a new LED billboard, "COVID Vaccinations" printed in three languages. Commissioner Emanuelson made a motion to begin this display, Commissioner Gunderson seconded the motion. City Administrator Busse will contact the billboard company to update the message displayed.

During New Business, members discussed possibly changing the regular OHRC Meeting Date. Commissioner Gunderson prefers the commission return to in-person meetings and social distance requirements could be met in the Second Floor Conference Room if only a few guests attend. Staff suggested using Council Chambers; however, a new date/time would be necessary as the Planning Commission currently meets at this date/time in Council Chambers. Several commissioners preferred keeping the meeting date/time, so the Gainey Room at the Library was suggested with advice this room is not TEAMS compatible. With no decision made, this will be discussed during the May OHRC Meeting.

Commissioner Gunderson advised he and Commissioner Emanuelson will be representing the OHRC and speak during the P.E.O. (Philanthropic Educational Organization) Meeting tonight. Commissioner Vanoosbree made a motion to adjourn at 6:14 p.m., Commissioner Emanuelson seconded the motion, with no objections, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 11th at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Clawson, Administrative Specialist