

Owatonna Human Rights Commission
Minutes

The Owatonna Human Rights Commission (OHRC) met on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 in the Second Floor Conference Room of the City Administration Building. The meeting was accessible via Microsoft TEAMS at Call-in Number 507-242-3225 and Conference ID 254 505 327#. Commission Chairman Gunderson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Present were Commissioners Ethan Cords and Jim Gunderson, City Administrator Kris Busse and Administrative Specialist Jeanette Clawson. Attending virtually were Commissioners Susie Effertz, Jamie Vanoosbree, Ryan Gillespie, Dave Emanuelson and John Worden and Human Resource Director Lynn Gorski.

Commissioner Gunderson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Minutes of the June 9, 2020 OHRC Meeting were reviewed; Commissioner Emanuelson made a motion to approve the minutes, Commissioner Worden seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, voting aye were Commissioners Cords, Effertz, Vanoosbree, Worden, Gillespie, Emanuelson and Gunderson, the motion carried.

During Commissioner Comments, Commissioner Vanoosbree commented she heard negative comments regarding the recent murder in Darts Park. The suspect and victim are both Somali and some of the Somali community felt disrespected as the body was not moved for several hours. City Administrator Busse commented Chief Hiller has spoken with the family and explained the investigation process and assured them no disrespect was intended in any way.

During Old Business, Human Resource Director Gorski explained the process the City uses for employment applications. Scoring criteria is established prior to receiving any application, each applicant is scored using this criteria and top candidates are offered interviews. There is no bias as scores are calculated based on the qualifications desired and information provided by the applicant. The City is a member of the League of Minnesota Cities which held an initiative during 2019 to promote diverse hiring and assists the City in reaching many diverse communities when job openings occur. The hiring process may vary depending on the open position. For example, police officer applicants may be interviewed by several panels and a conditional offer is made contingent on successfully completing pre-employment physicals, psychological examination, and intense background checks.

All commissioners thought the first edition of the OHRC Newsletter was well received. Copy was posted on the city's website and published in the OPU June Newsletter. Commissioner Effertz is beginning to plan the next edition and welcome for any suggestions.

During New Business, the date for the August meeting was moved to Monday, August 10th as the Primary Election is planned for Tuesday, August 11th. Commissioner Vanoosbree commented Better Together has established 15 Community Reading Circles with approximately 10 members in each circle. They hope to kickoff this program this next week.

At 6:22 pm, Commissioner Worden made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Vanoosbree seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, all members voted aye, and the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be Monday, August 10th at 5:30 p.m.