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Human Rights Commission Minutes 06/17/2004

Final –Human Rights Committee Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2004

Present

Bill Shea
 Sheri Baron
 Christine Deshler
 Marlissa Briggett
 Cecilia Akuffo
 Christine Carney
 Nick Minton
 Jim Webster
 Kevin McGann

Absent

Kim Lam
 Nancy Rhodes
 Nancy Sweeney

Meeting called to order at 8:00 p.m.

May 20th meeting minutes approved June 9th minutes approved.

Follow Up

Bill Shea waiting for a return call from Paul Schlichtman and Diane Mahon.

Nancy Sweeney spoke with Vision 20/20 who responded positively to the Commission's interest in including them in our network.

There are plans for Human Rights Month in October.

Sheri spoke with Ann Mathes who welcomed HRC's help in sponsoring events:

Movie: Whale Rider

Book discussion

Interview series

We need to be able to add value to this collaboration other than labor/set-up.

Bettie Connors is new Chair of Vision 20/20 Diversity Task Force.

Note: Chief Ryan, not the ADL, recommended passing a bylaw requiring groups that want to distribute literature in the Town to register with City Hall.

Other Business

Vision 20/20 will have a conflict resolution facilitator help the group resolve disruptive disagreement that resulted from discussions relating to May 17 gay marriage in Arlington. Miriam Stein invited AHRC to participate in this facilitation.

Question: Should AHRC participate in this?

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Response: No, because this would involve us in a problem that we do not share at that level. HRC is a separate group, is at a different place and should have separate meetings for this.

Question: Does the AHRC have the need for a similar activity

Response: To be discussed as a group *if* and *when* to have a facilitator on group-conflict resolution.

Complaints And Incidents

No complaints or incidents reported.

Subcommittees

Rapid Response

Subcommittee has met twice

Framework discussed for rapid response is as follows:

Incident is reported the chair would contact the RR subcommittee and would decide whether a meeting would take place.

Commission Chair or Co-Chair initiates rapid response.

HRC meets and decides a) whether a response is required or not, or b) if there's to be a response, what kind.

Commission can a) make a decision to take action or b) decide whether we need more input and should bring in others in the community for suggestions c) if major response necessary, take to the next level.

Next level

Identify phone tree of groups that rapid response put together, let them know what's going to happen.

HRC has to be willing to meet on an emergency basis. If some can't make the meeting, need to be comfortable with the decision of those who attend the meeting.

Follow Up On Strategic Plan

Dialogue Discussion

Should have 4 dialogues: 2 debates, 2 informational activities/dialogues.

Potential topics:

Affirmative action

Class issues

2 of 2

The effect of globalization and democracy in developing countries

The way the US voting system is constructed-are our laws outdated?

The role of the media, controlled by a few

English as the US's primary language

Asylum seekers held by the INS in holding cells, mixed in with inmates

Chief Ryan addressing racial profiling

Is profiling ever appropriate; El-Al Airlines profiles, and swears by it

Film-have a Human Rights themed film then follow it up with a dialogue

Samantha Powers re: the US selectively ignoring human rights abuses

Is the UN relevant or not

Facing History-done in Arlington schools; opportunity to do a dialogue on anti-Semitism

Advocating for seniors; how we treat our seniors in society (can do this at the senior center); medical care for seniors

Vision 20/20 plans to hold events celebrating diversity on October 13, 16, and 23.

Something HRC can do is have a rep from 3 presidential campaigns come to present their candidates' views.

Dialogues To Be Held

October

January

March

May

Marlissa-booking author for January, March, or May

Potential events:

Film

Afghanistan 1380-can ask Hamid Kharzi's sister if she would be willing to speak following a showing (contacts: Marlissa/Marylou).

Debate

Role of the Media

English Immersion

English as primary language

HRC decided on:

Film & Speaker-May

Election dialogue-October

Book-US response to genocide/human rights response

Racial profiling-January

3 of 3

Action

Find out who can and is willing to speak

Cecilia-Find out if Human Rights International will provide a speaker for a dialogue after showing of one of their films

Dialogue subcommittee (next meeting 7:30, July 1st):

Christine C

Christine D

Sheri

Nancy S

Marlissa **can't be at 7/1 meeting

Other

We will have an Annual Human Rights Award recognizing ordinary people who perform small, charitable acts, practice tolerance (ex. kids who volunteer with disabled people).

3-5 awards in different categories

Would need to publicize

Can send letter throughout Arlington

Commissioners could spread the word through their friends, and through religious organizations, the schools, Patsy Kraemer, or a drop brochure
Could hold ceremony at Whittemore Robbins House
Need awards committee
Could be done at end of the calendar year
Could invite Town officials/appointing bodies

Town Day

We'll do a raffle
We have \$1,000 in the account
Cost of printing 2,500 brochures \$2,200
We a banner
Bill will try to encumber the money
Christine C. will get quotes from *Kwik Kopy* and *Swiftly*
We'll get price quotes on a) printing 2,500 brochures Black & White and color

Christine C. will get application for Town Day

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.