

MOORHEAD HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ANNUAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 13, 2007
7:00 PM
MOORHEAD CITY HALL
FIRST FLOOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Members Present: Dr. Richard Adler/Chair, Del Rae Williams/Vice Chair, Phyllis Emmel, Brian Arett, Kevin Kopperud, Stephanie Chimeziri, Erin Clark, and Tammie Yak

Members Absent: LaVerne Czichotzki, Dorene Neeland, Diane Wray Williams/City Council Member

Others present: Ryan O'Keefe/Staff Liaison, Duke Schempp/People Escaping Poverty Project, Dave Beauchamp/St. Joseph's Parish Social Justice Ministry

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS: The meeting was called to order by Chair Dr. Adler at 7:05 p.m.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA: ***Action*** Mr. Arett moved, seconded by Vice Chair Williams, to amend the agenda to conduct item 4/Approval of Minutes from October 10, 2006 through item 7/Reports of the Chair/Officers/Commissioners/Committees prior to conducting item 3/Election of Commission Officers. The agenda was approved as amended by unanimous consent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 10, 2006 MEETING: A draft of the Minutes for the October 10, 2006 meeting was presented to the Commission. ***Action*** A motion was made and seconded to approve the October 10, 2006 meeting minutes as presented, which passed by unanimous consent.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD: Dave Beauchamp of St Joseph's Parish Social Justice Ministry gave the Commission a short update on his organization's activities and requested that the Commission write a letter in support of MN Rep. Morrie Lanning's possible appointment to the Legislative Commission to End Poverty in MN by 2020. ***Action*** The Commission agreed to send a letter in support of MN Rep. Morrie Lanning's appointment to that body by unanimous consent. Mr. Arett also requested that Mr. Beauchamp send periodic updates to the Commission Staff member, which he agreed to do. ***Follow-up Action*** Write requested letter and mail it out.

Duke Schempp of the People Escaping Poverty Project (PEPP) gave a brief overview to the Commission of pending legislation that would seal the arrest records of individuals who had been accused of non-violent, non-narcotics related, as well as non-sex related crimes, but have not been convicted of them. Mr. Schempp requested that the Commission write a letter to the three legislators from MN District 9 in support of this legislation. ***Action*** Ms. Williams moved, seconded by Mr. Kopperud, to write such a letter. Vice Chair Yak offered a draft to the Commission that she had previously prepared. The motion passed by unanimous approval. ***Follow-up Action*** Finalize requested letter and send to the three MN District 9 legislators.

Enson Maattala addressed the Commission to share his concerns regarding the appearance of racial slurs in a *Forum* letter to the editor sometime ago and to recommend the book Law of

Affirmative Action.

CITIZEN CONCERNS REPORT: There are no citizen concerns to report at this time.

REPORTS OF THE CHAIR/OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS/COMMITTEES: There were no reports to be given at this time.

ELECTION OF COMMISSION OFFICERS: According to the Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure, an election for the Commission Chair must be held at the Annual Meeting in February. ***Action*** Mr. Arett moved, seconded by Vice Chair Williams, to nominate Dr. Richard Adler for a second term as Commission Chair. No other nominations were made for the position of Commission Chair. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

According to the Commission Rules of Practice and Procedure, an election for the Commission Vice Chair must be held at the Annual Meeting in February. ***Action*** Chair Adler moved to nominate Del Rae Williams for a second term as Commission Vice Chair, which she declined. Mr. Kopperud moved, seconded by Vice Chair Williams, to nominate Tammie Yak for the position of Commission Vice Chair. No other nominations were made for the position of Commission Vice Chair. The motion to elect Tammie Yak to the position of Vice Chair passed by unanimous approval.

The election of Tammie Yak to the position of Commission Vice Chair created a vacancy in the position of Education Committee Chair. Ms. Emmel was requested to serve as second term on the Executive Committee but declined, creating a vacancy for the At-Large position on that body. According to the Rules of Practice and Procedure, Chair Adler has the authority to appoint committee members. ***Action*** Chair Adler appointed Kevin Kopperud as the Chair of the Education Committee and Stephanie Chimeziri as the At-Large appointment to the Executive Committee.

BUDGET REPORT FOR FY 2007: Mr. O'Keefe gave a brief report to the commission regarding their 2007 Budget. Of particular note, Mr. O'Keefe discovered that \$2,000 was available for travel and training by the commissioners, with \$1,200 of that specifically designated to pay for costs associated with membership in the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions. Originally, staff had reported that the Commission only had \$800 available for such activities in 2007. Vice Chair Yak requested information regarding accounts related to the Otto Bremer grant the Commission received to facilitate their strategic planning process. Mr. O'Keefe agreed to return with a more thorough budget report at the next meeting which would include information related to the grant. ***Follow-up Action*** Prepare budget presentation for March meeting.

JOINT MOORHEAD-FARGO HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER: Chair Adler reported that the Fargo Human Relations Commission had not yet discussed the issue, as their retreat had been delayed. He then stated that Yoke Sim Gunaratne of Cultural Diversity Resources had expressed her concern to him that such a center would unnecessarily duplicate what is done by her organization and would lead to an undesirable competition over resources. The Commission

agreed to table the discussion until the next meeting so that the Fargo Human Relations Commission could have an opportunity to show their support for the concept.

SISTER CORITA ART EXHIBIT: Ms. Williams informed the Commission that the exhibit would be done in October.

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR BENNETT PARK COOPERATIVE: Ms. Williams gave a quick overview of the history of the Bennett Park Cooperative as well as an update on the current issues they face. She then asked the Commission if they would be willing to write a letter to the North Country Cooperative Foundation in support of the Cooperative's efforts to purchase the Greenwood Mobile Home Park. ***Action*** Vice Chair Yak moved, seconded by Ms. Emmel, for the Commission to write a letter that is substantially the same as a draft passed out by Ms. Williams in support of the Bennett Park Cooperative's efforts to purchase the mobile home park. The motion passed by unanimous approval. ***Follow-up Action*** Finalize requested letter and send to the North Country Cooperative Foundation

NEW BUSINESS: Ms. Williams suggested that the Commission write a letter to the Fargo City Commission in support of the proposed "Ray of Hope" homeless shelter to be located near downtown Fargo. ***Action*** Ms. Emmel moved, seconded by Vice Chair Yak, to write such a letter. The motion passed by unanimous consent. ***Follow-up Action*** Write requested letter and send to the Fargo City Commission.

LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS: At the request of the Commission, Vice Chair Yak and Ms. Emmel gave an informal presentation to the Commission explaining the value of continued participation in the League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions. ***Action*** Vice Chair Yak moved, seconded by Ms. Emmel, to use the available funds to send select commissioners to League meetings. Mr. Arett submitted a friendly amendment that the approval of expenditures extends through May, after which the authorization would be revisited. The friendly amendment was accepted and the motion passed by unanimous approval.

U OF MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS ACTION PLAN GRANT APPLICATION: Mr. Kopperud shared the comments made by Lynn Kovash that expressed both interest in the program and concerns that the existing curriculum is too full to incorporate new material. Mr. Kopperud suggested that three second-grade teachers at Robert Asp Elementary would be willing to pilot the program if there were funds available to support planning time/substitute teacher pay. Mr. Kopperud also felt that Maret Kashmark, Counselor at Robert Asp Elementary, should be involved in implementing the program. ***Action*** Vice Chair Yak moved, seconded by Mr. Arett, that the Commission submit the application to the University of Minnesota Human Rights Center naming the Moorhead Area Public Schools as the fiduciary agent of the \$2,000 grant with the intent of funding the planning and implementation of the "This is My Home" program in a pilot second grade class at Robert Asp Elementary in Fall 2007. Chair Adler requested a friendly amendment to the motion that would require an outcome/achievement report be given to the Commission at some time after the program has been implemented and relevant data has been gathered. The motion was amended and passed by unanimous approval. ***Follow-up Action***

Send application to University of Minnesota and communicate plan with selected teachers at Robert Asp Elementary.

COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN: A draft of the strategic plan was presented to the Commission for its approval. The Chair and Vice Chair shared some of the concerns expressed at the community forum regarding Goal 4/Develop a plan to fund the Commission and its priority programs. Specifically, some in attendance at the forum felt it was inappropriate for a City advisory body to compete with local non-profits for scarce grant funds, but should instead petition the City for resources. ***Action*** Vice Chair Yak moved, seconded by Mr. Arett, to approve Goals 1-3 of the Draft Strategic Plan (attached) and to table discussion of Goal 4 until the March meeting. Ms. Chimeziri suggested Goal 1-B be assigned to the Executive Committee, not the Outreach Committee. Chair Adler argued that the task is best suited for the Outreach Committee because it will involve reaching out and communicating with members of the community. The motion passed by unanimous approval

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION EXPENDITURES: PEPP agreed to conduct "One to One" training for the Commission at its next meeting. This training is in accordance with the Commission's Strategic Plan and is a permissible expense under City Policy. PEPP typically receives a \$50 honorarium for conducting such training. ***Action*** The Commission approved a \$50 honorarium for PEPP.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 9:20 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 13th at 7:00 p.m. in Moorhead City Hall, Council Chambers.