

City of Eugene Human Rights Commission



MINUTES

Tuesday, March 15th, 2016

5:30 – 7:30 PM Meeting

Atrium Building, Sloat Room, 99 W. 10th Avenue, Eugene

Present:

Human Rights Commissioners: Ken Neubeck, Jennifer Frenzer, Edward Goehring, Chris Nunes, Arun Toke, Deb Merskin, Phil Carrasco Councilor Chris Pryor

Staff: Michael Kinnison and Jennifer Lleras Van Der Haeghen

EPD Liaison: Lt. Jennifer Bills

Commission and Board Liaisons: Heather Marek (Civilian Review Board), Bill Randall (Planning Commission)

1. Agenda/Minutes Review and Approval

Motion: Move to approve the mins

Made by: K. Neubeck

Second: D. Merskin

Vote: Unanimous

Motion: Move to approve the agenda

Made by: D. Merskin

Second: K. Nuebeck

Vote: Unanimous

2. Public Comment

Larisa Varela, Associate Planner, City of Eugene Public Works – Engineering

In 2016 the City Council initiated a Vision Zero task force to establish how we will eliminate traffic fatalities in our community. From 2014-2015 saw a large increase in traffic fatalities. Vision Zero has seen success in Europe, many cities in the US are taking on initiatives like this. Since data shows members of affinity groups the HRC often represents are most likely to be injured or killed in a traffic accident staff are inviting an HRC rep for the task force. Kicking off the taskforce in April.

3. Support Request

TAC International Film Festival –

Rick Petegrew – Thank you for the opportunity to come to you again and ask for your support.

We've been putting on this event for 13 years. It's Eugene's oldest film festival. This event is a celebration of human cultures worldwide through time and space. We will be screening 21 films

from many different places. We're expanding our event this year to be a conference. There will be films and presentations from all over the world. The films in most cases have to do with universal human rights values and principles.

K. Nuebeck – Could you share examples of the films?

R. Pettigrew – Sure, the old Bizarre of Tehran, Ancient Culture of Peru, one on Turkey and Istanbul, Australia etc.

C. Nunes – There are a lot of different locations to view the films this year, I see the Bijou Metro listed.

R. Pettigrew – Yes, they will be shown at the Bijou Metro, Shed and Hilton

E. Goehring – How much is your request for?

R. Pettigrew - \$200

E. Goehring – Can you meet the requirements for the co-sponsorship? I want to bring up again that we need to determine if we can be involved or give co-sponsorship without the participation.

D. Merskin – Are you talking about the development of this request being with a commissioner?

E. Goehring – Our rules say that we'll be involved in the planning process as a function of our co-sponsorship. The problem is that we don't have enough commissioners to do that for every request. So instead of having folks come in and thinking that is a requirement I'd like to see the forms updated.

D. Merskin – I usually attend this festival and am happy to help in that regard.

R. Pettigrew – We're very willing to do all that we can to make it possible for an HRC member to participate in whatever way works.

A. Toke – Will you be able to give tickets to the HRC to attend?

R. Pettigrew – Our films at the recital hall will be free this year.

Motion: Move to approve \$200 with Debra attending the event.

Made by: E. Goehring

Second: J. Frenzer

Vote: Unanimous

DisOrient Film Festival

Motion: Move to approve the amount requested \$200.

Made by: P. Carrasco

Second: K. Neubeck

Vote: Unanimous

Community Alliance of Land County

K. Neubeck – I'm on the planning committee for this event. This is one in a series of movies and discussions that are being put on by CALC and SURJ. This is a film that has been recommended by the Rural Organizing Project (ROP) who work where armed militias are active. After the film we'll have a presentation by Jess Campbell with ROP. She will bring us up to date and focus on what rural counties in Oregon are experiencing with militias. We know that many of the people who were involved in the Maulher County demonstrations are from Eugene/Springfield. There will be small group discussions after her talk. We've had about 40-60 people on Sundays. What they're asking for is the use of the Hilyard Community Center to hold the event.

E. Goehring – How does this work with parks?

J. Lleras Van Der Haeghen – Community groups can access the space at no cost if sponsored by an agent of the City such as Human Rights and Neighborhood Involvement office or the HRC.

Motion: Move to support the event so that they can access the free rental.

Made by: J. Frenzer

Second: P. Carrasco

Vote: Unanimous

A. Nunes - The purpose of this is to do education right.

K. Neubeck – Yes, there is a lot of poverty and a lack of resources in those areas. There are people who call 911 and get an answering machine or responses hours later. Many people have concerns about what is going on in these areas and we want to show that these militias are closely linked to white supremacists groups. It's a strategy that they're not outright racist, they're all white groups and armed.

P. Carrasco – Wanted to make a note that when we offer an endorsement we're letting them know that they can use the Commission's name for publicity. One thing I want to point out is that I think we should consider taking the banner to these events. I'll commit to taking the banner to the three events that we've sponsored tonight.

A. Toke – At the disorient events they have a screen with sponsors.

E. Goehring – A. I think this is a good idea. It would be a more beneficial if we had our brochures and if we write this into what organizations should do once they receive sponsorship.

P. Carrasco – We can make the logo available to them for publicity as well.

J. Frenzer – These types of events are great places to be meeting potential candidates for our commission. Maybe we should have a brochure to ask people to learn more about the commission and invite them to join so that we can mentor and build interest all year.

4. Indigenous People's Day Resolution Update

P. Carrasco – It was awesome last night. I want to thank Councilor Pryor. We didn't have to ask he just helped move this forward. There were beautiful words spoken by community members. There were a lot of new faces. This is such a small symbolic gesture and for the right reasons the community does come out. They were passionate, respectful and vocal. It had me thinking about how many other issues there are where we can invite people to participate. Juventud Faceta and native youth were there. It was a great moment for the City of Eugene, demonstrates great leadership. Passed 8-0. Proof again that we're a human rights city and took this step forward.

Councilor Pryor – I was very proud, all of the people who spoke did so with a lot of passion. I was hoping for a unanimous vote and any time we get a unanimous vote we're really doing something powerful.

5. Housing First Resolution Discussion

C. Nunes – You can find it on page 28.

J. Frenzer – The status of the resolution right now is that we were hoping to hear back from the City Manager's Office so that we could have their feedback on the feedback we provided about the resolution. We don't have that at this time, what this does is give us a chance to talk about what the work group did. The Work Group took the drafts presented to us and we worked them and came up with this draft. Some of this was done online and some in the meeting. We spent time doing group

writing together. We have a lot of people's input and for that I'm really grateful. That means a lot of advocates and people who are unhoused have been able to look at this and contemplate what it means for them. I don't know how much time you've had to look at this. Objective is to make sure that Housing first is seen as an approach, not the end all be all. This is one tool in the tool box in dealing with a large and complex population and the goal is that City Council resolves to commit to using this tool. The Poverty and Homelessness Board is already working on these projects and pursuing funding from HUD. In the past there was an assumption that people needed to be ready for housing. What we want to build is no threshold housing that is supported with services, tailored to their needs, where the people are not expected to be clean and sober before shelter is part of the service. What we're emphasizing is that this is not in lieu of emergency shelter. When we say this is important, we're not saying they're more important than resources for emergency shelter in the short term. If someone is going to transition to the housing first program where there needs to be a plan for the interim. Eliminate criminalization, emergency shelter and Housing First are important strategies. There are more evidence based programs emerging in other places.

P. Carasco – What you're proposing here is the idea that there is not one strategy that were investing in right?

J. Frenzer – Yes it's a piece of the puzzle.

K. Neubeck – One feature of Housing First is that it's going to take quite a while. We need to address what we'll do with people in the interim. Want to really give a push to the HF thing, not at the cost of the city's continued support of sanctioned camps, dusk to dawn etc.

P. Carasco – In regards to tracking. This is a Human Rights issue, for educational purposes we should track progress to see if it's been successful. Will there be tracking of success of people who are part of the program?

J. Frenzer – Steve Manella at the County could answer this question. These are evidence based strategies, evaluating what works for our town is important. We want to figure out what works here.

P. Carasco- We want a standing argument about what works here. The fact that HUD is involved, will they share local information, if not can we put something in place?

E. Goehring – For this resolution draft are you seeking us to sign off on it? And then that City Council will adopt this?

J. Frenzer – Not sure where this is going. There were two motions that came out of that meeting. One of them was to draft resolution. The original was drafted then the work group sent in feedback and we're waiting to hear from the City Manager's office so that we're aligning. The goal is that the Council would be able to adopt a resolution in the end. Chris can likely fill us in to what council thinks.

Councilor Pryor – This goes to the City Manager's office to make sure that it doesn't create any unintentional problems. Jennifer is right, you want to put something in front of the City Council that they will be supportive of. I think this draft has really advanced. It does put an obligation to find a funding source. Putting feet to the fire in that way. It's more than aspirational, it wants us to do something. Need to find the resources, time and energy to do something. In that respect it's a good thing.

A. Toke – Went to an international conference where they discussed similar work in Canada. I will pass it along to you.

6. A.L.I.C.E Report Discussion

Elena Fracchia – United Way Lane County

I'm here to share research from the Pacific Northwest and Lane County in particular as it pertains to the A.L.I.C.E. Report. Looking to figure out how we can help families get to the end of the month with money left over and understand what that means. What we're doing is looking at households and what it will mean to help people get to the end of the month. The federal poverty level is not telling us what it takes to get to the end of the month because it is not a realistic measure of poverty. Some people in our area are using multiples of the federal poverty level to assess who qualifies for their support. Our focus is on the Household Survival Budget first and the helping people get to a Stability Budget.

A.L.I.C.E. households make up more people than you might think. The A.L.I.C.E. Report is telling us that these people are our friends, families and neighbors. They're people who work in high and well-paying jobs, finding that the cost of living is exceeding those salaries. 2 in 5 households are struggling to meet the survival budget. Nearly doubles the federal poverty number of households. 5 basic household costs are taken into account – Housing, Childcare, Food, Transportation, Health Care, Taxes.

J. Frenzer – We'd like to help you get this information out. Thank you so much for coming to us again with this information. It was very helpful to have you at the Homelessness Work Group meeting as well. There is more to this than meets the eye, there are very interesting conversations we can have about this data. It does help us understand how to have conversations about poverty. If you come at it from the same page and data we can make coordinated solutions. When you realize that 153K people in our community are faced with this dilemma. When people are talking about how homeless people are doing this by choice, that's not true and we can use this information to support that. The economic recovery never occurred and we have many families in this situation. What is the plan to get this out to community at large?

Elena – Making sure that we're getting this to our key partners, from here we're intending to focus one topic at a time to discuss. For example starting with child care to figure out what the ways are that we can collaborate on supporting families who need to access child care. We're hoping to pull together many people who have knowledge about each issues to discuss strategies. We want to change the conversation about poverty, from us and them to all of us. Not just about this exact budget but beyond.

P. Carasco – You mentioned a lot of partners, they see this happening. Not to pick a fight but is this information being presented to the Chamber of Commerce? There is a lot being said to present false information about low wage workers. Need to get real and talk about these facts. There is a real ethical question that businesses have to ask themselves. If I owned a small business and looked at that and knew what I paid my employees I would have a dilemma.

Elena – One of the conversations we're having is with employers. This conversation is top of mind right now. You see this data today but that doesn't mean that employers can change the salaries being paid tomorrow. We are seeing employers ask questions about the bigger picture and thinking about collaboration. They're thinking about what partnerships are possible to meet the transportation, child care needs of their employees.

E. Goehring – One thing that is driving Oregon's cost of living up is that were one of the destinations to move to. People from around the country are coming here because of the cost of living. I would love to see a column that is 1 or 2 people who are seniors or folks with disabilities. That's going to look different, as those of us who are boomers know we're costing a lot more. It's not up here in this presentation.

Elena - It is addressed in the report. We're also working with AARP in Oregon to see what this looks like.

C. Nunes – I’ve been looking at this in conjunction with my day job at a credit union. You’ve been touching on this a little bit in addressing a lease on a car or student loans. What is the analysis of where loans come into this? A lot of these families have a loan or two. The other aspect, if they’re not making ends meet, credit card debt may be going up. How does that factor in?

Elena – It’s not factored in. We’re looking at the survival budget but the reality is that we’re seeing that these are the salaries that people are living on. We have to start asking, what are the tradeoffs that people are making? Maybe taking up another loan means you need to take up another job which impact child care. There are many levers and pulleys that impact this. The other piece of this is the stability budget, the one line item that is added is a savings budget. Either for an emergency savings or paying for loans. But when we look at that salary we know people are not making that kind of money. We’re working with folks to think about how case workers can talk about budgeting in order to normalize this conversation.

7. City Council Update

Councilor Pryor – We already talked about the Indigenous Peoples’ Day resolution. At the same meeting the City Council voted to extend the sunset dates of the Rest Stops and Dusk to Dawn ordinances. We find these programs to be very successful and have decided to remove the word “pilot” from their description. We continued to talk about down town. This is the nexus for where these issues come together around human rights and other areas. I serve on a task force that the mayor put together to address these issues. We’ve been getting a lot of back ground information so that we can best respond to populations and their characteristics. The meeting I had just before this one was the Housing Policy Board. In looking at this material, one thing we’re looking at is that a lot of projects are funded on the area median income. Terry McDonald was there to ask about the increasing of the minimum wage, rapid increase medical increases and the rolling impact will be on how HUD funding works for low income housing projects. We’re talking about minimum wage at the council level as well. We want to see what the state roll out looks like and then we will continue these discussions at a later time. We will be thinking about this as we have budget discussions this year. We’re not shying away from things, we’re taking them on, although maybe not as quickly as you might like. I’m very pleased with the progress we’re making. The meeting with the HRC from December was very helpful.

J. Frenzer – The pilot programs now being considered programs, does that increase the likelihood that we’ll see an updated list of potential property for new sites? We’ve shown that the model is effective but haven’t been able to expand because of the limited sites.

Councilor Pryor – The original Rest Stop program was built around sites that were owned by City of Eugene. We had talked about trying to identify and finding other sites the City didn’t control but we’re not there yet. At least 3 or 4 other councilors have been keen to look for other partners. Having Lane County do what they have has been very positive. We’re going to look for industrial and private locations. When I proposed a Rest Stop site I had my head handed to me in a basket. We run into a natural fear on these issues. You’re absolutely right but it’s going to take time to get into this.

J. Frenzer – How much commitment is there to coordinate with the Neighborhood Associations? If they’re bringing the ideal locations, you’re side stepping this all together.

Councilor Pryor – We did talk about a need to distribute the locations to all of the wards, including mine and everyone else’s. Involving the neighborhoods does not get us completely away from NIMBY response.

J. Frenzer – It really does have a different impact if people are engaged from the beginning. What about 4j, EWEB or state property?

Councilor Pryor – I believe these organizations have been approached but I don't know what the responses have been.

J. Frenzer – I would be curious to know who is working on property outreach. It would be great to do the inventory work.

Councilor Pryor – I will find out.

J. Frenzer – The UO has not engaged.

Councilor Pryor – I talked with them personally a few years ago and it was a giant stonewall.

J. Frenzer – That was a long time ago, people have shifted. We now have the A.L.I.C.E. study to walk in with. UO Grad students did an evaluation of the Rest Stops and it was great.

Councilor Pryor – When you talk about people being involved, Neighborhood Associations only reflect their neighborhoods to a certain degree. We've seen things fall apart when we only work with Neighborhood Associations. We'll endeavor to try broader outreach especially when we talk about camps in wards like my own. As we learned in the South Willamette process traditional forms of public participation will not keep it together.

J. Frenzer – Full engagement is what we really need to get to.

Councilor Pryor – This is really a matter of resources. Engagement costs significantly more than the cost of notification.

K. Neubeck – If these become programs will we then have budget items that identify these programs?

Councilor Pryor – These programs have been set up to be minimal costs to the city. That is a conversation council needs to have to see how far they need to go.

J. Frenzer – A group of us had lunch and you said you'd do an update on that meeting here, can we plan on that for the next meeting?

Councilor Pryor – Yes, it will take longer than a few minutes.

8. EPD Update

Lt. Bills – I want to follow up on the hiring process for EPD as it is lengthy. The first phase is an application where we had well over 400 applicants. Applicants are then invited to do the physical test and from there we move to prehistory questionnaires and background checks. A large number did pass the physical test. We did get to a high number of prehistory questionnaires. We'll take 69 people to interviews and full background checks and from there we're likely to lose at least half. Organizationally we're having a major change, Assistant Chief Durr has taken a new position. The Assistant Chief position is new to EPD. Captain Meisel will move over to the Chief's side and will take over the body worn camera, in car video etc. In Investigations we've had another change. For many years the Violent Crimes Unit was investigating hate and bias crimes. I moved bias crimes over to the Special Investigations Unit. That's a big change.

P. Carasco – When violent crimes was investigating, the fact that it was investigated by Violent Crimes Unit with special investigation did that put it at a higher threshold to potentially connect it to state or federal hate groups?

Lt. Bills – When a case comes in it is given a special code. That's the code that we report out on to the Federal Government. In terms of where it is put that doesn't matter, it's the code. The Special Investigations Unit does work on gangs, sexual exploitation, and terrorism they also serve as the liaison to FBI, DEA and Dept. of Justice. They do the big cases. An example was the students who were looking for amnesty during the track meeting last summer. The Special Investigations Team led this effort. They're the best liaisons for hate and bias work.

P. Carrasco – My concern is that someone graffiti's a swastika and that's a hate crime.

Lt. Bills – the reason why it was moved frankly was that our Violent Crimes Unit is focused on domestic violence, child abuse and child sex abuse. So it's a crime against a person who is vulnerable in that moment. Graffiti is not something we can take immediate action on or removing someone from a situation. Protocols and criteria for investigating will still be the same. We always call and offer the HRC services and UO services depending on what is appropriate. The only thing that is changed is where it is housed and investigated.

A. Toke – On the 10th I had gone to the community conversations and Sam Kamkar was wonderful! He was the guest speaker there.

E. Goehring – As for Captain Meisel, some of the police commissioners get to participate in the interviews. I was very impressed that she stayed so long in Detroit. It struck me that she had done what I have seen a number of women in policing do. Women in the officer level will form a club to help each other study and prepare for tests etc. When the Captain was speaking about this I was happy to hear her talk about this model. I think well of her.

9. Commission Liaison Updates

E. Goehring – The Police Commission met, you all got the weekly update with the information about that meeting.

J. Lleras Van Der Haeghen – Bonnie provided you all with the Civilian Review Board update which is printed here.

E. Goehring – Informally I've been told that when the resolution from this body was shared to the Civilian Review Board at least one person said they were offended that they received input from us. I am dismayed by this. The recommendation we sent was specific to human rights.

C. Nunes – Jen and I are doing work behind the scenes on this. We'll bring an update to you at the next meeting likely.

J. Frenzer – If you're willing, your experience in working in other commissions could be helpful. There is clearly some rapport building that needs to happen.

M. Kinnison – Heather is here from the Civilian Review Board.

K. Neubeck – Heather took the lead in arguing for the recording of the meetings at the Civilian Review Board. I heard she did an incredible job.

J. Frenzer – That might be helpful I know you were able to show that the manner that minutes are being take right now are really falling short of what the Civilian Review Board was believing they were doing. Recording with summary minutes are going to be far superior. If you're willing to be part of the conversation I'd like to keep you in the loop.

Heather Marek – I would like to help build a good working relationship between the two groups. I think that you have a lot to say that can inform the work being done at the CRB. I also want to think more specifically about how we can make the process more accessible and transparent to the community. We're concerned about whether or not people in the community feel that the Police Auditor is a good resource for them or even know the Police Auditor exists. We'd also like to see more diverse voices on the Civilian Review Board.

10. Work Group Lead Updates

J. Frenzer – There are two events coming up. I know our budget continues to shrink. These events and sponsorships are to ensure that Human Rights work is happening in the community. I'd love for us to be able to show a movie on criminalization. I'm encouraging THRIVE and the Work Group to come to this body to get the \$200 sponsorship for that movie. I'd like us to keep this event in mind and the youth event we're scheduling for June 3rd. Part of that event can happen in the Bascom Tykeson room. I'm also trying to connect with LCC to get space there. We're trying to get to at risk

youth and people who are already on the streets. There will be music, food and services tabling. This is a follow up event to last spring's event. Two budget items I'd like us to consider finding funding for. I'm going to make contact with the 15th night youth board to see how they might want to participate.

We also had a work group meeting with Mark Johnson and the Director of LTD about data that was requested through a public information request. The request looked at people who have been excluded from LTD services. We're going to do follow up on that. One thing we can do is to figure out how to do better work with LTD. We could be helping people when they go to do an appeal. There may be other groups in the community to support them in going through the appeal process. One more thing is fences, there are a lot of fences going up under bridges. There is money going to keeping people from taking shelter from weather and not to supporting people. It's confusing that the money is going into fences and not into dumpsters and port-a-potties. We're tracking that and want to have a response to it. Maybe this body can respond to this. We're still recruiting HRC members. We have until the 31st before the processes closes and I would love for us to have a conversation about how we go about doing this next year.

P. Carasco – What if we held a forum to review the work we did in a previous year. This will allow us to get some input from the community and to help tell people what we're doing. Could create a pool of applicants.

JLVDH – I will look into what the process is of retaining applications.

P. Carrasco – I would like people to have access to staying in the pool.

JLVDH – I'm willing to keep an interested party list, then when applications are due we can send emails to them.

P. Carrasco – How many people are you envisioning for your youth event?

J. Frenzer – Open house style, if we have two venues we're figuring they'll just be flying through. Starting at 4:30 and ending around 6:30 or 7. I'd love to see a couple hundred kids go through there. We're going to flyer and encourage people to show up. I have a youth designing a poster right now. Hopefully we have a number of types of posters to make it intriguing.

P. Carrasco – What do you think a rough budget would be?

J. Frenzer – Probably around \$500

P. Carrasco – I wonder if the food pantry and the Warming Centers would want to participate or help.

Kiwanis Club update

C. Nunes – Jen and I went to Kiwanis where they try to learn about aspects of the community. I just gave a basic overview of what the commission does, Jen went more in-depth on what the homelessness work group is working on. It was a good conversation and good publicity.

Anti-Discrimination Work group

P. Carasco – For the Latino Focus group meeting, I heard great things, youth came out feeling like this is the real deal. They tend to be cynical and they really liked it.

K. Neubeck – We gathered a lot of rich information we have two more coming up later this month and early April 6th.

11. Staff Update

J. Lleras Van Der Haeghen – Take a look at the staff update in your packets. Let me know if you have any questions.

12. Announcements

E. Goehring - June will be my last month with this Commission. I will be asking for a transfer to the Police Commission. I am specifically asking that the Council consider placing youth, women and people of color in these positions. One thing I've learned is that there are a few hundred people or more qualified as I to sit at this commission. There are few people in Eugene with police operations understanding who can serve the Police Commission. I've been a good translator and clarifier there. I will miss you and I will be continuing my Human Rights and Diversity work via social media. Right now those pages are meeting well over 10k people.