



CITY OF EUGENE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION FY 12/13 WORK PLAN

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Approved by Eugene City Council on November 16, 2011



Human Rights Commission Committee Members

- Toni Gyatso (Commission Chair)
- Ken Neubeck (Vice Chair)
- Linda Hamilton
- Elizabeth Andrade
- Raydeen Cuffe
- Lorraine Kerwood
- City Councilor Pat Farr
- Andrew Thomson
- Martha Fish
- Rod Buck
- Iva Boslough
- Ron McMullin
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Background

In April, 2011 the City Manager directed staff to begin looking at potential improvements to our current human rights system. Broad input from commissioners, staff and key stakeholders was needed to build a better understanding of:



- The commission's role with the Mayor and Council, City staff, and the community;
- Best practices, needs and trends that impact the City's role and practices around human rights; and,
- Models for an effective and efficient structure to support the City's human rights goals.

The Human Rights Listening Project was developed to gather information over a six-month span of time, through extensive outreach, with several phases. The project was overseen by a project team with equal representation from commissioners and city staff. The project reached over 600 community members to understand their views on the current status of human rights within the Eugene community and what they would like to see the commission and city of Eugene focus efforts on. Special outreach specifically to youth (14-24), immigrant communities, and community members who are currently un-housed was a priority of this project.

A "think tank" representing current and past Human Rights commissioners, current and past human rights staff, key community stakeholders, and City staff reviewed findings. The group then shared ideas for what opportunities or solutions might be considered by the commission and staff, with items divided into three areas: items that required City of Eugene council direction or ordinance changes,



items that should be considered for Human Rights Commission work planning and items that should be given to the City Manager and staff for consideration.

Human Rights commissioners, committee members and staff met on September 10, 2011 to refine the recommendations the commission brought to Council for consideration on October 24, 2011. The items commissioners, committee members and staff focused on were:

- **Updating Language in Chapter 2 of City of Eugene Code**
 - The current language is about 20 years old and needs to be updated to align with current human rights city efforts moving from a civil rights to human rights framing.
 - *Commissioners and community members would like the council to consider updating the overall introduction in Chapter 2 to reflect current human rights work and conditions. A human rights orientation moves the ordinance from a civil rights-only focus to an inclusive broader framework.*
- **The size of the Human Rights Commission**
 - Feedback from commissioners and think tank members is that the current size of the commission is too large and the City of Eugene should consider reducing the size to increase effectiveness. Case study research shows nationally there is an average of 9-11 members for similar commissions in other communities.
 - *The commission would like the council to consider reducing the commission to 10 community members and 1 city councilor.*
- **The current commission has four standing subcommittees codified in City of Eugene code**
 - Feedback from commissioners and community members clearly asks for the commission to be nimble and to tie task team and work groups to the current work plan.
 - Maintaining the current structure is neither sustainable nor effective.
 - *The commission would like council to consider repealing provisions for the four subcommittees. Commission work groups would be established as needed, on a short-term basis, to support adopted work plans. An accessibility committee would be created as a department advisory committee to work directly with departments and City staff on the broad range of accessibility challenges.*
- **Effective commission appointments**
 - Feedback from commissioners and community members is that more focus on the recruitment and appointment process is critical to the commission's success.
 - There is a strong desire to increase the commission's role in supporting council in making effective appointments.
 - *The commission would like the council to consider having the commission assume a more active role in screening and recommending candidates for council approval, thus aligning commission practices closer to those of other council advisory bodies.*

These code changes are substantial and a direct result of the Human Rights Listening Project.

However, the vast majority of feedback gathered from community was used to inform the Human Rights Commission work planning process.

FY12/13 Work Plan Focus

The Human Rights Commission's work plan is focused upon the following main goals:

1. **Engage in education, outreach, and collaborations fostering respect for social equity, and civil and human rights in the community.**
2. **Maintain strategic HRC liaisons and engage in cooperative endeavors with the community and with City of Eugene advisory groups that support human rights and social equity.**
3. **Effectively address selected human rights and social equity issues of concern to the community and City**

Goal 1

Engage in education, outreach, and collaborations fostering respect for social equity, civil and human rights in the community.

1.1 Objective: Present International Human Rights Day annually

Tasks:

- Collaborate with community groups to organize and promote a community-wide celebration in December

1.2 Objective: Hold human rights events in collaboration with the Community Coalition and others

Tasks:

- The Commission will collaborate on one event annually



1.3 Objective: Provide human rights education through speakers and workshops

Tasks:

- Create a Human Rights Commission speaker's bureau and bring presentations about human rights to community groups
- Hold a human rights framework workshop for local social justice groups

1.3 Objective: Respond to requests for HRC event sponsorships and financial assistance from community groups; present awards for human rights contributions

Tasks:

- Assess current community event support system and spread awareness of it within the community
- Continue to provide Human Rights Day staff award and MLK community award annually
- Explore and create award as incentive for youth efforts to learn and participate in events on human rights learning



Goal 2

Maintain strategic HRC liaisons and engage in cooperative endeavors with the community and with City of Eugene advisory groups that support human rights and social equity

2.1 Objective: Advise and work with City Council

Tasks:

- Provide Council with quarterly reports of work accomplished regarding human rights issues
- Maintain strong relationships with Council liaison
- Regularly advise Council on human rights issues or concerns
- Collaborate with council on recruitment and selection of new commissioners keeping in mind work plan goals

2.2 Objective: Increase the effectiveness of Human Rights Commission liaison relationships

Tasks:

- In collaboration with Equity and Human Rights staff, establish an effective system for liaison relationships.
- Request quarterly reports from liaisons.
- Design a clear description of liaison's roles and responsibilities



2.3 Objective: Work with Equity and Human Rights Board

Tasks:

- Assign liaison to Board
- Create an opportunities for the HRC to become familiar with the implementation of the City of Eugene's Diversity and Equity Strategic Plan (DESP)

2.4 Objective: Work with the Police Commission

Tasks:

- Assign liaison to Police Commission
- Provide member(s) to participate on hate crimes conference planning committee

2.5 Objective: Work with the Sustainability Commission

Tasks:

- Hold joint meetings
- Identify role/relationship/opportunities for an ongoing liaison
- Provide input on Triple Bottom Line Framework, a framework that helps look at impacts on the planet, people, and prosperity
- Collaborate with the Sustainability Commission on developing talking points for council on various community issues with social equity/human rights implications

2.6 Objective: Work with the Neighborhood Associations

Tasks:

- Identify an ongoing link to neighborhood associations
- Prepare regular article for Neighborhood Leaders newsletter (from neighborhood services) and advertise HRC speakers bureau
- Assign commissioners to annually attend their own neighborhood association and promote the HRC

2.7 Objective: Support the creation of a City of Eugene Disability Advisory Committee

Tasks:

- Support the City with the creation of a Disability Department Advisory Committee, providing recommendations for its structure and transition from the current codified standing committee on accessibility
- Assign a liaison to Advisory Committee

2.8 Objective: Work with Police Auditor's Office and Civilian Review Board

Tasks:

- Continue and strengthen liaison relationship and explore the possibility of an HRC connection to the Civilian Review Board
- Explore possible joint meeting
- Invite annual presentation by Auditor's office with recommendations that guide the work of the HRC
- Collaborate with policy reviews to identify changes that will help minimize institutional barriers for accessing the police oversight system

2.9 Objective: Work with the Equity and Human Rights Center on ombudsman program that addresses community member human rights concerns

Tasks:

- Partner with Equity and Human Rights staff in the development of their program

Goal 3

Effectively address selected human rights and social equity issue areas of concern to the community and City

3.1 Objective: Respond to and advocate on community issues around homelessness

Tasks:

- Work with others to explore solutions for sanitation issue and the possibility of another day center
- Support and advocate for “Safe Spaces” for community members who are unsheltered (e.g., service stations, cooling centers and warming centers)
- Host a community forum and listening opportunities as a way of increasing community education and dialog about this topic
- Ask City Council to consider creating a committee on Homelessness and Youth



3.2 Objective: Respond to and advocate on youth issues in our community

Tasks:

- Provide support for programs in middle schools and high schools that address bullying and harassment (e.g. mini grants for youth-created projects that demonstrate solutions on this issue)
- Explore ways to support the City of Eugene Teen Court program and other restorative justice programs in schools
- Explore and advocate for community programs that support or increase youth employment opportunities
- Sponsor annual listening opportunity to hear from youth
- Ask City Council to consider creating a committee on Homelessness and Youth

3.3 Objective: Respond to and advocate for the removal of impediments to immigrant integration within the Eugene community

Tasks:

- Collaborate with the Lane County Network for Immigrant Integration
- Promote educational equity issues affecting immigrant youth
- Outreach and engage with new audiences to increase the awareness of this community issue



3.4 Objective: Respond to and address the issue of systemic and individual racism

Tasks:

- Have HRC commissioners take part in a training addressing systemic racism
- Provide community education on the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, ascertain how the local situation conforms to CERD, and report to Council

3.5 Objective: Respond to and address hate and bias activity within the Eugene community

Tasks:

- Continue to support City of Eugene's Hate and Bias Plan
- Receive quarterly reports from Eugene Police Department on hate and bias crimes in our community
- Provide quarterly reports to City Council on community complaints, non-criminal hate and bias activity in the community



Implementation Plan

Overall Accountability for Work Plan

For Goal 1 – HRC would handle the implementation of this goal as a large group during their business meetings.

For Goal 2 – Chairs track the overall goal area and 2 (one primary and one back up) commissioners sign up for each assignment and check in on these assignments on an annual basis.

For Goal 3 – Objectives become small work groups. These work groups would consist of at least two HRC members and they would recruit community members or organizations or city staff to help achieve the work. We suggest the following groups:

- Work Group on Youth
- Work Group on Homelessness
- Work Group on Integrating Immigrants
- Work Group on Hate/Bias/Individual and Systemic Racism

As outlined above, the tasks proposed for this year's work plan are clearly aligned with the commission's role and objectives as described in its charter. The group continues to be forward thinking in its work strategies and responsive to issues facing our community. The projects detailed in this work plan are designed to ensure a thorough, deliberative review of important issues in our community that require the attention of the Human Rights Commission and organization. These new and ongoing projects make for a full and ambitious work plan. However, the commission will accommodate work plan changes as directed by the City Council or as necessary to respond to emerging community concerns.