

Brookings Human Rights Commission Minutes (unapproved)

Monday, August 09, 2021

Community Room 300, Brookings City/County Government Building and Go To Meeting App

Attendance: Nieema Thasing (chair - in-person); Lawrence Novotny, (recorder – in person); Dan Berg (in-person); Joel Gindo (in-person); Meagan Irvine-Miller (in-person); Erica Moore (in-person); Dianne Nagy (in-person); Erinn Thomas (in-person); Charlene ‘Charlie’ Ward (county representative – in-person); Jennifer McLaughlin (sustainability council liaison – in person); Kevin Murfield (sheriff’s department liaison – in-person); Mikaela Neubauer (library liaison – in-person); Michele Vande Weerd (school liaison - online); Casey Bell (city human resources & staff liaison – in person)

Absent: Marci Gebers (police liaison); Keith Theroux (police liaison); Kas Williams (SDSU liaison);

Guest: Ishmael Collzao (in-person as an observer)

Meet & Greet:

The group gathered at 5 pm and enjoyed pizza, chicken and cake. Everyone introduced themselves.

- Dan Berg –BHRC member; teacher at Brookings High School
- Joel Gindo – new member; lives in Elkton but works at Larson Manufacturing in Brookings
- Casey Bell – Brookings City human resources risk manager and staff liaison to BHRC
- Jennifer McLaughlin – chair of Brookings Sustainability Council and liaison to BHRC; sustainability coordinator at SDSU
- Lawrence Novotny – member of BHRC for more than 30 years; the LGBTQ liaison to the city
- “Charlie” Ward – county representative; is a case manager for people with disabilities
- Mikaela Neubauer – Brookings Public Library community librarian and library liaison
- Dianne Nagy – new member; research & technology compliance officer at SDSU; Dianne was instrumental in BHRC getting the “welcome neighbor” signs
- Izzie Collzao – owner of Blind Man Cutting Boards business
- Meagan Irwin-Miller – past chair of BHRC; academic advisor at SDSU
- Erica Moore – new member; director of the American Indian Center at SDSU
- Nieema Thasing – chair of BHRC; former Elkton City Councilor
- Erinn Thomas – BHRC member; director of Brookings Boys & Girls Club
- Michele Vande Weerd – Brookings school system curriculum coordinator and school liaison
- Kevin Murfield – representing the sheriff’s department

Old Business:

Chair Thasing called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Ward moved, Irvin-Miller seconded, to adopt the agenda. Motion passed.

Due to a computer glitch the July minutes were not available.

Decision on the diversity potluck will be made at the September meeting.

The Brookings Library has on display the communal prayer flags that were created during the Juneteenth event.

Commission vacancies:

A press release will be prepared soliciting nominations for the student representative vacancy. The PR will be distributed around August 16 via various social media outlets on campus. The deadline for receiving nominations is September 10. The PR will have a website link to apply.

Murfield suggested a contact in the University Police Dept. Irvin-Miller will pursue this to see if we can establish having a UPD liaison.

Common Read:

The community common read will be a panel on October 13 held in the council chambers. The panel will focus on water quality and environmental justice. The working group is in the process of contacting panelists.

The Brookings Library will hold a bookclub discussion on the book on September 27.

Moore announced that SDSU will host a panel of water protectors.

Budget:

Bell explained the city's budget process. There is approximately \$1500 remaining in unspent funds in this year's budget which ends on December 31. We need to look at ordering more "Welcome Neighbor" signs and decals.

Discussion on Working Groups and Ideas List"

These groups were formally known as leadership areas or sub-committees. Suggest changing the names to working groups (WG). There cannot be more than 4 BHRC members on each WG. Otherwise we will have a quorum of members and must then publicize each meeting of the WG. Liaisons and community members are welcome to serve on the WGs. Each area was discussed. Staff will distribute a list of the WGs and ask members and liaisons to indicate which WGs they are willing to serve on.

Social media/communications -- Update Facebook page; collaborate with city on press releases and other communication; put photos of HRC on website; look into posting public service announcements on the radio

Awards (MLK, Butler) – Coordinate nomination, selection, and communication with stakeholders. Propose moving MLK contest to a new Black Culture Awareness WG

Legislative Liaison – Report on bills related to human rights and recommend HRC positions and communication; present to legislature when needed

Potlucks/Community Events – Organize logistics and communicate with speakers/presenters It was suggested to move potluck to International Outreach WG but would combining Potluck/Community Events in with Inclusivity WG be a better fit.

Common Read – Serve on the SDSU Common Read Committee and organize Brookings community event

Renters Rights – Updates to and distribution of renters rights brochures; organize trainings for renters/landlords

International Outreach/Community Outreach – Coordinate new programming/outreach for international population. Incorporate international health WG under this

MEI Scorecard rename LGBTQ Awareness – Review scorecard and assemble materials as needed; promote efforts to improve score. It was suggested to eliminate this WG but on second thought the name should be changed to LGBTQ awareness to incorporate pride activities

Inclusivity Team/School District Collaboration – Coordinate with school district on programs for both teachers and students that promote human rights. Suggest changing name to Inclusivity/Community Outreach. Add potluck, community outreach. Listening sessions and working with schools to this WG

Trainings/Complaint Process – Work with city on employee training plans; coordinate other trainings for community

Black Culture Awareness – A proposed new WG that would include MLK contest, Black History month and Juneteenth events.

New Business:

The next listening session will deal with people who have disabilities. It will be held on August 18 from 7-9 pm in the Council chambers. Nancy Hartenhoff-Crooks, SDSU disabilities coordinator will be the moderator. The listening session is being organized by Thomas.

The organizers of the past 3 listening sessions need to meet and review the follow-up process on the recommended action items that came out of each session.

The question came up about providing translators for the listening sessions and meetings. Should these translators be available for each meeting or only on special request? It can be intimidating for someone to ask for a translator a week ahead of time. Collzao volunteered to serve as a Spanish translator.

The city attorney will provide training to the BHRC on the complaint resolution process at a future meeting.

There is a request to provide the information magnets in other languages.

The idea of a Brookings welcome packet was brought up. The Brookings library would be interested in cooperating on this. This should be a project of the Chamber of Commerce.

Murfield left at this point. He appreciated everything that BHRC does.

Collzoe is seeking BHRC's assistance in promoting blind cane awareness day on October 15. This should be done in cooperation with the disabilities committee.

Liaison Reports:

McLaughlin reported that the Sustainability Council is doing a call for sustainability awards from organizations, businesses, and individuals. There are 5 categories - environmental resilience, social/quality of life, economic vitality, sustainability leadership/innovative best practices, and triple bottom line. Applications are due Aug. 25th.

The Brookings library will hold a bookclub discussion on how to be an anti-racist on August 23 and another discussion on the opioid public health crises on August 31.

Next meeting will be held in mid-September and will be determined by Doodle poll.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned around 7 pm.

A group photo of the BHRC was taken.

Submitted by *Lawrence Novotny*, recorder