

McHENRY COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL

MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2007

The meeting of the McHenry County Human Relations Council was called to order at 6:06 p.m. on January 17, 2007 with the following members present: Mario Perez, Chairman; Kathy Seith, Susan Stelford, Lou Ness, Walter Liedtke, Virginia Peschke, John Jung, and Holly Eddy (Efrin Orville, Don Riggensbach and Anna May Miller absent).

MINUTES

The council reviewed the minutes from August 16, 2006. Following discussion, Ms. Seith moved to accept the minutes of August 16, 2006 as presented. Motion seconded by Mr. Jung and carried with all ayes.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Perez informed the council that he has been contacted concerning possible discrimination issues. A seven year resident of Marengo contacted Mr. Perez and claimed that her husband had gone to work and she was at home with their children. Immigration came to her door, entered her home, performed a search, accused them of being illegal immigrants, and threatened deportation. She was informed that the three children that had been born in United States would be placed with DCFS. Her husband subsequently turned himself in. The council discussed possible options for this family including contacting the local newspaper and doing a human interest story and contacting the INS on their behalf. Following discussion, the council determined that contacting the INS was beyond the scope of the council.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Stelford informed the council that three email votes passed. The council voted to amend the meeting schedule from meeting quarterly to meeting bi-monthly beginning in January, 2007. The additional meetings will enable the council to plan and execute projects during the year. Mr. Liedtke, Ms. Seith, Ms. Peschke, Mr. Perez, Ms. Stelford, Ms. Ness and Ms. Eddy voted in favor of bi-monthly meetings.

The council voted to contribute an amount of \$500.00 to co-sponsor the creation of a mural that will be hung in the Administration Building of the Government Center. The mural will depict the history and diversity of McHenry County. Mr. Liedtke, Ms. Seith, Ms. Peschke, Mr. Perez, Ms. Stelford, Ms. Ness and Ms. Eddy voted in favor of co-sponsoring the mural.

The council discussed the Piñata Project, which was also approved through an email vote. The Piñata Project would be a contest offered to school age children to study the origin of piñata's. The children would create piñata's which would be judged and prizes awarded (perhaps savings bonds). The piñata's would be displayed in the Administration Building. Ms. Seith, Ms. Peschke, Mr. Perez, Ms. Stelford, and Ms. Eddy voted in favor of proceeding with the proposed Piñata Project.

The council discussed the calendar project. Concern was expressed in regards to the lack of participation from the schools. To date, there have been no entries received.

Ms. Stelford informed the council that the response from area nursing homes for the Senior Art Show was not as positive as hoped. The nursing homes did not want to move the residents' artwork from the nursing homes to a central location.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Jung obtained some brochures about discrimination in various languages from Mike Tryon's office. The council discussed the possibility of making the brochures available to the public by putting up a display in one of the County buildings.

Distribution of By-Laws – The by-laws were distributed and reviewed by the council. Following review and discussion, the council amended several by-law items. Ms. Peschke will present the amended by-laws to the Health and Human Services Committee for approval.

Following discussion, the council determined the need to issue a press release concerning the vacancies on the board.

Election of Officers – Motion by Ms. Peschke to nominate Mr. Liedtke as Treasurer. Motion seconded by Ms. Seith and carried with all ayes. Motion by Ms. Peschke to nominate Ms. Eddy as Secretary. Motion seconded by Ms. Seith and carried with all ayes. Motion by Mr. Jung to nominate Ms. Ness as Chairman. Motion seconded by Ms. Peschke and carried with all ayes. Motion by Ms. Peschke to nominate Ms. Stelford as Vice-Chairman. Motion seconded by Mr. Jung and carried with all ayes.

2007 Budget – The council reviewed the 2007 budget. Mr. Liedtke requested the council consider a monetary donation in the amount of \$250.00 to sponsor the Diversity Days event. Mr. Jung expressed concern about becoming too closely associated with a particular group. The council determined that a decision was not required at this time and will take the issue under advisement.

Ms. Stelford requested the council consider getting a table at International Night which is held at McHenry County College.

2007 Action Plan – The council members determined the need to consider issues and areas which they would like to work on in the next two years. The council discussed supplying local schools with a copy of the diversity video again and the need to recruit new members.

2006 Yearly Summary – The council discussed accomplishments for 2006. Mr. Perez has all of the related documents. A presentation needs to be developed and presented to the County Board.

Motion to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. by Ms. Seith. Motion seconded by Ms. Peschke and carried with all ayes.